

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE

FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD

Institut politologických studií

Rigorózní práce

2012

Mgr. Lenka Vašíčková

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE

FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD

Institut politologických studií

Mgr. Lenka Vašíčková

**The US Presidential Nomination System
in Its Three Dimensions:
Past, Present and Future**

Rigorózní práce

Praha 2012

Autor práce: **Mgr. Lenka Vašíčková**

Vedoucí práce:

Rok obhajoby: 2012

Bibliografický záznam:

VAŠÍČKOVÁ, Lenka. *The US Presidential Nomination System in Its Three Dimensions: Past, Present and Future*. Praha, 2012. 91 s. Rigorózní práce (PhDr.) Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Fakulta sociálních věd, Institut politologických studií.

Abstrakt

Rigorózní práce „Vývoj nominačního systému amerických prezidentských voleb ve svých třech dimenzích: minulost, přítomnost a budoucnost“ se zaměřuje na politické a historické aspekty systému výběru prezidentských kandidátů ve Spojených státech amerických. V první spíše historické části se zabývá vývojem během předcházejících dvou století, kdežto druhá část je věnována spíše politologickým aspektům systému. První kapitola je rozdělena do čtyř částí popisujících vývoj nominačního systému od doby přijetí Ústavy v 80. letech 18. století, přes stanovení nominačních sjezdů a zavedení primárních voleb, až po období reform v 70. letech 20. století. Druhá kapitola se zaměřuje na současný nominační systém a jeho pravidla v rámci Demokratické a Republikánské strany, zatímco třetí kapitola, jež je rozdělena do tří částí, popisuje troje významné primární volby 20., respektive 21. století. Demokratické primárky v roce 1960 a následný výběr J. F. Kennedyho, republikánské primárky roku 1980 s Ronaldem Reaganem jako bezkonkurenčním kandidátem a v neposlední řadě také poslední demokratické primárky v roce 2008 a následná nominace Baracka Obamy. Poslední čtvrtá kapitola pak představuje do současné doby navržené hlavní reformní návrhy, zejména tedy American Plan, Delaware Plan a Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan. Kromě těchto velkých návrhů je zmíněno i několik dalších plánů a v závěrečné části je pak přestaven vlastní systém reformy primárních voleb ve Spojených státech amerických. V závěru je celý vývoj shrnut a současně jsou nastíněny možnosti budoucího vývoje.

Abstract

“The US Presidential Nomination System in Its Three Dimension: Past, Present and Future” thesis focuses on political and historical aspects of presidential candidate selection system in the United States of America. Covering the past two and a half centuries of historical development in the first more historical part the final paper then continues with more political characters of the system. The first chapter is divided into four sections describing the evolution of the selection system since the very beginning of the US political history when the Constitution was adopted in 1780s over the establishment of national conventions and implementing primary elections around 1900 until the modern period of reform years in 1970s. The second chapter focuses on current selection system within the Democratic and the Republican Party while the last third chapter, being divided into three parts, describes three key primary elections of 20th and 21st century, respectively. The Democratic primaries of 1960 and a selection of J. F. Kennedy, the 1980 Republican primaries with Ronald Reagan as an unrivaled leader and the Democratic primary elections of 2008 selecting Barack Obama a presidential candidate. The last fourth chapter introduces main reform proposal that have been suggested so far, i.e. the Delaware Plan, the American Plan, and the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan. Besides those well-known suggestions, other proposals are mentioned as well and in the last part my own reform proposal is described. In the conclusion the whole development is summarized and few ideas of the future development are provided.

Klíčová slova

prezidentské volby, Demokratická strana, Republikánská strana, výbory, primárky, kampaň, národní sjezd, delegáti, Spojené státy americké

Keywords

presidential election, Democratic Party, Republican Party, caucuses, primaries, campaign, national convention, delegates, the USA

Prohlášení

1. Prohlašuji, že jsem předkládanou práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.
2. Prohlašuji, že práce nebyla využita k získání jiného titulu.
3. Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zpřístupněna pro studijní a výzkumné účely.

V Praze dne 10.9.2012

Mgr. Lenka Vašíčková

Contents

Introduction	2
1.The Evolution of Nominating System.....	5
1.1.The Early Evolution.....	5
1.2.National Conventions Establishment.....	12
1.3.State Primaries	18
1.4.Modern Period – the Reform Years.....	23
2.Selection System Nowadays	31
2.1.Primary Elections	31
2.2.National Conventions	36
3. Case Studies	39
3.1.1960 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Democratic Party	39
3.2.1980 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Republican Party.....	42
3.3.2008 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Democratic Party	46
4.Future Perspectives	50
4.1.The Delaware Plan.....	53
4.2.The American Plan	58
4.3.NASS Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan	63
4.4.Other Proposals.....	71
4.5.New Ideas	74
Conclusion	82
Summary.....	85
Resources.....	86

Introduction

The United States of America is a presidential republic with a President being the head of state and head of government at the same time ever since the country was established by the Constitution. Throughout modern history, American politics has been dominated by two-party system. Since 1852 when the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, in their current names, became the only two political parties to alternate within the political system on a long time basis, we have witnessed that only several third parties have emerged mainly on a local basis.

General ideological position of the two main political parties within the American political spectrum is that the Democratic Party is considered to be left-of-center whether the Republican Party is more right-of-center. The Democrats believe in rights of each citizen such as liberty, dignity, security, equal opportunities, justice, etc. without interference from government and their ideology goes together with liberalism, whereas the Republicans are more conservative and support limited government, low taxes and business regulations.

Every four years both major parties encounter for winning the highest position in the country – the Presidential office. The strategies and tactics differ depending on party, state and other factors, all together making the selection system. Nominating the right person as the party's presidential candidate is a result of a long journey at the end of which there are two people, one Democrat, one Republican, who join the presidential election battle against each other. The process preceding the main duel will be the target focus of my thesis.

The election year starts in January with primaries and caucuses which run until June and then during the summer time the national conventions of both major political parties are held. At the end of the summer the nominee is announced and the selection process is over. But not always the nominations had the structure I outlined above. Historical evolution went through more stages and the people did not play as significant role as they do these days. Founding Fathers put more power to delegates who had been previously elected and therefore were trustworthy, but progressive development of political system as well as the society brought necessary changes to what we now call the selection system.

Historical evolution will be covered in the first part of my thesis together with evolution of main political parties. While analyzing attributes of the system, I will focus on political factors (more than on historical) and I will be searching for an answer to the main questions for the first chapter: “What are the most influential factors that affected the long-term generation of the presidential primary election system?”

The second chapter will be targeted to current selection system and will mainly focus on its attributes such as different types of primaries, electoral formula, voting procedure, allocation of delegates, etc. The main questions I will try to answer are: “Why does the Democratic Party use system of proportional representation to select candidates unlike the Republican Party that prefers majority election?” and “Are there any differences in organization of primaries in various parts of the country?”

The next third chapter will be conceived as a case study part. I have chosen three election years to outline differences not only between timing of the nominating process, but also between the Democrats and the Republicans. This chapter will be focused on 1960 Democratic primaries in which John F. Kennedy won the nomination, followed by the Republican primaries in 1980 at the end of which Ronald Reagan became the party’s nominee, and finally will get to 2008 Democratic primaries and the nomination of Barack Obama. In this whole part I would like to find out if there were any differences in primaries within the United States and I would also like to explore strategies that were used in those three primaries and possibly find out how they differed, if they differed.

In the last, but not least, chapter of my thesis I will explore presidential primary reform proposals. The main attention will be paid to the Delaware Plan, the American Plan, and the NASS Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan. As there have been much more suggestions, I will also focus on more ideas to achieve a better comparison. In the last part of this chapter I would like to enrich the discussion by introducing my own reform proposal for presidential selection system. My main research questions for this chapter are: “Is implementing one of current options such as Delaware Plan or American Plan a good way how to make the system more democratic?” and “Are there any other options how to make primaries more effective and democratic?”

In the conclusion part, I will answer questions I mentioned above and depending on the results of my research I will try to analyze what the possible future development might be.

I will use a combination of descriptive and comparative methods, while some parts will undoubtedly require an analysis as well, which will be included.

1. The Evolution of Nominating System

The first chapter will be dedicated to the evolution of the selection system over the period of the last two and a half centuries and the main focus will be given to political figures more than to historical facts. The main character that goes through the whole time period, but only its value and impact change from decade to decade, is the amount of participation the people get. Having this in mind provides an interesting viewpoint on the whole following chapter. Starting with basically no participation on voting at the end of 18th century, the United States of America became a country with developed system of primary election throughout the whole country, giving the people a chance to decide who is the right candidate representing their values and therefore providing a democratic representation required in 21st century.

1.1. The Early Evolution

The key discussion about the form of the Constitution of the United States, the main document of the U.S. statehood, had been held among Founding Fathers, who also signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. By that time, they considered the presidential selection to be the most difficult procedure of all. The era of approximately thirty years after implementing the supreme law (1788), will give us the time frame for the first part of evolution of party system, election system, but mainly nominating system, to which the biggest attention will be paid.

The Constitution might seem to be the source of the form of nominating system, but this is not really true. Section 1 of Article II of the Constitution is only a source of rules for presidential election procedure - the system which had been used since the ratification of the Constitution in 1788 until the adoption of XII. Amendment in 1804. Section 1 describes formal requirements for the person to hold presidential office followed by the system of choosing this person (along with vice-president).

The group of people, who decide who the best candidate is, is called the Electoral College. According to the Constitution and Section 1 of Article II the president is elected by gaining the highest number of votes (and a majority of votes at the same

time) from Electoral College members. The whole procedure, just like today, used to happen on state level and after the election was completed the votes were counted and sent to the Speaker of the House who counted all the votes and announced the winner. But there is neither a part specifying the actual nominating system nor any closer information about how the candidates used to be chosen which means that basically anybody could have been placed as a nominee (*Constitution of the United States of America*). This was very characteristic for Washington era (1789-1797) and Adams era (1797-1801).

Founding Fathers

It was the Founders who introduced, as the first people in the history, the very basic ideas of how to choose the head of the executive power. They put their ideas together and therefore the Founder's Theory of Selection was written. According to them, the selection system had five functions, which were necessary to be followed to make sure the system is as democratic as possible and provides right tools to reach the goals they were willing to achieve. These five main functions were (Caesar 1979: 83-84):

- *Controlling ambition*

To avoid soliciting, the Founders tried to make sure there will be enough mechanisms to withdraw a candidate during a campaign and to prevent abuse of power.

- *Presidential leadership and the power of the office*

The main goals of Founders were mainly to keep the president above all the popular demands and to make sure he exercises independent discretions. Therefore they tried to avoid a contest "in which the candidates would have to pose as "friends" of the people or make specific policy commitments" (Caesar 1979: 83). In the same time they wanted the office to be run under the laws.

- *Presidential character*

Searching for a capable candidate with previous political experience was one of the goals the Founders aimed to fulfill.¹ They imagined someone of a good character, but they also realized, that many candidates participate on elections

¹ Just like nowadays people who were well-known had higher chances to obtain more votes. In current politics, we can see such electorate's behavior as well. As an example I can mention local elections where people who are well-known to others do some public activities or simply have occupations that are very „trustworthy“ (ex. MDs) are more likely to be elected, because people generally trust them and they see them as „nice people next door“.

for their own personal profit and that finding someone “virtuous” won’t be easy. For that reason, they tried to influence people to prioritize public good over their own.

- *Legitimacy*

The Founders brought many principles in accordance with republican government, but not as many in accordance with democratic principles. They did, however, aim to create such a system, which would provide a secure majority winning to a perspective candidate.

- *Choice and Change*

They didn’t see the purpose of elections to be a “time of changes”, they preferred the elections to be a time when people can judge the incumbent executives and then decide whether they want any changes to be made or not.

Those five main points faced a lot of criticism. One of the reasons was that they didn’t provide party competition which had a lot to do with the lack of political parties typical for the end of 18th century. The period after implementing the Constitution can be called “*pre-party era*”(Crotty-Jackson 1985: 7) because no political parties existed yet. James W. Ceaser says, that “The Founders’ system was designed to elevate a man who stood out from others on the basis of his reputation for merit” (Caesar 1979: 87) and continues his thought with the fact, that this proceeded even later after establishing political parties.

Beginnings of party organization

As many political scientists and historians have tried to clarify and describe political history of the US since the very beginning, there are currently lots of ideas providing more or less sufficient answers to the question when the political parties in the US emerged. John F. Hoadley (Hoadley 1986: 3-7) has made a brief, but still detailed research in this field, based on which he outlined few different ideas of when specialists think the American political parties were originally created. One of the opinions is that parties existed since the very beginning of the national government, other says that there was a “(...) clear evidence of partisan behavior beginning in the First Congress, based on economic interests of members” (Hoadley 1986: 3).² Based on this research, Hoadley

² Others even came up with more exact timing – one of these opinions expects the year 1795 to be the year of formation of the first political party. Another scholar considers the Federalists to be a political party since 1792 and the Republican since 1794. Others say that no real political parties existed earlier than in 1830.

then thinks that political parties existed this early, but there was no such thing as party system. “The case is something like the metaphor of half-full or half-empty glass” (Hoadley 1986: 4).

According to Crotty and Jackson’s *Presidential Primaries and Nominations* the first effort to organize a party was expressed in Madison and Jefferson era. Jefferson’s party was the Democratic-Republican Party and their opponents were the Federalists. The second president of the US John Adams was elected by the Federalists in 1796 and four years later the Democratic-Republicans elected Thomas Jefferson the third US president. But there were some major differences between these two political parties. Jeffersonians slowly developed a very strong party organization, which led to a close relationship between leaders and followers and they also focused on mass appeal, unlike Federalists, who stood on elitist principles. Therefore it became more and more difficult for them to resist emerging unified Democratic-Republican Party (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 7-10). Presidential election of 1800 proved Jeffersonians raising position.³

Running for president in 1790s was pretty simple, because basically anybody who wanted to be a candidate and a potential president could do so. Contact with other people and “*community status*” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 8) were the key things to one’s victory. The whole process lacked any formal structures, therefore the system could be described as follows: “Candidates were self-announced or, more usually, brought forward by a group of influential persons after some sort of *parlor caucus*, and even when mass-meetings were called for the purpose of making local nominations, they (...) probably did no more than ratify the proposals that were laid before them” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 8). Hoadley completes the idea in his *Origins of Political Parties*. First, he agrees that basically anybody could be a candidate but in few states they moved one step forward by “submitting names to an official who posted the list of nominees before the elections” (Hoadley 1986: 37).

³The other difference between now and then is the fact that no organized means existed at the end of eighteenth century. That means that there were no such groups of people gathered based on member’s similar opinions, which would be represented by a leader. It was just a matter of time for those elected leaders not to be accountable for their actions to their constituencies and people and to undermine the whole “*system*”. The system established by Founders lasted for not even a decade – mostly during 1790s. The need for political parties was more than essential and that was the time of their emerging, although we don’t have any detailed evidence that would give us one unique timing (ideally an accurate year) providing a starting point of the research. It is obvious that before the year 1789, we only spoke about *faction* in terms of future political parties. Those probably emerged in 1790s and started to develop very quickly by the beginning of the new century, when congressional party caucuses were created.

Early years of nominating system

After about a decade the self-nominating process appeared to be the most democratic. As the communication channels were much more limited than now, the world didn't know the invention of television yet and travelling was more difficult, the face-to-face relationship between candidates and officeholders was built just on the closeness. As a result there were local differences in self-nomination system.⁴ Firstly, the informal congressional nomination system seemed to be sufficient enough, although some non-expected cases occurred from time to time. But later on the nominations started gaining more and more importance and factional and party politics became more and more important as well. It was necessary to bring a new structure into the whole procedure. In 1790s no party caucuses existed yet, although Congress member parties gathered on different occasions to discuss specific topics.⁵

In 1790s Electoral College members could vote for anybody who they considered to be the best president-to-be, which worked very well as soon as they were able to agree on one person – just like when George Washington was elected a president on April 6, 1789 (in the office since April 30, 1789). But as it would have been difficult to choose delegates for each state and the system would have been too complicated and maybe not even possible to run at that time, the Electoral College was simply formed from members of Congress, because that way the representativeness of each state was guaranteed and unquestionable.

As most historians believe, there was no real formal caucus that would have met before the presidential election until the year of 1800.⁶ After Washington had retired, a caucus among the Democratic-Republican Party congressmen was held but unfortunately the party wasn't able to agree on one person to be a vice-president.⁷

⁴ Crotty and Jackson describe them in *Presidential Primaries and Nominations* and they find that the most extreme self-nomination system was in southern states, where candidates presented themselves in front of other people. On the other hand they see a significant difference between this approach and the approach that New England states had, where candidates were chosen in advance and they were discussed in detail during town meetings.

⁵ According to Hoadley, there were two main reasons for incentives for party caucus meetings. One was the coordination of legislative strategy and the other one was to agree on candidates for presidential elections. Unlike nominations for Congress elections, presidential election was more complicated, though (Hoadley 1986: 53).

⁶ As Hoadley says, no caucus had met before the election in 1792 to find an opponent for John Adams, who was an incumbent vice-president by that time (Hoadley 1986: 54).

⁷ Their presidential candidate was Thomas Jefferson, who they all agreed on, so there was no second candidate for presidential office.

Federalists held a “quasi caucus”⁸ in Philadelphia in May 1796 after which they nominated John Adams and Thomas Pinckney. But as the system was developing during Adam’s era, Jefferson’s presidency (1801-1809) and mainly the nomination process that led to his candidacy was held under different conditions, in different public mood and mostly under more formal rules. “Each party in 1800 agreed on its candidates for president and vice-president in advance of the selection of electors (...)” says Caesar and continues with an opinion that changes made in 1800 “(...) emerged under the pressure of events, as partisans sought to win power in order to further their ideological goals” (Caesar 1979: 88). Both the Democratic-Republican Party and the Federalists held their congressional caucuses, although they were based on more secret level. First mentioned gathered in Marache’s boarding house⁹ in Philadelphia, where they nominated Aaron Burr for vice-president. All delegates had previously unanimously agreed on Thomas Jefferson to be a presidential candidate, so he was not formally chosen by caucus. Federalists held their caucus in Philadelphia as well, where they agreed on incumbent president Adams and Charles C. Pickney, who was a brother of Thomas Pickney, who was nominated four years earlier (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 3).

XII. Amendment

The selection system of congressional caucuses dominated presidential politics for the next two decades. The Democratic-Republican Party contributed to the face of selection system based on caucuses with two main points. Firstly, it was them who came up with the idea for a candidate as a party leader and secondly they initiated ratification of the XII. Amendment in 1804. The main aim of changing the mechanism of presidential election by this amendment was to make changes while the Electoral College gathered.

XII. Amendment brings to the procedure one new thing – the way how each member of the Electoral College can vote for president. Before 1804 they had two votes that they gave to two candidates who they preferred, without any further specification of who should become a president and who should become a vice-president. The person with the highest number of votes received simply became the first mentioned and the person with second highest number of votes received became the second mentioned. Since 1804 members of Electoral College have been distinguishing between those two

⁸ The term was firstly mentioned by historian Roy F. Nichols

⁹ Marache’s boarding house is a former residency of several Republican leaders.

positions and now they have one vote for presidential candidate and one vote for vice-president (*Constitution of the United States of America*). This was a reaction to 1800 election when Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr (both Democratic-Republican Party candidates) received the same amount of electoral votes (after which the House of Representatives elected Thomas Jefferson).¹⁰

Party system at the beginning of 19th century

By 1816 the Federalist Party became very passive and barely existed. They did not hold a caucus or any kind of a meeting to choose their candidates. Democratic-Republicans, on the other hand, held a caucus and nominated James Monroe for the presidential office and Daniel D. Tompkins for the office of vice-president. Therefore as a result, there was only one political party taking part in 1816 and 1820 presidential elections, which was the Democratic-Republican Party. In 1820 they didn't even organize a caucus or any formal or at least informal gathering. "Despite the fact that Monroe and Tompkins were not formally nominated, electoral states were filed on their behalf. They both received nearly unanimous Electoral College victories" (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 5) say the reports about 1820 presidential nominations.

But as the Federalists were slowly losing their power and technically stopped existing as a political party between years 1815-1820, more and more protests against the caucus system arose. Not only that not all the Democratic-Republican Party members were present at the caucuses, but it was also known that there were some members who were strictly against the whole system. Historian Edward Stanwood says that: "(...) there were mass meetings around the country to protest the caucus system. Opponents claimed that the writers of the Constitution did not envision the caucus, that presidential

¹⁰ The first election held under the XII. Amendment was the election of 1804. The Democratic-Republican Party organized a caucus and decided to nominate Thomas Jefferson as a presidential candidate and George Clinton, who was New York's Governor, a candidate for vice-president. They both easily took their offices, moreover according to Congressional Quarterly's publication "*National Party Conventions 1831-1992*" we don't have any record of Federalists having their caucus or any kind of meeting to nominate candidates in 1804. Before Jefferson accomplished his second presidential period, caucuses of two main political parties were held. The Democratic-Republicans made one step forward by formal announcement of their meeting during which they decided to nominate James Madison, who eventually defeated Charles C. Pinckney, who was the Federalists' candidate, and became a president of the United States for the next two terms (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 4).

nominating should not be a function of Congress and that the caucus system encouraged candidates to curry the favor of Congress” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 5)¹¹

The presidential election of 1824 is considered to be a breakthrough point. The existence of caucus system had to be replaced by another – more effective – system. The candidacy of Andrew Jackson in 1824 was rejected by the Democratic Party caucus in favor of William Crawford. This step eventually caused the party’s defeat because Crawford ended up on the fourth place out of four after the general election. Jackson decided to take part in the next election of 1828 on his own. He was successful in winning the presidential office and during the next four years of his presidency he contributed to great Democratic expansion and mainly to adopting the system of national nominating conventions.

1.2. National Conventions Establishment

The system of party caucuses experienced its last election in 1824. Since then there has been no such system used any more. The main point of losing its power appeared in the moment when a field of candidates didn’t agree with the choice that party caucus had made and they were not able to tolerate it. Sooner or later more disadvantages of caucus system were recognized. Those were mainly connected to voting procedure and to suffrage. The candidates simply needed more support than just what caucus provided.

Introducing national conventions

As a result, in 1824 it was decided that there should be a special state meeting organized, something close to the idea of what Joseph Bucklin Bishop calls “*state convention*” in his book *Presidential Nominations and Elections* (Bishop 1916: 5). As he says, such convention should consist of the same number of delegates as the number of representatives is and they should nominate a presidential candidate. “Thus, the policy of nominations, emanating directly from the people, instead of by legislative caucus, was inaugurated” (Bishop 1916: 5-6). The convention was then organized in August 1824 and started a new era of American politics.

¹¹ Crotty and Jackson add the fact that districts where no members of Congress were elected had at the same time no contribution on presidential nominations which might be understood as elitist (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 10).

It was inevitable that as the new system was so popular at the state level, it was just a matter time before it spreads to national level as well. Crotty and Jackson describe a *convention* as “a body of elected or appointed representatives selected to represent their constituents at a higher level party meeting” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 11).¹² Another step away from caucus system to national convention system was the fact that these conventions have always been called in advance. After the date and place had been chosen, formal announcement followed. This happened early in the election year or even a year earlier, depending on each party and its organization (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 5-6).

The very first national conventions preceding presidential election were held in 1831-1832. As we know from the previous era, there were two political parties – the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. Forty to fifty years later the situation looked differently. The Federalists were slowly dissolved after 1816 (potentially even after 1812) and by 1832 only succeeding organizations existed. The other political party – the Democratic-Republicans – split and more politically active entities were then formed. The main reason was an opinion difference when the question of a successor of President James Monroe (in the office 1817-1825) came up. The section led by Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren gained some level of separation and subsequently adopted name the Democratic Party. Another movement inside the original Democratic-Republican Party was formed as an opposition against President Andrew Jackson (in the office 1829-1837) and was called the Whig Party.

Besides those two, the National Republican Party emerged as well, supporting John Quincy Adams as a presidential candidate later on (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 251-265). But there was one more important political movement - the Anti-Masonic Party. Described by Bishop with a little bit of exaggeration as “one of those ephemeral political movements whose birth and death occur in a single campaign” (Bishop 1916: 8). I would have personally guessed that it was the Democratic Party or maybe the National Republicans, who held the very first nominating convention, but it was the Anti-Masons.

¹² Such conventions were usually held in small buildings to prevent too many spectators from passive participation. As the transportation wasn't nearly as good as nowadays, the location was very often chosen according to the city's geographical location. Baltimore, MD was a very popular city for the 19th century conventions, as it is located in the centre of political life of those days. The Democratic Party chose it for six of its conventions between years 1832-1852. Chicago, ILL became another popular meeting point in the second half of the 19th century and stayed the most popular even until present time.

The First Anti-Masonic Party convention

The years 1831 and 1832, as I said, are the years when first national conventions of the three most important political parties were held. In 1831 the Anti-Masonic Party gathered in Baltimore, where a hundred and sixteen delegates from thirteen states arrived. They nominated their presidential candidates and adopted a three-fourths majority rule. But upcoming presidential election of 1832 was the only one they participated on, after that most of them left the party for the Whigs.

The National Republican Party convention

The National Republicans held their convention three months later in the same city. They were united in their strong opinion against current president Andrew Jackson, but otherwise they had no closer ideas about how to manage their first convention. One hundred sixty-eight delegates from eighteen states arrived (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 25). They hadn't set any rules previously, they only called each other's names and then unanimously agreed on Henry Clay of Kentucky as their presidential candidate.

The Democratic Party convention

The Democratic Party held the first convention in May 1832 in Baltimore as well. Jackson wasn't formally nominated because his candidacy was obvious so more attention was paid to a vice-president candidate. The convention adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, that each State be entitled, in a nomination to be made of a candidate for the vice-presidency, to a number of votes equal to the number to which they will be entitled in the electoral colleges, under the new apportionment, in voting for President and Vice-President; and that two-thirds of the whole number of the votes in the convention shall be necessary to constitute a choice" (Bishop 1916: 9-10).

The apportionment method remained one of the Democratic Party convention's features until 1940 and the two-thirds rule hadn't been changed until 1936.¹³ Eight years later they adopted one more important rule. Bishop says that it was proposed by a member of the Massachusetts delegation, "in the form of a rule directing each delegation, to take informal ballots as to candidates until a majority should be recorded for some one candidate, upon which a report of the result should be made to the convention, and the vote of the majority of each delegation should be reported as the

¹³ Also, there was no formal address for the people issued afterwards, the party decided to let each state to make a statement on its own.

vote of that State” (Bishop 1916: 13). This rule is called the *unit rule* and together with the *two-thirds rule*, it has defined the Democratic Party presidential candidate selection system since then.¹⁴

The years of reconstruction

The second half of the 19th century is known as a period of *reconstruction*. Politicians were more focused on organization of the state than on the rules of selection system. The country experienced a civil war and there was a need for “new birth of freedom” (*Liberty, equality, power: a history of the American people* 2008: 463). Abolition of slavery became one of the most important goals of the Northern states and the selection system itself became not so important during this period of time.

In terms of party system, the second half of the 19th century is usually defined as a Third-Party System, succeeding the Second Party System (approximately 1828-1854). This period begins in 1854, the year when the Republican Party officially emerged. Both of the largest political parties identified themselves with different groups of people and sooner or later the nation split between Republicans and Democrats, depending on whose opinions were closer to each person. Generally, the Northern states, Protestants, clerks, businessmen and professionals favored the Republicans and the Democrats were more a party of Catholic immigrants, farmers and labors (Karas-Kupka 2005: 3-4). Traditional European right-left scale for political parties is not applicable for American politics and nor is the traditional blue and red color distinguishing. While European tradition uses blue for conservative parties which are more on the right-hand side of political spectrum and red color for parties more on the left or socialist parties, in the US blue color became a symbol of the Democrats, while red is known as the Republicans’ color.¹⁵ The second half of the 19th century is known for the Republican

¹⁴ Before the Democratic candidate James K. Polk took over the presidential office after John Tyler in 1845, another set of national conventions had been held. The Democratic Party convention was a unique one in terms of not only the telegraph invention, but also the very new phenomenon that appeared called the “*dark horse*”. Martin Van Buren, former American President, was a front runner of the Democratic Party and his position seemed to be safe. The convention, taking place in Baltimore in May 1844, ratified the two-thirds rule again and the need for nomination was 178 votes, which neither Buren nor Cass, his main opponent, approached. The name of James K. Polk was mentioned just modestly, firstly in connection with vice-presidential candidacy. He was a former Speaker of the Tennessee House and former governor of Tennessee and became an acceptable choice for even the presidential office. Winning the nomination on the ninth ballot “marked the first time in American history that a dark-horse candidate won a presidential nomination” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 30).

¹⁵ That’s how the nicknames “*blue states*” and “*red states*” became familiar. Simply according to the fact, whether the state itself prefers the Democratic or the Republican candidate on a long time basis.

Party dominance, in fact the Democrats managed to win only three presidential elections – in 1856, 1884 and 1892.

The Republican Party dominance

The first Republican president was Abraham Lincoln, who was firstly elected in 1860. The party was not satisfied with Buchanan's administration and therefore they not only gathered by themselves for their nominating convention in Chicago, but they also invited other groups who shared the opinion with them. The main things discussed involved the problem of nominating majority which was eventually solved by passing the minority report based on simple majority of votes (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 40-41). The final vote gave the nomination to Abraham Lincoln who then defeated Democratic candidate Stephen A. Douglas in presidential election.

The Democrats held their convention in South Carolina and as the party was very fragmented in opinions mainly on slavery, the main aim was to gain at least some kind of party unity. There were two reports introduced to the convention, "(...) the majority report (favored by the South) declared that no government – local, state or federal – could outlaw slavery in the territories. The minority report took a more moderate position, stating that the decision of allowing slavery in the territories should be left to the Supreme Court" (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 39). Eventually the minority report was accepted. As a result, the majority of Southern delegations withdrew (Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Texas, South Carolina and Louisiana) along with other three states (Arkansas, Delaware and North Carolina). The convention then had to deal with the situation and decide whether the two-thirds rule should be based on total votes allocated or on the number of delegates present. Reseating missing delegates was another option. After another walkout only about two-thirds of the original convention was present, but still able to agree on Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois as a presidential candidate.¹⁶

¹⁶ The second half of the nineteenth century had a bigger impact on American history than on political system. As a reaction to Abraham Lincoln's election as President of the United States 11 southern states left the Union and established Confederate state of America as known as "the Confederacy". Lincoln's aim was to prevent expansion of the slavery behind the border of the states where it already existed. Before he was inaugurated seven other states had joined the Confederation but the association has never been recognized by any country in the world. The war lasted until 1865 and ended up by victory of the North, which meant the end of slavery in the US. All the other issues that came up during the war – political, social, economic etc. – were crucial for the post-war era for which we generally use a term "reconstruction" and which lasted to approximately 1877.

After the Civil War the Democratic Party was uniformed again, but its strength on the national level was replaced by Republicans. They were strong especially in Southern states, where their candidates usually won, but it was obvious that the more on the North we went, the less support they had which was most noticeable in border states. The Republicans became extremely strong and they managed to hold their power for almost three-quarters of a century, 1860-1932. “(...) [they] projected a patriotic image, which, coupled with the party’s belief in national expansion and limited federal involvement in the free enterprise system, helped make it the dominant party (...)” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 261).¹⁷

Getting closer to the end of the century, the criticism of political parties spread all over the country. As Crotty and Jackson say: “The spoil system, the awarding of jobs, contracts, and political favors to supporters, was the rule, not the exception” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 12). Participation of the public in nominations for public offices was lower and lower and although there were a few rules about the process of presidential nomination, they were not enforced. Crotty and Jackson continue that even physical forces were used to manipulate gaining or prohibiting entry to convention deliberations. So many abuses led to threatening the whole idea of a country being built on principles of democracy. Conventions became “(...) symbols of all the political extravagances of the age” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 12). By the end of the century, change of current system appeared to be necessary.

National conventions for presidential nomination weren’t entirely abandoned immediately – like for example caucuses in 1824 when they were replaced by conventions. Progressive changes had been made over the period of many years and the system went through lots of modifications until it turned to the system of state primaries.

¹⁷ According to Congressional Quarterly (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 254) “The Democrats occupied the White House for 16 of these 72 years, controlled the House of Representatives for 26 years and controlled the Senate for 10 years.” Or in other words, the Republicans controlled the White House for 56 years, the Senate for 60 years and the House for 50 years.

1.3. State Primaries

History of the nominating system in the twentieth century is characterized by two different models of national nomination process. The first one was Van Buren's conception and the other one were thoughts of Wilson and the Progressives. Both of these differ in nominating arrangement, a role of political parties as well as electoral behavior. Caesar describes Van Buren's conception as a "*party-dominance model*" with the main characteristics such as "nomination by "regulars" of the party organization, a favorable attitude within the populace toward political parties, and a strong partisan identification among the voters rooted in a combination of affective attachment to their party and a commitment to its general principles" (Caesar 1979: 213). The nomination is then a result of inside negotiations of party leaders and favorable candidates are either politically neutral persons or people having the skill of mediating among elements.

On the other hand the Progressive idea, as Caesar (Caesar 1979: 214) continues, could be called a "*candidate-supremacy model*" or "*plebiscitary model*", which is characterized by nomination by amateurs, who are somehow interested, ambivalent attitude toward political parties and electorate, which is interested in current issues and open to changes. The party then forms around the nominee at the final election campaign and adopts his vision as the party program. A high-minded and goal-directed person seemed to be a perfect candidate for this conception.¹⁸

Beginnings of primaries

Primaries itself were introduced during the 19th century, but those were just on the state level, so we can't speak about presidential primaries yet.¹⁹ Application of primary method to presidential selection dates to 1905, when Wisconsin "(...) established by law a primary for the direct election of national convention delegates" (Crotty-Jackson

¹⁸ These two models went through three phases during the twentieth century. The first can be dated from the election of 1912, when the idea of candidate supremacy was introduced for the first time. Firstly the idea gained public support but towards 1920s the power of political parties was re-established and the model lost its support. The second phase lasted from 1920s to 1960s and contained elements of both models, which led to a mixed system. The final breakdown came in 1972 election, when the system was transformed to a plebiscitary system, which began the third phase.

¹⁹ Local primaries were firstly used in 1840s in Crawford County, Pennsylvania by the Democratic Party. Although it was dropped in 1850s, Republicans started using it again in 1860s. Around 1900s more states adopted primaries to select delegates for presidential nominating conventions.

1985: 14), which can be considered the first presidential primary.²⁰ The aim of these early primaries was to let people choose who the delegates will be, but without providing any further space to make a preference about presidential candidate and if so, then the convention was not committed to that previous selection at all.

In 1910 the primaries were adopted in Oregon in the form we know them today. The difference was that voters were allowed to register their preferences for president and vice president and they could also choose national convention delegates directly (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 14), which became popular in other states very quickly. Two years later fifteen states provided presidential primaries.

1912 national conventions

In the first two decades of the twentieth century a new movement called the Progressives was established. It can't be called a new political party in terms of a new subject that would appear on American political scene because they formally separated from the Republican Party which happened after the presidential convention of 1912 as a result of a dispute between President William Howard Taft (1909-1913) and former President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909).²¹

Only two names were then placed in presidential nomination – Taft and La Follette. As Roosevelt's supporters didn't participate in balloting, Taft won easily by receiving 556 votes. La Follette received only 41 votes, Roosevelt 107, but 348 did not vote at all although they were present. Roosevelt claimed that he "(...) would accept the nomination of the "*honestly elected majority*" of the Republican convention or a new progressive party" (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 69). The next day the Republicans gathered to listen to their leader speaking about an option being elected as a candidate of an honestly elected progressive convention. Therefore Governor Hiram

²⁰ Subsequently Pennsylvania adopted primaries to elect delegates for national convention in 1906 followed by South Dakota doing the same thing three years later (1909).

²¹ According to Congressional Quarterly (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 69) the Republican Party convention of 1912 in Chicago was the most tumultuous ever. Although Roosevelt had defeated Taft in presidential primaries, Taft on the other hand controlled national committee and Southern delegation, so the difference in their strength wasn't as tremendous at all. The party wasn't uniform and therefore able to elect a temporary chairman, when Taft's wing supported Senator Elihu Root of New York but Roosevelt delegates preferred Governor Francis E. McGovern of Wisconsin. Eventually, Root won over McGovern 558 to 501 (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 69), but this situation only led to even bigger disagreements. Roosevelt then advised his delegates not to withdraw from the convention, but to stay as a silent protest according to steamroller tactics. (According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the steamroller tactics is characterized by "a crushing force especially when ruthlessly applied to overcome opposition." In this particular case, the pro-Roosevelt part of convention "emphasized the feelings by blowing sandpaper and imitating a sound of a steamroller".)

Johnson was temporarily named a chairman of the new political party – the Progressives.

Two months after the Republican convention had been held the Progressives called their own Chicago convention.²² Both Roosevelt and his vice president were nominated by acclamation and the party platform was adopted by the same method. It was called “*A Covenant with the People*” and it contained main principles that the Progressives followed. Crotty and Jackson summarize it and say: “They believed in breaking the concentration of political power held by party leaders, (...) “*depoliticizing*” the political process and making it more efficient, accountable, and, in a business sense, economical” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 12-13). To achieve such goal they prioritized the direct election of US senators, nonpartisan elections, recall and referendum elections (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 13) as well as women’s suffrage and nationwide presidential primaries (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 71).

The Progressive platform of 1912 says following about the nominating system: “Electoral Reform: In particular, the party declares for direct primaries of the nomination of State and National officers, for non-wide preferential primaries for candidates for the presidency; for the direct election of United States Senators by the people; and we urge on the States the policy of the short ballot, with responsibility to the people secured by the initiative, referendum and recall” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 71).

The Democratic convention of 1912 included the idea of presidential primaries to its platform as well, just in other words: “Presidential Primaries: The movement toward more popular government should be promoted through legislation in each State which will permit the expression of the preference of the electors for national candidates at presidential primaries” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 71). The platform also included their aim to make the presidential office just a single-term with no option for the president to be reelected. The idea of primaries placed power over nominations to the people, the party’s electorate and made the nominating system more open and

²² Over two thousand delegates from different backgrounds gathered for a three-day convention. During the Republican campaign party organizations in the South supported Taft, which included blacks, so as a result, Roosevelt focused on white leaders in the region. He called Southern black delegates as “uneducated and purchasable” and insisted that only “lily white” delegations could be seated in the Progressive convention (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 69).

participatory. For the first time it was the electorate who could decide who was going to be the party's nominee for general election.²³

Golden years of primaries

The year 1916 might be considered as a peak of early primary movement. As fast as the concept was adopted at the beginning of the 19th century it was quickly abandoned at the end of the second decade. Alabama established the system, but it was eventually abolished as unconstitutional and shortly after that Minnesota, Iowa, Vermont and Montana reverted to convention system and delegate selection (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 15). The system entered its second phase and became more or less mixed, or limited for the next forty years.

The importance of primaries increased especially when incumbent president didn't seek for reelection or when there was no dominant figure in the race. In some cases primaries even helped candidates to obtain party's nomination. "Herbert Hoover and Al Smith won commanding victories in their respective parties' primaries in 1928 and, after previous failures, captured their parties' nominations. In 1932 Franklin Roosevelt beat Al Smith, who had been the 1928 Democratic standard bearer, in three of the four major primaries in which they faced each other (...)" (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 16-17). John F. Kennedy needed to prove that over his Catholicism he could still receive support from Protestants. Victories in Wisconsin and West Virginia showed he was a great campaigner and he was able to convert it into national convention support. Therefore his success in the primaries could have a significant importance for future nomination. As a result the party leaders had to pay attention to particular candidates, even though the victory during primaries was never sufficient to gain a nomination, it was sometimes a necessary condition to win party' s support.

The system of primary election remained popular for decades, until 1960s, when it reached its breakthrough point mainly because the society changed and therefore the political system needed to react to the situation.

²³ After sixteen years the Republicans eventually lost the presidency to Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson, who became twenty eighth president of the United States in 1913. This also led to the fact that nine other states adopted presidential primary laws over the next four years.

Sudden decline of primary system

The subsequent stagnation of the system at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century was caused by numerous factors. Those weakened the party system, encouraged factionalism, but more importantly as they differed from state to state, it was more difficult for the parties to define eligibility (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 18). The turnout was not as high as it was hoped for and the system still did not automatically provide high-quality candidates. Adding high cost of campaigns and weakening structure of traditional party organization²⁴, partisans now had lots of cons and reasons why the system of primaries needed to be reformed. Some states, for example Wisconsin, adopted *open primaries*, other even more extreme form – *blanket primary*, in which voters could choose Democratic candidates for one set of offices and Republican candidates for another and vote in different party contests at various levels.²⁵ Other states adopted *closed primaries* – only for declared party members (those who passed a test of party identification).²⁶ The turnout dropped under one-third as a result of people's lack of interest. Not only the turnout was so low, but the quality of candidates wasn't improved either. The growth of primaries that occurred in 1970s was mostly caused by the fact that presidential primaries were easily understood unlike other primaries.

The whole period from Progressive era to 1960s is called *old party system* (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 21). “Under this system, the primaries were essentially either advisory, indicating which candidates might have the most grass-roots support within a state, or tactical, demonstrating to the party bosses a candidate's potential to fund and run a campaign or to attract certain voters” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 21). But as American society changed in 1960s, the parties' coalitions became more fragmented and therefore the old party system proved less satisfactory for resolving internal party differences. Major reforms were irreversible.

²⁴ According to Crotty and Jackson (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 18) the Progressives never appreciated political parties and their role in democratic system, but parties linked the views of party members and public with candidates and officeholders and without parties voters have just a few ways how to promote their interests.

²⁵ In California a candidate could even run in both Democratic and Republican primaries having a chance to obtain both nominations.

²⁶ Illinois and Mississippi even required to be registered for at least two years prior the primaries in which the candidate wanted to participate.

1.4. Modern Period – the Reform Years

In 1960s the Democratic Party was the majority party. January 20, 1961 John F. Kennedy was inaugurated the 35th President of the US succeeded by his vice president Lyndon B. Johnson after his assassination in November 1963. The Democratic Party era lasted until January 20, 1969 when Richard Nixon took over the presidential office and began a two-term Republican dominance characterizing 1970s.

Political mood of 1960s was strongly influenced by American society and its changes. Two main national conventions were held in 1964²⁷ and 1968²⁸ and both of them led to significant changes within the Democratic Party, which were adopted in 1970s. Vietnam War was a major historical and political event of this decade, having an essential impact on many political decisions made back then and influencing American politics as a whole. The three main movements – the civil rights movement, the protest against the war in Vietnam and the movement for equal rights for women – gained a lot of strength over the years and increased role of television even augmented these movements. As a result of this situation in 1960s, the 1972 conventions brought important changes to both Democratic and Republican Party.

1972 Democratic Party convention

The Democrats held their 1972 convention in Miami Beach, FL in the middle of the summer. The previous convention of 1968, which was held in Chicago, established two commissions to draft the reforms – the Commission on Rules (chaired by James O’Hara of Michigan) and the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection (chaired

²⁷ The 1964 Democratic national convention was the first impulse to subsequent changes within the two main political parties. The Convention was held in Atlantic City, NJ and Lyndon B. Johnson was undoubtedly sure about his nomination. But as the civil right revolution was spreading all over the country, the situation had been influenced by it as well. The delegation from Mississippi was all-white group of leaders under the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), a group of both black and white people actively participating on civil right movements in their state. “The MFDP called on the Democratic party to live up to its civil right ideas, and they demanded all the seats held by the segregationist delegation, which had been duly selected under Mississippi law” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 28). Hubert H. Humphrey (a vice-president-to-be) arranged a compromise between these two groups. Two of the MFDP delegates should be seated and the rest were just “*honored delegates*” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 28).

²⁸ 1968 was the year of Vietnam. The nation as well as the Democratic Party were divided not only over the war, but over Johnson’s presidency as well. After the New Hampshire primaries Johnson announced his withdrawal as a result of his defeat against Senator Eugene McCarthy. Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. hit the world in April 1968 followed by assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy in June 1968, the night he won presidential primaries in California (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 29). Humphrey easily won the nomination with 67 percent of the delegate vote.

by Senator George McGovern of South Dakota) (*National Party Conventions 1995*: 117). The first mentioned composed set of rules out of which the following were adopted by the Democratic National Committee:

- A new vote-allocation formula based nearly equally on Electoral College strength and the Democratic vote in recent presidential elections.
- An expansion of the convention rules, platform and credentials committees so that their make-up would reflect state population differences rather than the previous method of allocating two seats to each state.
- The assurance that women and men be equally represented on committees and among convention officers.
- The requirement that the meetings and votes of all convention committees be open to the public.
- The requirement that the reports and minority views of all the committees be released at specific dates before the opening of the convention.
- The banning of floor demonstrations for candidates.
- The arrangement of the states and territories for roll calls in random sequence determined by lot rather than in traditional alphabetical order.

(*National Party Conventions 1995*: 117)

The Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection formulated eighteen guidelines, which became a part of 1972 convention call. “Among the important features of the 18 guidelines were the elimination of the unit rule; the restriction that no more than 10 percent of a state’s delegation be named by its state committee; the requirement that all steps in the delegate-selection process be publicly advertised and held in easily accessible public place within the calendar year of the convention; the requirement that women, youth and minority groups be included in delegations “in reasonable relationship” to their presence in the state’s population; and the establishment of a detailed, public method of hearing delegate challenges” (*National Party Conventions 1995*: 117).

The 1972 Democratic convention was the largest ever, having 3,203 delegates out of which nearly two-thirds had been selected in primaries.²⁹ The report of the rules that the

²⁹Four years earlier, in 1968, only 41 percent of delegates were elected by the primary system (*National Party Conventions 1995*: 118).

committee agreed on included for example abolition of winner-take-all primaries by 1976; requirement for choosing a woman to be a chairman of 1976 convention with the subsequent rotation of sexes from then on or the creation of a special fund to cover expenses. The output of the meeting was the longest ever (around 25,000 words) and among other attitudes on foreign policy, the Vietnam War, economy, taxes, poverty, etc. the platform also discussed the presidential elections concluding with:

“We favor a Constitutional change to abolish the Electoral College and to give every voter a direct and equal voice in Presidential elections. The amendment should provide for a runoff election, if no candidate received more than 40 percent of the popular vote” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 120).

1972 Republican Party convention

The Republican Party held its 1972 convention six weeks later in the same place in Miami Beach. With a range of debates twice as short as the Democrats had they adopted a new procedure of selecting delegates consisting of awarding bonus delegates for states electing Republican governors. As a reaction another plan rewarding mainly large states was suggested and then the dispute began. Final victory of conservatives over liberals prevented expansion of the convention to 2,000 delegates in 1976 compared to 1,358 in 1972. This struggle was the only case of party’s division, otherwise the Republicans were able to nominate Nixon unanimously – he received 1,347 votes out of 1,348 (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 121).³⁰

Between 1964 and 1976 many revisions within both major political parties were made. These changes included rules regarding translations of votes into seats, timing of primaries and caucuses, rules of open and close primaries, relationship between candidates and delegates, etc.

³⁰ While comparing the Democratic 1972 platform and the Republican 1972 platform we can find some differences. The Republicans criticized not only McGovern as a new leader of the Democratic Party, but also Kennedy’s and Johnson’s administrations. Major differences were in domestic economic policies, taxes, national health system etc., but mainly in foreign affairs and defense policies which was caused by ongoing Vietnam War. The Democratic platform of 1972 says: “We will end that war by a simple plan that need not be kept secret: The immediate total withdrawal of all Americans from Southeast Asia” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 119). The Republican platform did not say anything like this, moreover required continuing negotiations with North Vietnam and possible increase of American involvement in the war. All in all any form of amnesty was unspeakable.

Changes within the Democratic Party

The McGovern-Fraser Commission was the most important institution and the key body during the reform years (1968-1976) together with the Mikulski Commission followed by the Vinograd Commission and the Hunt Commission that were active during the postreform years (1976-1988).

The McGovern-Fraser Commission was named after Senator McGovern of South Dakota and Representative Donald M. Fraser of Minnesota. In the book *Of the People: The 200-Year History of the Democratic Party* McGovern is described as: “a soft-spoken preacher’s son whom Robert Kennedy once called “the most decent man in the Senate” (*Of the People: The 200-Year History of the Democratic Party* 1992: 145). The idea arose after catastrophic 1968 National Convention where party leaders ignored Eugene McCarthy, who had gone through primaries demonstrating his appeal to voters, by nominating another candidate instead of him – Hubert Humphrey, who had not attended a single primary. The Commission should prevent such cases by creating rules and conditions for selecting candidates to provide a better representation. Crotty and Jackson (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 35-36) point out that the Commission was mainly very concerned about minorities and their representation as well as women, young people or blacks. Therefore they prohibited a long-time used unit rule, which allowed candidates who obtained less than fifty percent of delegate’s votes, to still win the nomination. This was temporarily banned in 1968, but then the Commission made it permanent.³¹

The Commission also decided that the two delegate selection method was acceptable, which meant that direct election of delegates through primaries combined with caucuses and conventions together was allowable. The most important rule adopted by the McGovern-Fraser Commission was the way of distributing delegates for which the proportional representation (PR) had been chosen. This method reflects the percentage of votes obtained during primaries in the percentage of delegates of the convention. “Thus, in theory, a candidate who receives 60 percent of the mass votes in a primary ought to get 60 percent of the final delegate seats. His opponent, in a two-person race, ought to get the 40 percent of the seats that would result from 40 percent of the mass

³¹ “In some ways, the convention that nominated McGovern was the most representative of the country’s populace in history. Women comprised nearly 40 percent of delegates; young people made up another quarter; and the number of blacks doubles since 1968” (*Of the People: The 200-Year History of the Democratic Party* 1992: 145-146).

vote” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 36). In practice it is very difficult to make the system work precisely.

To make the system more transparent and to avoid too many candidates, a minimum threshold of getting a single delegate, which effects distribution of delegates among candidates, was set.³² The McGovern-Fraser Commission decided to set the threshold at 15 percent and once a candidate obtained at least 15 percent of votes in primary election, he would be awarded by a proportionate share of delegates. Crotty and Jackson (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 36-37) then explain that as soon as the threshold was increased to 25 percent a few years later and a significant disproportion between votes gained during primaries and the number of delegates gained after all arose, the threshold was lowered to 20 percent for the 1984 campaign.³³ This system, adopted by Democrats in 1984, gave more advantage to front-running candidates.

Another requirement that the Commission made was the direct vote of delegates to allow all the groups to be represented in the nominations and therefore the winner-take-all primary was introduced later on. This system obviously causes even bigger loss of votes because all votes, besides those that the winner obtained, are “wasted”. For 1984 primaries eight states chose to use direct vote primaries and 34 states stuck with PR method (either caucus or primary).³⁴

One of crucial aspects of primaries is who can actually vote and therefore we distinguish between two main types of primaries: open and close. “If some test of party loyalty is required, the primary is *closed*. If no test of party loyalty is required, the primary is *open*” (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 42). The most common way how to close primary is the membership. You simply have to identify yourself with one of the parties and then take part in just the ballot of the party you had selected. For 1980 elections

³² If the threshold is too low, more than two candidates can easily obtain votes from delegates, which then increases the amount of delegates for the first two candidates and therefore isn't desired.

³³ This was a case of Jackson and Mondale when Jackson received less delegates than his proportionate share indicated according to primaries (about 10 percent of delegates compared to about 18 percent of votes obtained in primaries) unlike Mondale, whose proportion was opposite (he received approximately 39 percent of votes in primaries, but 52 percent of the delegates). As a result, the threshold was decreased to 20 percent of popular vote. But then another problem arose. In the districts where Jackson did not meet the threshold, he did not receive any delegates, but in the states where he did so, he gained a large amount of votes as his supporters where mostly gathered geographically. This means that even though slightly over 50 percent of votes would have been enough he commonly obtained large majorities (80-90 percent) which resulted in “wasting” lots of votes. As Mondale's votes were widespread he was the one who proportionally received more delegates.

³⁴ The Commission also adopted rules about timing of primaries. Over criticism about the length of the whole process they eventually decided that the selection of delegates starts in the same year when the presidential election is held. The ideal was accepted without any further comments.

only close primaries were declared, which had a negative impact on Wisconsin and Michigan which did not want to abandon open version. Wisconsin stayed controversial while having open primaries anyways. The state was then fought at the Supreme Court and therefore in 1984 there was an open presidential preference primary combined with closed caucuses for delegate selection. As Hart won by the first method and Mondale by the second one, it was proven that the two-process combination can bring different results even on a state level (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 43).

Schlozman summarizes achievements of the McGovern Commission and points out mainly the fact that “the effect was to lessen the significance of the national convention in the process (...); made the decision of the grass-roots party voter the determining factor in choosing a presidential nominee; brought more blacks, youth and women into the process (...). The end result was reshaping of nominating process and a redefinition of the political power structure within the party” (Schlozman 1987: 76).

According to what Schlozman wrote in 1987 in his *Elections in America* (Schlozman 1987: 83) the nominating system in 1970s was characterized by five following attributes:

- The rules were not based on one-person/one-vote assumption.
- The nominating season was long, basically beginning right after the previous campaign ended.
- The whole process was very extensive.
- The media played a considerable role during the whole campaign.
- The nominating system was complicated and beyond what a regular citizen or even a party member could understand to.

Changes within the Republican Party

Besides the fact that the Republicans controlled the presidential office for a greater amount of time and they had been generally pleased and content with their party, they still decided to form two commissions for reform. One of the reasons why they did so was their electorate which had been in a decline and also the electorate base was getting older. The demographic changes such as increased number of blacks and Hispanic voters who identified themselves with the Democratic Party were results, too. Last, but not least, was the fact that as the Democrats made lots of reforms that required a change

of law, the Republicans were eventually influenced by them as well and they had to reorganize some of their principles, too.

The first Republican commission was the Delegates and Organizations Committee (also known as the DO Committee) which suggested recommendations for changes like: convention meetings should be open to party members, no automatic delegates should be allowed, equal number of men and women in the delegation, including people older than 25 years to state delegations, etc. (Crotty-Jackson 1985: 47). These suggestions weren't forced by law and as the reform was not the major issue inside the party they also did not have a sensible impact.

The second body was the Rule 29 Committee formed in 1972 having a goal to explore minority representation. Among main recommendations was for example to widen each state's party base, which was not very successful as the party did not manage to make the program more attractive to minorities. None of the reforms actually changed the Republican Party decision-making, nominations, dominant role of state parties, etc.

As I previously said, general content within the party was the main reason why not as many changes were adopted. Party regulars had nothing to complain about and radical reforms might have weakened their power, which was not desirable. As there was no general discontent with the nominating process and the changes were not as significant as inside the Democratic Party, they were clear to understand and therefore broadly accepted. Moreover, party members were also content with Republican economic and social policies and a very strong national organization in the Republican National Convention was just the proof.

The reform period of the second half of the 1960s and then 1970s mainly ensured adoption of formal written rules for presidential candidate selection as well as for party decision making. More power over presidential nominating was transferred to the national level and therefore the state level was weakened. At some point there had been thoughts of complete replacing caucuses and conventions by primaries. Secondly an increased role of media and mainly television had a huge impact on a new form of

primaries. The candidates became closer to their electorate and some even believed it was more about the decision that media made than about party leaders.³⁵

³⁵ In 1970s “between two and three times the number of party members participate in the process today, compared with the pre-reform era – perhaps 20 percent of the adult population” (Crotty-Jacson 1985: 50).

2. Selection System Nowadays

The idea of selecting candidates in primary elections rose as a consequence of political gatherings during caucuses because the electorate was completely left out from the procedure. When public showed resistance to being excluded from voting political figures, the system of primaries was adopted, proving a possibility to the people to vote by themselves and therefore actively participate on political life in the area and potentially in the whole country or even behind the borderline. Since 1968 the main attention has been on primaries instead of national conventions because since then the delegates only confirm the results of primary elections.

2.1. Primary Elections

Presidential primaries relate mostly to the two main political parties. Smaller parties rather use the petition system – a name of a candidate appears on the ballot just in case certain amount of people sign a petition suggesting the person to be a candidate.

Types of primaries

The system of presidential primary elections varies according to a political party and to a state where the election is held. Generally, people either vote for their delegates directly or they express a support to a certain presidential candidate. Therefore we distinguish four scenarios (Krejčí 2008: 71):

- People vote for delegates to national conventions and they can make a preference for a presidential candidate they prioritize.³⁶
- People pick a ballot with names of candidates for delegates and the ballot already says whether they prefer certain presidential candidate or they vote independently.³⁷
- The third option is a primary election during which delegates have to vote for the presidential candidate who received majority of votes in Congress counties

³⁶ For example the Democratic Party insists on this information.

³⁷ This type of primaries is called indirect primaries with preliminary preference (Krejčí 2008: 72).

or in a state as a whole. The delegates themselves are either elected directly in primaries as well or during the national convention in each state. Only the Republican Party in California follows the system in which the candidate with majority of votes receives all the delegates' votes from the state.

- The last option is the proportional representation (PR). People make a preference for a presidential candidate and depending on the results certain amount of delegates for national conventions is then “allocated”. For example the Democratic Party requires a minimum of twenty percent of votes for each candidate to be obtained to even participate in “redistribution of delegates”.

Another specific case is whether to make primaries open or close.³⁸ The Democrats completely abandoned open primaries and only use close primaries for presidential elections. In most of the states the Republicans use the open version as well. In Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, Vermont and Wisconsin non-registered voters can elect, too but they have to sign a statement that they support the Republican Party candidates (Krejčí 2008: 72).

Some states have adopted the rule of binding primaries, in which a certain amount of delegates is previously set to vote for a specific candidate until he (she) gets enough votes. The Republicans use this method of “*hooked delegates*” in Washington D.C. and eighteen other states.³⁹

Structure of primaries

Firstly appeared in 1912, the number of primaries amounted to thirty by 1980 and by 2008 even eight more states used primary elections to select a presidential candidate. The first-in-the-nation primary in New Hampshire gets a significant attention every February in the election year. Having not even a half a percent of overall US population, the third smallest state of New England faces a lot of criticism every four years for having such an impact on the whole campaign. The results of the first primary usually reveal preferences and show the direction of the next development.

As a reaction to this strong position of New Hampshire during the presidential candidate selection, several southern states formed “a coalition” to demean the position

³⁸ In close primaries only registered voters of each political party can elect in that political party's primaries.

³⁹ Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, South Dakota, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, North Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin (Krejčí 2008: 73).

by scheduling their primaries on the same day and as early as possible. “They were rapidly joined by small flock of other states, turning March 8, 1988 into “Super-Tuesday” with primaries in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Texas” (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 115). In 2012 primary election the Super Tuesday was held on March 6 with fourteen states⁴⁰ voting at the same time. “In 2008, Super Tuesday fell on February 5, when 24 states nominated candidates, and in 2004 it was March 2, with 10 states holding nominating events.”⁴¹ As Polsby and Wildavsky say, there were two reasons for creating the Super Tuesday. Firstly, to give the southern states more influence on presidential nominations and secondly to switch from caucuses to primaries and to hold the primaries early in the campaign before everything is decided (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 118).

Primaries and caucuses usually run during the first six months of the election year. This year a total of thirty-nine states including Washington, D.C. is holding primaries⁴² and twelve states are holding caucuses.⁴³

Primaries and media

A significant importance of primaries and public opinion polls has been more and more important which has been emphasized by media. Ever since the television broadcasting developed, many political scientists, and not only them, have written lots of books and papers about the impact of newly available source of information.⁴⁴ As soon as politicians find out who the front runner is, a big pressure immediately emerges and the role of television even increases. Primary election races are easier to cover for

⁴⁰ Alaska, American Samoa, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming (*National Conference of State Legislatures: 2012 Presidential Primary Calendar*, cit. April 8, 2012, available online: <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/2012-presidential-primary-calendar.aspx>)

⁴¹ *National Conference of State Legislatures: 2012 Presidential Primary Calendar*, available online: <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/2012-presidential-primary-calendar.aspx>

⁴² In order by date: New Hampshire, South Carolina, Florida, Missouri, Arizona, Michigan, Georgia, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, Illinois, Louisiana, Washington D.C., Maryland, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Indiana, North Carolina, West Virginia, Nebraska, Oregon, Arkansas, Kentucky, Texas, California, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah (*2012 Election Central: 2012 Primary Schedule*, available online: <http://www.2012presidentialelectionnews.com/2012-republican-primary-schedule/>)

⁴³ In order by date: Iowa, Nevada Colorado, Minnesota, Maine, Wyoming, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, North Dakota, Kansas, Hawaii (*2012 Election Central: 2012 Primary Schedule*, available online: <http://www.2012presidentialelectionnews.com/2012-republican-primary-schedule/>)

⁴⁴ Samuel Kernell’s book *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership* (Kernell 2006) is one of good sources of further description of presidential powers in terms of cooperation with media.

the television than for press, plus the process of primaries is more interesting for reporters than just plain talking during caucuses which, as a result, leads to exaggeration and overexcitement. Richard Rubin claims in his *Press, Party and Presidency* that television tends to dramatize the whole election procedure by using short sporting sentences to even deepen the experience. “Candidates are “leading the pack”, “closing fast”, “sagging in the stretch,” and “gaining ground (...)” (Rubin 1991: 194). The game analogy is even more significant on the television. “(...) With primaries replacing caucuses and conventions, it is fair to say that candidates have to care much more about how they do on television than whether they please leaders of their party” (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 120).

The fact that candidates are seen on the television very often leads to another fact that people, voters, obviously create a relationship to these politicians and when they manage to receive their votes, it is very likely due to their personalities as dominating factors over their actual political views and opinions. The question of timing primaries suddenly comes up as another significant factor. According to Polsby and Wildavsky the most of Carter’s support in primaries in 1976 came from his early successes. Brody and Rothenber released a study proving that the voters’ turnout decreases toward the end of the whole primary season (Polsby-Wildavski 1991: 121-122). Is it then possible to identify qualities that a candidate should have to “win the race”? And do the rules of counting votes effect the final numbers?

Electoral formula

The method of counting votes always influences final results of any election. We differ three basic ways of counting votes during primaries:

- Winner-take-all – the candidate who gets a plurality of votes in the entire state gets all the delegates.
- Proportional representation (PR) – after passing a certain threshold all candidates get a percentage of delegates in accordance with their percentage of votes.
- Congressional districts – after delegates are allocated to districts, the candidate with a plurality in each area gets all of its delegates (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 123).

If we tried to recalculate results from previous primaries, or just picked one situation and did some math going through all three possibilities, we would have most likely come up with different numbers and different results.⁴⁵ Lenge and Shafer analyzed 1972 Democratic primaries in terms of electoral formula and its effect on distributing votes and their results were more than interesting. Humphrey would have won, if redistribution of votes had been done under winner-take-all. He would have obtained 446 delegates, Wallace would have had 379 and McGovern 249. But if the counting had been done under PR Wallace would have received 350 delegates being on the first place, followed by McGovern with 319 delegates and Humphrey would have ended up on the third place with 314 delegates. Using congressional districts, the order would have been the same as for PR, but the number of delegates would have been different (367 for Wallace, 343 for McGovern and 324 for Humphrey). And finally the last option, the actual results – neither Wallace nor Humphrey reached McGovern’s leading position having 401 delegates. Wallace being the second obtained 291 delegates and Humphrey at the third place received 284 delegates (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 124).

Generally, the winner-take-all formula gives more advantage to larger and populous states having larger number of delegates. These are North-Eastern states and California which have lots of urban voters, ethnic minorities and laborers. Proportional representation gives advantage to smaller states where giving support to one candidate pays off.

Allocation of delegates

According to Democratic *Detailed Delegate Allocation – 2012* there are currently two main factors influencing the allocation of pledged delegates. The first one is the proportion of votes each state gave to the Democratic candidate in presidential elections of 2008, 2004 and 2000 and the second one is the number of delegates each state has in Electoral College. If states schedule primaries for later dates they are automatically awarded with a bonus. States with April dates receive a ten percent bonus whether states with May dates receive even a twenty percent bonus (in addition to the number of votes)

⁴⁵ Considering primary election in Pennsylvania in 1972 and applying a different formula, the results change significantly. If the primary had been run under winner-take-all, Hubert Humphrey would have gained all 182 votes. But according to actual formula he received only ninety-three votes, which was still more than what he would have obtained if the proportional method had been used – in that case it would have been only sixty-six votes. The difference was actually “(...) greater than the total number of delegates available in twelve out of the first fifteen primaries” (Polsby-Wildavsky 1991: 123).

(*Democratic Detailed Delegate Allocation – 2012*). In 2008 Republican primaries McCain clinched the presidential nomination in early March⁴⁶ and Barack Obama was leading Democratic nominee being far in front (Nagourney 2008).⁴⁷

In 2008 Republican primaries the party gave more power to decide between PR and winner-take-all methods to the states and therefore there were states using statewide winner-take-all method (for example New York), proportional allocation (Massachusetts) or district and state-level winner-take-all (California) (*Republican Delegate Selection and Voter Eligibility*). For 2012 primaries the Republicans made changes towards implementing PR method to more states.

2.2. National Conventions

After going through all primary elections, usually during the summer of the election year, national conventions of each relevant political party are held.⁴⁸ The gathering is basically just a confirmation of results of primaries, although nothing is decided yet.

Formal announcement is usually released eighteen months prior the convention and gives enough space for organization. There is no strict rule specifying the order of conventions, but according to an informal tradition built during the twentieth century the party out of power usually goes first which will be applied for 2012 national conventions as well. The conventions are held either in July or in August (rarely in early September) and they usually take four days with about a month between Democratic and Republican convention.⁴⁹ Each party also sets its own rules about participation and delegate selection according to each state's population, Congressional representatives or government officials. To give an example, 2008 Democratic convention hosted a total of 4,418 delegates and the Republican convention was attended by 2,380 delegates (*The Green Papers: 2008 Presidential Primaries, Caucuses, and Conventions*).

⁴⁶ http://articles.cnn.com/2008-03-04/politics/march.4.gop_1_mccain-on-tuesday-night-mike-huckabee-gop-nomination?_s=PM:POLITICS

⁴⁷ http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/20/us/politics/20memo.html?_r=1

⁴⁸ 2012 Democratic National Convention will be held on September 3-6 in Charlotte, NC hosting a total of 2,778 delegates (using proportional representation to select a candidate). 2012 Republican National Convention will be held on August 27-30 in Tampa, FL gathering overall 2,286 delegates (according to the winner-take-all method, 1,144 delegates is a majority a candidate has to obtain to be elected).

⁴⁹ According to a tradition, when summer Olympics are held in the election year, one political party usually schedules its convention prior the games and the other one after them.

Structure and voting procedure

The structure of a four-day convention is usually very similar for both parties. During the first day the opening speeches are delivered and then committee appointments are made as well as the Permanent Chair⁵⁰ is elected. The Democrats also schedule the keynote address for the first session whether the Republicans usually leave it for the second day. The keynote address sets the themes of the convention and usually mentions the general election campaign as well. Again, this speech is delivered by another prominent person or a “rising star” of the party. The second day agenda is mostly formed by approving platform committees and debating over rules and credentials followed by adopting the party platform, a statement of principles and policies. The third day is usually the day of presidential nomination, which has lately been accomplished within one evening. During the voting procedure each state is called alphabetically (starting with Alabama and Wyoming being the last one) and is represented by a spokesman. After introducing the highlights of the state and its main political representatives the delegate count is announced. The method is called a *roll call of the states*. The last day of the convention the vice presidential nomination is usually given followed by vice presidential and presidential acceptance speeches, the second mentioned being the closing event of the whole convention (*Presidential Elections in the United States: A Primer* 2000: 24-30).

Brokered convention

Obviously, the results of primaries throughout American states have major influence on party conventions and voting itself. At the end of primary season, two scenarios may occur, depending on whether there is a candidate with enough delegates won and therefore he or she does or does not have a pre-existing majority for the first ballot. If there is not a person with clinched nomination the convention is “*brokered*”⁵¹ and the delegates who were previously pledged can second guess their original preference and vote for someone else. Historically, this situation happened for example during 1976 Republican primaries when Gerald Ford was in a slight lead after primary elections and caucuses but he did not obtain enough delegates to secure the nomination and

⁵⁰ The Permanent Chair presides the convention and is usually represented by a senior party figure, most often the party leader in the House of Representatives (*Presidential Elections in the United States: A Primer* 2000: 24).

⁵¹ The definition of a brokered convention according to Taegan Goddard’s Political Dictionary to be found also online on: <http://politicaldictionary.com/words/brokered-convention/>

eventually almost lost it to Ronald Reagan (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 127-129). As far as I can remember, the last Democratic National Convention in 2008 was also expected to be brokered until beginning of June. Generally the Democratic Party tends more to brokered conventions simply because of their system of proportional representation.

“Immediately following the conventions, the nominees are faced with several tasks. These include uniting the party behind the candidates, establishing a general election campaign organization, and preparing a campaign plan” (*Presidential Elections in the United States: A primer* 2000: 31). The presidential race moves to the next phase – the campaigning terminated by winning the office and becoming the President of the United States of America.

3. Case Studies

The third chapter describes three remarkable presidential primaries followed by national conventions. Two of them were held in the 20th century and one in the 21st century, two of them were Democratic primaries and one were Republican primaries. According to the timeline, this chapter firstly focuses on John Fitzgerald Kennedy's journey to being elected the Democratic Party nominee for 1960 presidential election, followed by Republican primaries of 1980 and Ronald Wilson Reagan's nomination. The third part will be dedicated to 2008 presidential primaries within the Democratic Party, which was unique in terms of shifting the United States to another phase of presidential candidate nominations, when either a woman, Hillary Rodham Clinton, or an Afro-American candidate, Barack Hussein Obama, were right about to win the office.

3.1. 1960 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Democratic Party

In the beginning of 1960s nothing was decided when it came to presidential primary elections. There were states which chose direct primaries as a method of a candidate selection but there were also states which abandoned it and some states were just experimenting with it by changing rules decade to decade. As a result, in 1960 sixteen American states⁵² held primaries to select a presidential candidate.

Primaries

The Democratic Party had two main candidates for primary elections. One of them was Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, who eventually became Lyndon Johnson's Vice President in 1964, which was his first successful nomination for presidential and vice-presidential, respectively, candidate but third overall. The other one was soon-to-be-elected American President and according to Gallup statistics a

⁵² Oregon, California, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Florida

person holding the presidential office scoring the highest overall average job approval⁵³ rating ever, John F. Kennedy (*Gallup* 2012).

Humphrey ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1952 for the first time, receiving only twenty-six votes during the first ballot. Four years later he became a vice-presidential candidate of the Democratic Party and received 134 votes in the first ballot and 74 in the second one. For a long time ignored by press, he “had grown in public measure” and became well-known in the years between 1956 and 1960 (White 2009: 29). After traditional opening primary in New Hampshire Wisconsin hosted one of two breaking primaries, in which Kennedy was more successful but he did not manage to fulfill expectations and predictions about his lead. According to White’s *The Making of President: 1960*, JFK won six districts but “no one could tell whether Humphrey’s districts had voted against Kennedy because they were Protestant or because they were farmland closest to Minnesota; nor whether Kennedy had won his own six districts because they were heavily Catholic or because they were heavily industrial” (White 2009: 94). Humphrey commented on Kennedy’s well-funded campaign with lots of representatively-looking people around, great organization and assurance saying that he felt “like an independent merchant competing against a chain store” (Schlesinger 1996: 195).

West Virginia primary

After seeing the results of Wisconsin primary Humphrey decided to continue his campaign in following state, in which he faced JFK - West Virginia. Kennedy’s preferences had been slightly decreasing but he decided to stand up the religion issue. As a Catholic candidate he afforded to focus less on Catholic-Protestant differences and move more attention to tolerance-intolerance dichotomy. Making a good impression on people was highly supported by his wealthy financial background. While Humphrey travelled across the country by bus to meet his electorate, Kennedy could easily afford luxury plane rides in a family-owned airplane.

⁵³ Gallup.com has been focusing on presidential approval for years and its statistics start with Harry Truman (in the office 1945-1953). The highest overall average job approval ever reached 70.1% (JFK) and the lowest on the other hand only 45.4% (Harry Truman). For comparison, George W. Bush’s overall average job approval was 62.2% during his first term in the office and then dropped to 36.5% during the second terms. Obama’s average job approval has been 49.0% (*Gallup* 2012).

Highly Protestant West Virginia's primary was held on May 10 and after counting all votes later in the evening it was sure that Kennedy defeated Humphrey by winning about sixty percent majority and proved that a Catholic candidate can win in a non-Catholic state (White 2009: 112). As a result, Humphrey decided to resign on his candidacy for Democratic Party nominee for 1960 presidential election. He managed to win two primaries – in South Dakota and District of Columbia.

Results

After Humphrey left the game there were still more candidates in primaries, having a potential chance to win the nomination, but mostly just in their home states. Pat Brown, a Governor of California, won by 67% in the Golden State, George Smathers, a Senator of Florida, won by 100% in the Sunshine State primary and Michael DiSalle, a Governor of Ohio and a Mayor of Toledo, won by 60% in the Buckeye State.⁵⁴

JFK won in ten states including Massachusetts, his home state, where he received 92.4% of votes in the Democratic primary. According to John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum statistics, the overall percentage of votes he obtained during primaries was 32.5%.⁵⁵ Brown being the second received 23.8% of votes, so Kennedy's lead can be considered as safe.⁵⁶

In June, at the end of primary season, John Fitzgerald Kennedy clinched himself a good starting position for upcoming Democratic National Convention, this time being held in California.

National Convention

1960 Democratic National Convention was, for the first time ever, held in Los Angeles, CA hosting more than 4,000 delegates (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 103). In the beginning rules and credentials were discussed, as usually, followed by a dispute over Puerto Rico Delegation and balloting over the solution. The convention also discussed the Democratic platform, which had been the longest yet written (20,200 words).

⁵⁴ Data of John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum
(<http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/JFK-Miscellaneous-Information/Primaries-1960.aspx>)

⁵⁵ In numbers: 1,847,259 votes, 100% being all the votes for the Democratic Party, not overall number of votes.

⁵⁶ Data of John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum
(<http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/JFK-Miscellaneous-Information/Primaries-1960.aspx>)

The next session dealt with presidential candidate selection. JFK, as mentioned previously, was a front-runner of the convention with a very advantageous nominating majority. His strongest opponent was Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, who did not enter a single primary. Kennedy and Johnson met during a joint debate of Massachusetts and Texas delegations the day before balloting, but their discussion hardly had any effect on final results. According to *National Party Conventions*, a total of nine candidates were nominated, but the first ballot gave Kennedy a significant majority before the rest of them. When the roll call was over, JFK had 806 votes compared to 409 votes for Johnson. The third and fourth candidate did not even reach 100 votes. Based on these results, the convention decided to make the nomination of Massachusetts Senator unanimous. “Kennedy’s selection marked the first time since 1920 that a senator had been nominated for the presidency by Democrats or Republicans and the first time since 1928 that a Roman Catholic had been represented on a national ticket of one of the two major parties” (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 103).

Many participants might have been surprised by Kennedy’s vice-presidential candidate selection when the name of Lyndon B. Johnson was announced. He was then approved by acclamation.

At the end of the convention Kennedy soon-to-be-elected American President delivered his acceptance speech composed of about 80,000 words. He not only dedicated a large part of it to Richard Nixon and the race they were right about to start against each other, but he also focused on people generally not forgetting to mention his Catholicism believing that it was not an issue any more. “I hope that no American, considering the really critical issues facing this country, will waste his franchise and throw away his vote by voting either for me or against me because of my religion affiliation. It is not relevant” (*American Rhetoric* 2012).

3.2. 1980 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Republican Party

Twenty years after remarkable era of John Fitzgerald Kennedy holding the presidential office, political situation in the United States grew into another phase. After significant changes adopted in 1970s by both major political parties, the nominating system gained

even more attention and a new period of presidential candidate selection started. The Republicans held the office since 1969 (when Richard Nixon overtook it after Lyndon Johnson) continuously until 1980s with just one four-year term served by Jimmy Carter (1977-1981), who was a Democratic Party member. Carter won presidential election of 1976 when he beat Reagan, who eventually managed to win four years later in 1980 presidential election.

By 1980 incumbent Democratic president Jimmy Carter was highly unpopular mainly due to his economic policy. Levine sums up his four-year term in the office in his *Presidential Campaigns and Elections* and points out three facts – the inflation hit eighteen percent, the unemployment rate amounted to double digit numbers and at the end of Carter’s presidency only every fifth American agreed with his economic performance (Levine, 1992: 146).

Primary elections and caucuses

Ronald Reagan was a front-running candidate of the Republican Party for 1980 presidential primaries. As he realized his position, he did not consider Iowa caucus, being traditionally the very first event during the primary elections and caucuses season, to be highly important and focused more on New Hampshire. That step turned out to be a mistake once the results were revealed. George H.W. Bush beat Reagan with 31.6% to 29.5%⁵⁷ and won the advantage of early preference.

But as a whole month was there between Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary, Reagan had enough time to prepare himself for “winning his position back”. The Nashua Telegraph⁵⁸ invited both Bush and Reagan for a two-person debate. As no other Republican Party candidates had been invited, it might have been considered as an illegal support of Bush and Reagan’s campaigns. The situation was solved by Reagan’s campaign paying for the whole debate. By the time the debate was about to start four Republican candidates showed up eager to participate as well. Reagan spoke in their defense and therefore the moderator asked for Reagan’s microphone to be turned off. His reply “I’m paying for this microphone” (Levine, 1992: 150) immediately became famous and contributed to Reagan’s victory in New Hampshire Republican primary

⁵⁷ The turnout was 106,051 (*Iowa Caucuses & New Hampshire Primary Guide* 2012: 12). Available online on: http://msnbc.zendesk.com/attachments/token/w02nlnlnazkr2dv/?name=2012_IA-NH_book_FINAL_1_.pdf

⁵⁸ The Nashua Telegraph (or the Telegraph) is a daily newspaper in Nashua, New Hampshire founded in 1869. In 2005 it was the second largest newspaper in the state.

(53% for Reagan to 22% for Bush).⁵⁹ Although Reagan did not win all the primaries and once he even ended up the third after Bush and Anderson (who lately joined the presidential race as an independent candidate) he still clinched his nomination very early with almost 60% of overall votes and 28 primaries won out of 34.⁶⁰

National convention

The GOP⁶¹ National Convention of 1980 was held between July 14-17 in Detroit, MI. Although the presidential nominee was very likely to be Ronald Reagan, the biggest suspense was provided by a vice-presidential candidate, who had not been known yet. At first Ford seemed to run as Reagan's mate which would have made him to be the first former president running for vice-president. As a result, two groups inside the Republican Party emerged – the Ford group and the Reagan group. Reagan talked to Ford about such an option and Ford decided to think it over. In a subsequent interview for CBS Ford stated his position: "I would not go to Washington and be a figurehead vice president. If I go to Washington I have to be there in the belief that I would play a meaningful role" (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 132).⁶² Although he did not specify what exactly he would be in charge of in case his imagination was fulfilled, according to *National Party Conventions* he would basically be a co-president with Reagan having responsibility for agencies such as the National Security Council or the Office of Management and Budget.

The national convention also dealt with the problem of both Reagan and Ford being from the same state. According to the XII. Amendment, when voting for president and vice president in certain state at least one of them shall not be an inhabitant of that state (*the Constitution of the United States of America*). Therefore this rule would apply for

⁵⁹ Ronald Reagan speaking about his debate with George H.W. Bush: "When the Nashua Telegraph offered to sponsor a debate between the two of us on the Saturday evening preceding the election, we both accepted. Understandably, this brought howls from the other candidates. In protest, one of them, Senator Bob Dole, complained to the Federal Elections Commission that by financing a debate between only two of the seven candidates, the newspaper was making an illegal campaign contribution to the Bush and Reagan campaigns. The commission agreed with him, so my campaign offered to pay the full cost of the debate - a few thousand dollars - and they accepted. I thought it had been unfair to exclude the other candidates from the debate." (available online on: <http://www.nhreagannetwork.com/>)

⁶⁰ The total amount of votes he received was 7,709,793 representing 59.79%, while George H.W. Bush received 3,070,033 votes representing 23.81%. The last candidate still having double digit percentage of votes was John B. Anderson receiving 1,572,147 representing 12.19%.

(available online on: <http://www.ourcampaigns.com/RaceDetail.html?RaceID=51805>)

⁶¹ Grand Old Party, another name for the Republican Party

⁶² Ford was also asked if it would have been difficult to be a vice president after having had the highest position on which he answered: "Not at all. I'd be more interested in substance than glamour" (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 132).

California, but would not have any impact on voting elsewhere. As a result some ideas such as changing Ford's permanent address to Michigan (where he had represented the House for 25 years) or Colorado, where he had a house, emerged but eventually were not implemented.

Later in the evening of July 16 Reagan called Ford asking whether he wanted the vice-presidential candidacy, while back in the arena roll call of states began. When Reagan obtained enough votes to be the Republican Party official nominee Ford decided to withdraw. "His instinct told him it was not the thing to do", commented Reagan (*National Party Conventions* 1995: 13). The second option was George H.W. Bush who was Reagan's biggest competitor during primary elections although he won just six of them.⁶³ He was considered to be a good candidate for his extensive experience in Washington (unlike Reagan, who did not have any), he served four years in the U.S. House, had been head of the U.S. liaison office in Beijing, ambassador to the United Nations and director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Although Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, leader of right wing within the Republican Party, run for the vice-presidential nomination as well and managed to receive 54 votes, Bush was more successful with 1,832 votes received. Original duo Reagan-Ford was replaced by Reagan-Bush.

The GOP platform of 1980 was more a plan of how to win the presidential office in November. Having lots of different factions inside the party, the Republicans managed to come up with a strategy that did not please any faction entirely, but on which everybody could more or less agree.

Traditionally, the last event of the Convention was the acceptance speech. Reagan (receiving the nomination on the first ballot) promised to unify the country again, to renew American spirit and he strictly rejected that the US had already had its best days and that the nation had passed its zenith. He also criticized Carter's administration, his national defense policies and mainly foreign policy as well as the economic situation.⁶⁴

⁶³ Michigan, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

⁶⁴ „First, we must overcome something the present administration has cooked up: a new and altogether indigestible economic stew, one part inflation, one part high unemployment, one part recession, one part runaway taxes, one party deficit spending and seasoned by an energy crisis. It's an economic stew that has turned the national stomach. Ours are not problems of abstract economic theory. Those are problems of flesh and blood; problems that cause pain and destroy the moral fiber of real people who should not suffer the further indignity of being told by the government that it is all somehow their fault. We do not have inflation because--as Mr. Carter

“It is the responsibility of the president of the United States, in working for peace, to insure that the safety of our people cannot successfully be threatened by a hostile foreign power. As president, fulfilling that responsibility will be my number one priority.”⁶⁵

3.3. 2008 Presidential Candidate Selection – the Democratic Party

Four years ago the presidential nominating procedure within the Democratic Party experienced an unusual race between former US President Bill Clinton’s wife Hillary and a young African-American Senator of Illinois Barack Obama. At the end of six-month primary season both of them were tight and nothing was decided until June.

Early primaries and caucuses

2008 presidential primary season was opened traditionally by Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary. The nation rule does not allow any state besides these two, Nevada and South Carolina to hold primaries before February 5, but as Michigan and Florida broke this rule, the results of these two primaries had not been recognized (CNN, March, 6 2008).⁶⁶ Obama won the caucus in Iowa on January 3, 2008 and commented on it with: “Our time for change had come” (*Boston Globe*, January, 3 2008).⁶⁷

The importance of early primaries and caucuses, respectively, has already been described, so it is unquestionable that New Hampshire primary results were eagerly awaited. Clinton pointed out herself in a debate against Obama on January 5, 2008 while she was passionately speaking about making changes and working hard (*ABC News*, January 5, 2008).⁶⁸ Her emotional and convincing appearance surprisingly won

says--we have lived too well. The head of a government which has utterly refused to live within its means and which has, in the last few days, told us that this year's deficit will be \$60 billion, dares to point the finger of blame at business and labor, both of which have been engaged in a losing struggle just trying to stay even. High taxes, we are told, are somehow good for us, as if, when government spends our money it isn't inflationary, but when we spend it, it is.“

Available online on: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25970#ixzz1uGxH6bs5>

⁶⁵ Available online on: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25970#ixzz1uGzMyS6O>

⁶⁶ Available online on: http://articles.cnn.com/2008-03-06/politics/florida.michigan_1_florida-and-michigan-primary-date-jennifer-granholm?_s=PM:POLITICS

⁶⁷ Available online on:

http://www.boston.com/news/politics/politicalintelligence/2008/01/obama_says_time.html

⁶⁸ Available online on:

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/DemocraticDebate/story?id=4092530&page=12#.T5Rw8tndPCM>

her a three-percent victory over Obama in popular vote. Eleven days later Clinton won Nevada primaries and overtook the leading position, but Obama's strong position in rural areas put him back to game practically immediately. January 26 primary in South Dakota gained a lot of attention because a large part of population living there is African-American. Obama won by 55% to 27% for Clinton and obtained 33 delegates, while Clinton received only 12 (*CNN*, August 20, 2008).⁶⁹

Super Tuesday

The biggest Super Tuesday gathering the largest amount of states and allocating the largest amount of delegates in the United States presidential primaries ever was held on February 5, 2008. The Democrats held primaries and caucuses in more than twenty states at the same time and a total of 1,681 delegates was reallocated representing 52% of all Democratic delegates (*The Washington Post*, January 15, 2008).⁷⁰ At the end of the day when the results were announced Obama and Clinton ended up being tight again. Obama won 847 delegates which was only thirteen more than what Clinton received. On the other hand, Clinton won the popular vote by receiving 46% - only one percent point more than Obama (*The New York Times*, February 5, 2008).⁷¹ Eight days later *NBC* called Obama "Mr. Front-runner" (*NBC*, February 13, 2008)⁷² as a result of an analysis; either including or excluding Florida and Michigan (or just one or the other one), Obama was always in lead.

Clinton's strong position was renewed at the beginning of March again, as expected, when she won Ohio, Rhode Island and Texas primary (but lost Texas caucus). Less than two weeks later Obama managed to erase Clinton's gains from early March and overtook the leading position again.

⁶⁹ The remaining 18% of people voted for Edwards, who eventually did not receive any delegates.

Available online on:

<http://edition.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/results/state/#SC>

⁷⁰ Available online on:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/14/AR2008011402926_pf.html

⁷¹ Available online on: <http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/results/votes/index.html>

⁷² "For Clinton to overtake Obama for the pledged delegate lead – which we think is the single most important statistic for superdelegates to decide their vote – she'll have to win 55% of the remaining delegates. Assuming next week goes Obama's way in Wisconsin and Hawaii, that percentage rises to 57%. Toss in likely Obama victories in Vermont, Wyoming, Mississippi, Oregon, Montana, and South Dakota, then Clinton's percentage need tops 60% of the remaining delegates available (...) So no matter how you slice the total popular vote, Obama is the leader." (Available online on: http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2008/02/13/4427039-first-thoughts-mr-front-runner)

Later primaries

The longer the primaries lasted the smaller chances were given to Clinton's ability to catch up again. On April 22 Clinton scored winning in Pennsylvania receiving 85 delegates compared to Obama's 73, but on May 6 Obama succeeded in North Carolina obtaining 67 delegates while Clinton dropped to 48 (*CNN*, August 20, 2008).⁷³ May primaries scenario continued similarly until June 3, the last day of primary season. After South Dakota and Montana votes had been counted, Obama clinched the Democratic presidential nomination by going beyond necessary 2,118-delegate threshold. Subsequently, Clinton suspended her nomination, but at the same time she expressed her support⁷⁴ to the "first black candidate to lead a major party ticket" (*The New York Times*, June 4, 2008).⁷⁵

National Convention

2008 Democratic National Convention was held in Denver, CO, from August 25 to August 28. The theme of the first day of the convention was "One Nation" and the principal speakers were Michelle Obama, Caroline Kennedy or Nancy Pelosi. The next day's theme was "Renewing America's Promise", and it was dominated by Hillary Clinton and her speech, which main idea immediately appeared in newspaper headlines throughout the whole country: "No way. No how. No McCain" (Tolliver 2011: 91). Wednesday's theme was "Securing America's Future" and the main speeches were given by Joe Biden, vice presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, former president, or John Kerry, Senator of Massachusetts. Clinton highly supported Obama in her speech and ensured the crowd that he was the right person to be elected the next President of the United States. The final fourth day's theme was "Change You Can Believe In" being supported by Al Gore as one of the main speakers.

During the roll call Hillary Clinton suggested to suspend the rules and elect Barack Obama by acclamation. She also released her delegates in purpose to vote for Obama as the Democratic Party nominee and therefore he obtained 3,188.5 votes (of 4, 419 votes)

⁷³ Available online on: <http://edition.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/>

⁷⁴ "The way to continue our fight now, to accomplish the goals for which we stand is to take our energy, our passion, our strength, and do all we can to help elect Barack Obama, the next president of the United States. Today, as I suspend my campaign, I congratulate him on the victory he has won and the extraordinary race he has run. I endorse him and throw my full support behind him. And I ask all of you to join me in working as hard for Barack Obama as you have for me" (*The New York Times*, June 7, 2008. Available online on: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/07/us/politics/07text-clinton.html?pagewanted=all>).

⁷⁵ Available online on: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/04/us/politics/04elect.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

representing 72%. After announcing the results he stepped up on the stage and announced: “With profound gratitude and great humility, I accept your nomination for presidency of the United States” (Tolliver 2011: 95). And the history was made. In a forty-two-minute speech Obama expressed what he wanted to achieve and persuaded eighty four thousand people sitting in the arena and another millions watching him on their TVs that he was the right person to hold the presidential office in the next four years. He outlined various reasons for Republican candidate McCain not to be elected and his acceptance speech has been considered one of the best ones ever.

All three primaries described above differ mainly by the time period in which they were held. Development of television broadcasting together with Kennedy’s cross-country trips and his appearance contributed to his victory in receiving a party nomination for presidential elections. In 1960, balance between primaries and caucuses was starting to be disproportional and more advantage was slightly given to primaries and therefore a very good local connections together with eliminating distance between politicians and people turned out to be a very good strategy for winning not only a party nomination, but also the presidential office. Twenty years later, in 1980, when Reagan was seeking for Republican nomination, his “ace in the hole” was his rhetoric skills. He had a very good starting position and the way he acted only helped him to develop enough confidence to become a candidate without serious opponents within the Republican Party, which was unfortunate for George H. W. Bush, who had more experience in politics, but lacked communication skills and overall political stature compared to superior candidate Reagan. Another twenty years later, in 2008, the situation was much more difficult for Barack Obama. Hillary Clinton was sure about her strong position within the Democratic Party and firstly did not feel jeopardized by young Senator from Illinois. As Obama knew Clinton would be very successful in certain states like Ohio or Pennsylvania, he focused on gaining as many votes as possible in the states where Clinton’s position was not so strong, and eliminating her gains in the states where she was the favorite. As a result he focused on caucuses and specific rural districts. Therefore, a unique previously developed detailed strategy of each district together with internet expansion were the key tools to his, firstly unexpected, win.

4. Future Perspectives

Current system of presidential primaries has been facing a lot of criticism for more than past decade. This is in large major due to the fact that the system lacks certain level of democracy which has been widely required. This is mainly caused by the fact that states which host primaries in the beginning of the season secure themselves significant privilege and benefit compared to states in which primaries are held later. This, as a result, leads to an effort of those states to move their primaries for earlier timing in the season. In 1996, California's primaries was moved from the first Tuesday in June to the second Tuesday in March, followed by the most populous states four years later all moving their primaries to the first Tuesday in March and creating "Mega Tuesday". This led the fact that a group of western states scheduled their primaries between "Mega Tuesday" and "Super Tuesday" which is traditionally held by southern states, as previously mentioned (Gangale 2008: 12)⁷⁶. Moreover, most of us still remember this endeavor of going as early as possible culminating in 2008 by penalizing Michigan and Florida for holding their Democratic primaries in mid January and late January, respectively.

So how to ensure that all states will be equal and no state will be advantaged by the day of the month in which its primary is held?

Issues along primaries

The first, and probably the most significant, issue which primaries are facing is the position of Iowa and New Hampshire. As those two states historically always come first and therefore hold "first-in-the-nation" caucus and primary, they consistently attract massive amount of attention not only of candidates by mainly of media and although belonging among smallest states by this privilege they turn themselves into places where the candidates make or break campaign. Being declared by press as a winner, a candidate immediately receives a strong position and can even be considered as a leader. Why should two small states get so much attention every four years? Why two

⁷⁶ Available online on:

<http://books.google.cz/books?id=2a2Qni9RCHMC&pg=PA12&lpg=PA12&dq=to+the+first+Tuesday+on+March+and+creating+%E2%80%9CMega+Tuesday%E2%80%9D.&source=bl&ots=oDB8RsJ2BK&sig=bViEK3HpKIHyYQp4yScWDjXQWPI&hl=cs#v=onepage&q=to%20the%20first%20Tuesday%20on%20March%20and%20creating%20%E2%80%9CMega%20Tuesday%E2%80%9D.&f=false>

states with no proportional relation to the rest of the country? This is a historical arrangement which turned to a big deal after reform years. Before 1970 about one third of states held primaries and therefore no serious issues we emphasized, but as soon as most of the states switched to primary election the system showed its deficiencies. Mike Dukakis, former Democratic presidential nominee and Massachusetts Governor, claimed at National Symposium on Presidential Selection in 2001 that he spent almost three months in Iowa while campaigning in 1988: “(...) eighty five full campaign days in one state, folks, really doesn’t make a hell of a lot of sense, does it? (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection, 2001*)”. Lack of demographic reflection caused by lesser black people than what the US average is as well as percentage of persons below poverty those states have, are main arguments against Iowa a New Hampshire for being on the top of each primary season schedule.

On the other hand, isn’t it a sort of advantage when candidates go campaigning to a state in which they know the history of first campaigns, they know how people elect, they know the approach of media and they have the whole row of campaigns held in the past which they can learn a trend from? I don’t say that keeping Iowa and New Hampshire on the first place every single election season is undoubtedly right I only try to refer to the other side of the coin. Not even speaking about financing a campaign, which would have been much more difficult when starting let’s say in Florida or Texas.⁷⁷

Together with this issue also goes front-loading. As Thomas Gangale mentions in his analysis on candidate selection, merging dates of primaries and creating Super Tuesdays and Mega Tuesdays destroy primary competition (Gangale, 2004). In 2000, John McCain clinched his nomination on March 8, the day after Mega Tuesday and in other words even before the western states voted and before southern Super Tuesday at the same time. Gangale adds that before 1976, New Hampshire held its primary on the first Tuesday in March, unlike in 2000 when the first Tuesday in March did not mean the beginning of the season, but the end.

⁷⁷ This opinion was also supported by Senator Bob Smith from New Hampshire who expressed few arguments for Iowa and New Hampshire to stay in the beginning of candidate selection season. He mainly emphasized a good role done by media which according to him are very well prepared for being the first-in-the-nation as well as people who are very committed to such an important leading position in primary system (*The report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection, 2001*).

States holding their primaries later in the season push to schedule them earlier and those holding them earlier in the season push to hold them even earlier and therefore the vicious circle forms as it is basically up to each state to decide when to hold its primary. This rationally leads to less time spent with people as the schedule is very busy and the quality of time dedicated to voters becomes more than poor. As a result, the media coverage decreases as well. If the main contest is held before the end of March, the rest of the season doesn't get nearly as much attention if the race has already been decided. Kathleen Kendall of Harvard University wrote about 1996 primaries: "On March 9, only 18 days after the New Hampshire primary, the networks began to speak as though the primary contest was over. Media coverage dropped off precipitously from March on, true to the pattern found in primaries through history: no contest-no coverage" (Kendall, 1998).⁷⁸

The deepest negative impact of front-loading simply is that by candidates being decided early in the season, millions of people are excluded from decision-making process. At that moment their vote simply doesn't matter. Is this fair? Of course not.

First steps toward change

Kennedy School of Government, a part of Harvard University, put together four main bullet points describing the main characteristics which new system should possess to provide democratic outcomes and to minimize negative effects of current system. According to this study called Vanishing Voter Project, all reform proposals should be characterized by (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001):

1. A shorter campaign
2. A nominating process that remains competitive for a longer period of time in order to give the public a greater opportunity to engage the campaign and to become informed about the candidates
3. A briefer interval between the decisive contest and conventions in order to help people sustain the levels of public engagement and information they had attained when the nominating campaign peaked

⁷⁸ Above mentioned Senator Smith once commented the reason why candidates drop their candidacy: "People don't quit running for President because they are tired of it or because it is hard. People quit running for President because they can't afford to keep the campaign going" (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

4. A system that increases the likelihood that voters in all states will have an effective voice in the selection of nominees.

In the next chapters, I would like to outline main reform proposals which have been discussed and those are: the Delaware Plan, the American Plan (also known as the California Plan, in full words the Graduated Random Presidential Primary System) and the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan proposed by the National Association of Secretaries of States.

4.1. The Delaware Plan

The Delaware Plan is, according to Thomas Gangale, the only reform suggestion which has come the closest to actually being implemented. This system was firstly mentioned to the Republican National Committee Rules Committee in 2000 as an idea of Richard A. Forsten, the Republican Committee member, and Basil Battaglia, state chairman (Gangale, 2004). In July 2000, the Delaware Plan was presented to the Republican Convention in Philadelphia but eventually was neither ratified nor implemented.

Historical background

Robert D. Loevy mentions in his detailed study about the Delaware Plan, that in 1999 the Advisory Commission on the Presidential Nominating Process, also known as the Brock Commission, was formed inside the Republican Party. The Commission organized a public discussion in which anybody could come up with a suggestion of how to reform current system. Based on this session, two reform proposals emerged; the NASS Rotating Regional Primary Plan and the Small States First – Large States Last Plan (firstly proposed by Robert D. Loevy in 1992). The Small States First – Large States Last Plan counted with a total of five presidential primaries, each one being held once in two weeks with the main goal to “back-load” the presidential primary and therefore ensure that the end of the process will be just as important as the beginning

(Loevy, 2001). This altogether meant an effort to seek for a plan which will put small states at the beginning of the primary season and therefore allow retail campaigning.⁷⁹

Aiming to find the right solution the Republican Party sent to local party leaders a questionnaire in which everybody could make a suggestion. That attracted Basil Battaglia and Richard Forsten who were mainly interested in strengthening position of the smallest states. Their system of five sets of primaries was justified by the fact that each state would play a meaningful role until the very last round. The second most important argument was financing. Placing smaller states at the beginning enables to save some money for later campaigning in large states. The Advisory Commission then discussed those proposals and developed a plan with primaries scheduled one month apart calling it the Delaware Plan.

The proposal was then forwarded to the Rules Committee by which it was ratified. The next step was Republican National Convention in July 2000 in Philadelphia. According to what Loevy describe in his analysis, the Delaware Plan was discussed very deeply although some representatives of large states found it unfair explaining that smaller states would pick a candidate anyway. No matter what, the negotiations were suddenly interrupted by a spokesperson for George W. Bush who asked for a plan to be voted down without specifying why exactly. The plan was recalled and no new suggestions were presented.

How does it work?

Under Delaware Plan, the states would be divided into four groups according to their population. Those groups are called “pods” and the main idea is that states with the lowest population would hold their primaries first, on the first Tuesday in March, followed by the group of more populated states with primaries held on the first Tuesday in April, then the next group on the first Tuesday in May, terminating with the most populous states having their primaries on the first Tuesday in June. Intervals before primaries would always be the same and nothing would be decided until the last primary was held, because over a half of the population would not vote yet.

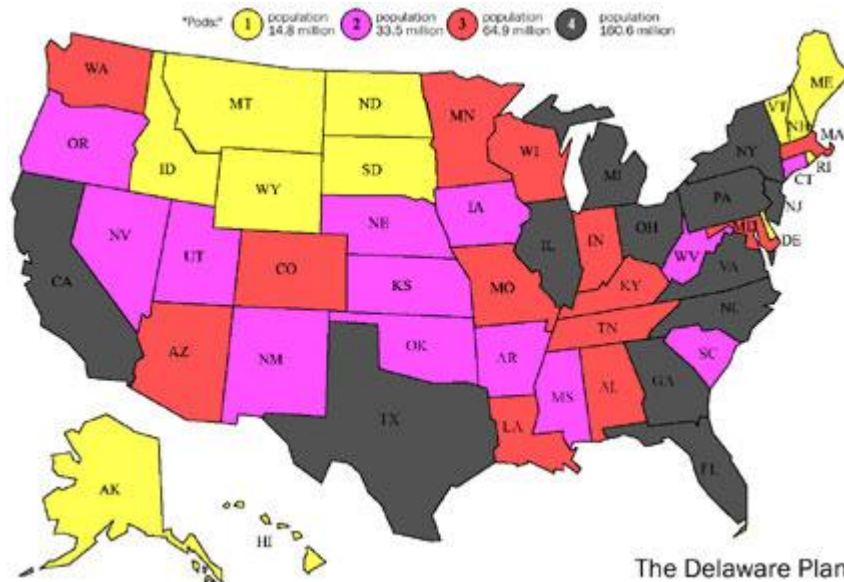
⁷⁹ Retail campaigning refers to a type of campaign when politicians focus on local events and meetings. This type of campaigning is many times considered as old-fashioned.

The Center for Voting and Democracy (also known as FairVote.org) and a group of reformers who established Fix the Primaries movement both interpret the Delaware Plan as follows:

- POD 1: American Samoa, Virgin Islands, Guam, Wyoming, District of Columbia, Vermont, Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware Montana, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Idaho, Maine, Puerto Rico
- POD 2: Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, West Virginia, Utah, Arkansas, Kansas, Mississippi, Iowa Connecticut, Oregon, Oklahoma, South Carolina
- POD 3: Kentucky, Colorado, Alabama, Louisiana, Arizona, Minnesota, Maryland, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Missouri, Washington, Indiana, Massachusetts
- POD 4: Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, New Jersey, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Florida, New York, Texas, California

For more precise imagination, the map below shows how the plan would work geographically.

The Delaware Plan – Division of States



Source: fixtheprimaries.com

In the first round a total of 14.8 million people would vote, 33.5 million people would participate in the second round, then 64.9 million people in the third round and lastly 160.6 million people would vote in the fourth round.

Critics

It is very likely that it was large states that eventually didn't support the proposal. I think it makes sense to schedule primaries into only four rounds one month apart but I don't think all the states would support it with lacking principle of rotation.

Besides the argument of large states ending up holding maybe at some point meaningful primaries every four years, a geographical argument should also not be underestimated. Although the states have always around the same amount of inhabitants their geographical location can be very different and therefore harder to reach and therefore more expensive to hold a campaign there. The first group, if we don't count territories, seems to be pretty homogenous, the states are located in the North-East corner of New England and then on the North but they happen to be bordering countries. The problem comes with the rest of the groups where the states are literally spread around the whole country. I can imagine this leading to a situation when candidates just pick few key states in which they will focus on their victory leaving other states behind with no particular interest. Or maybe they would just choose direct mailing or TV spots as a way how to gain people's attention.

Tom Sansonetti mentioned at the National Symposium in 2001 that the Delaware Plan should also provide larger participation of public in terms of the period during which they are included into the process. Current system allows them to participate only for about six weeks until everything is decided, but under Delaware Plan, only nine percent of delegates are chosen in the first round and therefore people could participate in the voting for at least three months and realistically even four because 50.5% of the delegates are selected in the last round (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

Together with the geographical aspect and the large costs of campaigning also goes the fact that candidates would have to be prepared for a four-month marathon of holding a campaign instead of six-week campaigning as we know it just know. That, as a result,

may tend to become more about the ability of each candidate to find enough funds to pay for the whole process leading to the most important event, the last primary round.

Craig Smith, one of the speakers at National Symposium on Presidential Selection, outlined another disadvantage of the Delaware Plan which is based on the fact that there are more time zones in the US. According to his words, he expects East coast states to be favored by system: “If you have a choice between Washington state and a smaller state on the East coast, and you can only play one of them, you are playing the one on the East coast because you can make the news cycle as opposed to the West coast”. In other words, when geographically different states such as Delaware and Alaska, hold their primaries on the same day, “(...) because Delaware will make the six o’clock news, it is most likely that Delaware will be considered more newsworthy” (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

It is a fact that the Republican Party was undoubtedly divided of the proposal of the Delaware Plan. In 2000, it was more important to stay united because it was the presidential election year. On the other hand, is there such a thing as united Democrats or Republicans? Political parties in the US are the biggest players on local state fields and only the Republican National Committee (RNC) and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) operate as national bodies.

Maybe the whole primary reform should not be in hands of political parties and maybe Washington D.C. should be the place where changes should be made. Therefore they would apply for both parties equally and no internal argues would emerge.

Summing up, what I think is a good and helpful benefit of the Delaware Plan is the population criteria. It is a good start where to begin the reform but as we learned from the past few pages, it can’t be the only criteria because we have to take the geographical aspect in account as well. By various people, it has been proved that costs of campaigns would reach astronomical values if adopting the Delaware Plan just like it was proposed, although not all of its parts were completely unrealistic. It was a good start for further discussions and for other plans to be proposed. What I see as the most significant negative aspect of the Delaware Plan is the fact that it doesn’t provide any kind of rotation. I think implementing a system based on groups of states which will rotate every four years is the right way how to find a solution, because you can’t make

the system more democratic if you keep the same order of states each election season. You have to give states which go last one year a chance to go first the next time.

4.2. The American Plan

The American Plan, or the California Plan, or even more precisely the Graduated Random Presidential Primary system is probably the most complicated proposal which uses the basic philosophy of the Delaware Plan but implements it in an entirely different way. Thomas Gangale wrote a very detailed study of the American Plan in 2004 full of additional information including tables, graphs, etc. According to this analysis, the primary schedule is divided into ten rounds being held every two weeks (unlike the Delaware Plan consisting of four rounds being held every four weeks) during which randomly selected states hold their primaries. The selection of the states is more complicated, though. The basic idea is that the schedule of states is created according to number of congressional districts each state has in order to equally increase every round, i.e. every two weeks. The whole country is divided into 435 districts but as the American Plan also counts with American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, each being one district, the total number of districts increases to 440 (Gangale 2004).

How does it work?

The system was processed in a very detailed way which might be quite confusing while reading it for the first time but the more each person gets interested the easier it is to understand the core of the proposal. The main principle was set up as follows:

In the first round only randomly selected states with a total amount of districts which equals 8 are eligible (8x1). This can be reached by many different combinations, it can be for example just Iowa (5) and New Hampshire (2), also “(...) this could include such ethnically diverse jurisdictions as American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Alaska, Hawaii, New Mexico, Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Arizona and Maryland (Gangale 2004). Similarly expressed also by FairVote: “Any state or combination of states amounting to a total of eight congressional districts could be in the first round of

primaries and caucuses, including areas that have large proportion of people of color such as Asians, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, Native Americans, and African Americans (...)” (FairVote 2012).⁸⁰

In the second round, being held two weeks later, the number of congressional districts doubles to 16 (8x2) and every other round the number of districts increases by 8 until the last tenth round when states with 80 congressional districts altogether are eligible (8x10). In the final round almost one fifth of the districts would vote. Gangale further explains: “This system would foster the widest possible political debate, commensurate with the need to resolve the debate to one or two viable candidates at the end of the primary process” (Gangale 2004). In other words, this system would effectively support the right candidate selection and would eliminate non-competitive candidates gradually during the season.

So at this point, we would have 10 rounds of primary elections during which states with total amount of districts being 8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 48, 56, 64, 72, and 80 would gradually vote in 440 districts overall. But as California is so much populous than other states and therefore is divided into 53 districts, the state would be eligible to vote not earlier than in the seventh round when a total amount of 56 districts can participate. Texas, the second most populous state, would be eligible in the fourth round as well as New York and Florida. According to FairVote, in order to put California and other populous states on an equivalent position, the rounds between 4 and 10 would be mixed up. Gangale points out that the modified version inserts the seventh round before the fourth, the eighth round before the fifth and the ninth round before the sixth. So the row now goes: 8, 16, 24, 56, 32, 64, 40, 72, 48, 80 (Gangale 2004). Moreover, the interval between the third round and the fourth round which is now more than twice as big would be stretched to three weeks and the interval between the eighth round and now much smaller ninth round would be shortened to just one week.

The picture below shows a sample division of states in accordance with the American Plan which would obviously be different every election year. In this particular example, you can notice that the most populous state, California, would hold its primary already in the fourth round together with Nebraska, while the second populous state, Texas,

⁸⁰ There are 38 jurisdictions eligible for voting in the first round out of which 17 jurisdictions have poverty rates above the national average. This would mainly contribute to empowering demographical groups which are now marginalized (Gangale 2004).

would qualify two weeks later in the fifth round. Florida and New York would be in the later part, first mentioned in the eighth round and second mentioned in the last tenth round. On the other hand the smallest states like Wyoming, Vermont, North Dakota, Alaska, South Dakota, Delaware, Montana and Rhode Island⁸¹ would all form the sixth round.

The American Plan – an Example of Voting Schedule



Source:fixtheprimaries.com

Fix the Primaries prepared this map, but I think that this particular case is very unlikely to happen because eight least populous states of the US (excluding territories) are all included into the sixth group which would be a subject to a very improbable coincidence while choosing the states randomly.

Pros and cons

The essential principal of the Graduated Random Presidential Primary System is that every candidate has a realistic chance to participate and no one gets eliminated too early. But through the whole season strong candidates would get stronger, weak candidates weaker round by round because that's how the system is designed. Every

⁸¹ Population of each state available online on: <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/apportionment-pop-text.php>

two weeks the delegate price would be larger until the last round when nearly one fifth of the delegate-total would be elected. Currently favored Iowa and New Hampshire would, due to their size, be eligible during the whole season in any of those ten rounds. Not every state might go first, but every state, no matter if being small or large, might go last. This doesn't give advantage to any particular state and eliminates differences between states according to their size. Zachary Conine-Rapin from Indiana University summarizes in his *Presidential Primary Reform in the United States*: "(...) the Graduated System would enable voters in smaller states to have a more meaningful say in the winnowing out of the candidates" (Conine-Rapin 2008: 23).

The American Plan allows politician to use "retail politicking" strategy in the first round and therefore save some money for campaigning later. For example Virginia would be eligible for voting in the second round of the American Plan but would always have to be last under the Delaware Plan. American Plan enables the most populous states like California, Texas or Florida to vote in the fourth round (unlike the Delaware Plan again, according to which they would always go last which means in June). Gangale further explains that only 11% of the American electorate votes in the first three rounds which gives larger state a meaningful impact on candidate-selection without disadvantaging them just like the Delaware Plan does (Gangale 2004).

One of the disadvantages which was already mentioned few pages ago describing the Delaware Plan is finance. The American Plan brings a solution on what the Delaware Plan was missing – random or rotating selection of states, but still does not solve the problem of large expenses for campaigning caused by geographical differences among states. According to the sample map above, for example the sixth row of primaries would be held in state all around the country like Oregon, North Dakota, Michigan, Vermont, Mississippi, Alaska and other. Then probably the same effect with media attention would occur and therefore candidates would be "forced" to pick just key states where to put their attention which would subsequently have the same impact as voting under the Delaware Plan.

What I personally think is a big step forward from the times when the Delaware Plan was proposed is the fact that there is no steady schedule. Random selection or rotation system would either way bring more democratic features into the system as well as would secure that more states will agree with such proposal. The Delaware Plan was

never implemented because the most populated states would never agree with a proposal according to which they would always hold their primaries in June. It solves the problem of front-loading, but by giving the largest states significant disadvantage will obviously never be agreed by the states which would be affected the most.

On the other hand the American Plan, or California Plan, or the Graduated Random Presidential Primary System gives the largest states a chance to hold their primaries much earlier than in June. Looking at the Republican schedule of 2012 presidential primaries in the largest states, California held its primary on June 5, Texas on May 29, Florida on January 31 and New York on April 24.⁸² And the same applies for the Democrats. Under the American Plan it is impossible that Florida might hold a primary as early as at the end of January, but there is a chance that California, Texas and New York would be able to participate earlier than they do now.

From the opposite spectrum of states, smaller states like West Virginia, Arkansas, Delaware, Missouri, New Mexico or South Dakota which now hold primaries and caucuses in May and June, respectively, would be eligible for voting in the first and the second round, and therefore could significantly improve their position in candidate-selection process. Of course, the system does not secure them the position among the first-round states but still gives them this opportunity, by choosing states randomly.

In the introduction part of this chapter I used a four-point requirement study created in the Vanishing Voter Project describing which qualities should each newly proposed reform have. Those points were:

1. A shorter campaign
2. A nominating process that remains competitive for a longer period of time in order to give the public a greater opportunity to engage the campaign and to become informed about the candidates
3. A briefer interval between the decisive contest and conventions in order to help people sustain the levels of public engagement and information they had attained when the nominating campaign peaked
4. A system that increases the likelihood that voters in all states will have an effective voice in the selection of nominees.

⁸² Available online on: <http://www.2012presidentialelectionnews.com/2012-republican-primary-schedule/>

The American Plan, as designed and described above, fulfills three criteria. The system can be competitive until the last round which would mean for a period of 20 weeks during which public can be engaged into the whole process. An interval of two weeks provides short enough period of time to keep the public interested and not to lose its attention and finally voters in all states would have effective voice while selecting a nominee. Fulfilling the very first criteria focused on the length of the campaign might be easily reached by shortening periods between each round, but then the question is if the period wouldn't be too short for both public and mainly candidates. I think one week is not enough time for preparation but can be sufficient if it happens just once (between eighth and ninth round according to what the American Plan currently suggests).

4.3. NASS Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan

Another widely known reform proposal was created by the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and was presented in 2000. According to Fair Vote, the Carter-Baker Commission on Federal Election Reform endorsed the suggestion in its September 2005 report and Fix the Primaries adds that in 2007 the legislation of implementing this system was introduced.⁸³

How does it work?

The main criteria of how to divide states under the Delaware Plan was the population. The American Plan moved one step further while randomly grouping states according to the number of congressional districts and the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan suggests the main criteria to be geographical location. The US is divided into four regions and the "NASS Plan" copies those four geographical areas:

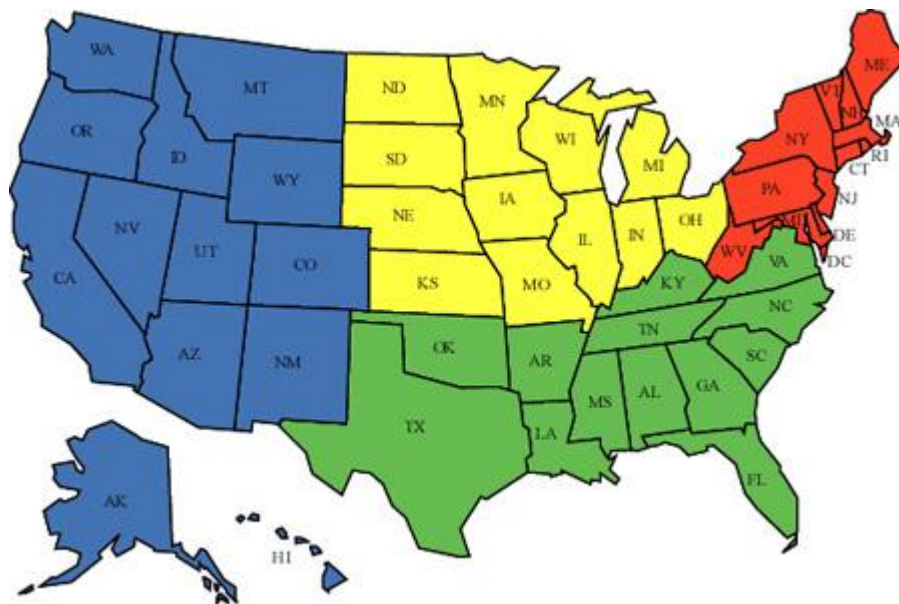
1. East (Northeast)
2. South
3. Midwest
4. West

⁸³ Available online on: fairvote.org and fixtheprimaries.com

A good advantage of this division is that all four regions have roughly the same amount of votes in Electoral College. The Northeast is formed by 13 states and has 127 electoral votes, the Midwest group totals 12 states and 129 electoral votes, the West is formed by 13 states and has 119 electoral votes and the largest region, the South, has 163 electoral votes in 13 states (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

The map below shows the division of the US into four regions. East (Northeast) is red, South is green, Midwest is yellow and West is colored in blue.

The Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan – Four Groups of States



Source:fixtheprimaries.com

In order to make the primary system more democratic and to give each region a meaningful voice during each primary season, the system has been designed on a rotating basis. Originally suggested for the primary election season of 2004 starting Eastern primary on (or about) the first Tuesday in March, moving to the South for April primary, then to Midwest in May and terminating in June in the West states. The rotation would then start in 2008 and Eastern states, being the first group in 2004, would then be the last one holding their primaries in June.

Until this point, the suggestion seems to be very smart and appears to be on a good way to be adopted. The country is divided into four established regions, the states are therefore relatively close to each other (unlike in both the Delaware Plan and the American Plan), no state is disadvantaged by always being in the last group (unlike the Delaware Plan) and every single state has an opportunity to go first (unlike both the Delaware and the American Plan) because the rotation is ensured. So far a brilliant idea how to reform current system. But until the point when all the facts are revealed. According to FairVote, the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan (unlike both the Delaware and the American) allows Iowa and New Hampshire to keep their first-in-the-nation positions to hold their caucus and primary, respectively, before the rest of the states elects according to the rotating principle (FairVote 2012). So the schedule for the very first year would now look subsequently: Iowa's caucus would go first, according to the tradition, then the New Hampshire primary would follow, both most likely happening in February, and then Eastern states would have their primaries in the beginning of March and then the rest would continue as stated above.

After knowing all the details, does this proposal really make any sense? To me it does not. Everybody can agree that the most significant disadvantage of current system of primary elections is the fact, that Iowa and New Hampshire, although not being the proportional example of the US population, demography, voting behavior, etc., hold their primary and caucus, respectively, before the rest of the country. And everybody can agree that this is one of the reasons why the US presidential primary system needs to be reformed. So is there a realistic chance that a plan which sounds very wise and coherent would, by any chance, be implemented if it doesn't solve one of the most important issues? I don't think so.

Is this what America needs?

The system would for sure bring some positive aspects to the primary season campaigning. Firstly, the effect of eliminating front-loading is desirable not only because the campaign takes longer time which means longer engagement of the public but also because it means a sort of opportunity for "dark horses" to become more visible.

Secondly, as the whole system stands on dividing states according to regions in which they are located, politicians could easily focus on local problems under the "NASS Plan" than under the Delaware Plan or the American Plan. This would not only save them

money but mainly it would be much more helpful for them to develop a closer relationship with local people. They would be closer to people's problems which they would easily distinguish. The closer to "door-to-door politicking" the politicians are the better for them, their campaign, their gains. Larry J. Sabato, an American Political Scientist and a Professor at the University of Virginia,⁸⁴ commented on this aspect: "They might actually get to know something about the states instead of just the airports in the states" (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

The most significant disadvantage of the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan has already been outlined. The position of Iowa and New Hampshire stays the same in order to keep the historical tradition. Besides this issue, FairVote mentions one more which is the fact that, similarly as under the Delaware Plan, everybody can expect the order of states long time in advance and therefore candidates may wait for the right timing when the candidacy will be the most beneficial (FairVote 2012). I think this opinion would be more relevant if the primaries were held every year or so but under these conditions, politicians might be waiting for up to twenty years to hold their "winning" primary season. So I would not worry about it as much as about more important negative issues connected to this proposal.

So according to what has been said, I personally don't think this is what America wants. Let's look at the Vanishing Voter Project's bullet points again:

1. A shorter campaign
2. A nominating process that remains competitive for a longer period of time in order to give the public a greater opportunity to engage the campaign and to become informed about the candidates
3. A briefer interval between the decisive contest and conventions in order to help people sustain the levels of public engagement and information they had attained when the nominating campaign peaked
4. A system that increases the likelihood that voters in all states will have an effective voice in the selection of nominees.

⁸⁴ Larry J. Sabato (born August 7, 1952) is a founder of Sabato's Crystal Ball, a famous site containing political analysis, developed to motivate American public to get involved in politics. The site is run by University of Virginia Center for Politics.

We see that the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan does not provide a shorter campaign (March-June in this case) and intervals between each primary are not brief enough either (one month). On the other hand the system stays competitive for a longer time but with Iowa and New Hampshire being advantaged by going first, the system undermines each voter's chance to have an effective voice.

Regional Lottery System

In order to eliminate negative features of the proposal, Larry J. Sabato came up with modified version of the "NASS Plan" which he called the Regional Lottery System and he firstly proposed this idea in 2001. The system keeps the division of the states according to regions as well as the one-month gap between each round. What makes it different is firstly the fact that the order of regions does not rotate, but it is selected on lottery basis, and secondly there are no states preceding the rest of the nation (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001). Sabato suggests creating a five-member commission appointed by an association such as the National Association of Secretaries of State which would take care of the lottery. The lottery would be held approximately six months prior the first round of primaries and would be organized like a common lottery – four balls of different colors (in line with colors on the picture above) would be put into a bowl and then drawn one by one. The first ball drawn represents the region holding the first primary and so on. Each state could then decide whether to hold a primary or a caucus. To encourage choosing caucus, which is cheaper, Sabato suggests holding caucuses on the first days of each voting month and then primaries on the fifteenth of the same month (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001).

This system eliminates negative impacts on the Regional, Rotating Presidential Primary Plan in terms of knowing the order of regions in advance. Candidates only know the order just a few months earlier and therefore they have to focus equally on all areas, explains Sabato (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection*, 2001). Every four-year period, each region has exactly the same chance to go first which makes the system as equal as possible.

After presenting this suggestion in 2001, Sabato faced some remarks from others. Craig Smith recommended creating a second lottery to select two small states which would precede all four rounds of primaries. In other words, keeping impacts of Iowa and

New Hampshire on the rest of the season but not necessarily these two states would always go first. Certain number of electoral votes maximum of which each state has to have to be considered a small would be set, in this case for example seven. Having two states holding their caucus or primary before the rest of the nation brings, according to Smith, more excitement to the whole selection system than just the lottery, moreover increases the number of citizens who meaningfully participate in the system (*The Report of the National Symposium on Presidential Selection, 2001*).

I like the idea of the lottery, I think the argument of not knowing the order years earlier is justified and I take it as a positive renewal of the Regional, Rotating Presidential Primary Plan. On the other hand I don't agree with the second lottery. Place one state, two states, five states or any other amount of states before the rest of the nation might create an excitement, but people will still consider it as unfair although those states would be chosen randomly. In one of Sabato's articles written in 2007, the author also inclines to the idea that the nominating procedure not only should be a result of a long-term negotiating between the two major political parties, but it should be placed into the US Constitution as well (Sabato's Crystal Ball, 2012).⁸⁵

Ops-Alaska together with FairVote prepared a comprehensive table introducing and comparing advantages and disadvantages of the three main suggestions described above – the American Plan, the Delaware Plan and the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan. I decided to use this table for this purpose but before I uncover the comparison, it is necessary to say that Ops-Alaska is an organization which highly supports the American Plan which the table clearly shows. But I don't think it makes it any less valuable.

Table: Comparison of main proposals

Criteria	American Plan	Delaware Plan	Rotating Regional Plan
Delays costly, high stakes campaigns in large states until later in the season, allowing a wide field of candidates to run inexpensive campaigns in small	Yes. The first three rounds involve a handful of states: Round 1: 1.8% of electorate. Round 2: 3.6% of electorate. Round 3: 5.5% of electorate.	No. All "pods" contain large numbers of states, making campaigning costly: Pod 1: 17 states and territories. Pod 2: 13 states.	No. The first interval encompasses 25% of the American electorate, forcing candidates to wage quasi-national campaigns.

⁸⁵ Available online on: <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/ljs2007101801/>

states in early contests.		Pod 3: 13 states. Pod 4: 12 states.	
Enhances “retail politics” by the graduated nature of the plan, giving opportunity for lesserknown (and less funded) candidates to gain traction in the primary process.	Yes. Every candidate can compete in one or two small states in the first interval. The plan preserves retail politicking in small states early in the season. It gives an under-funded grassroots campaign a chance to catch fire and take off.	No. The first “pod” encompasses 17 states and territories, forcing candidates to wage quasinational campaigns.	No. Retail politicking is impossible when candidates must campaign in 1/4 of the nation simultaneously. The nominee is determined in the first interval, thus all candidates spend all of their campaign money in this “do or die” round. Big Money wins the race.
Lengthens the period of time for the primary contest, enabling sustained voter participation and media interest, and increased discussion of the issues and vetting of the candidates.	Yes. A graduated schedule allows campaign competitiveness to be sustained over a longer portion of the primary season.	Marginal. The plan has a graduated schedule; however, even the first “pod” contains large numbers of states, making campaigning costly and likely giving a candidate insurmountable momentum and increasing the likelihood of candidates dropping out early.	No. The nominee is determined in the first interval. The other three regional primaries don’t matter.
Enables populous states early enough participation in the nomination process to have a strong influence on the outcome.	Yes. IL, PA, OH, and MI are eligible for Round 3, prior to which only 5.5% of the American electorate has voted. CA, TX, NY and FL are eligible for Round 4, at which point only 11% of the American electorate has voted.	No. The 12 most populous states, from CA to VA, are always in the last “pod.”	Yes. Each regional primary includes large and small states.
“A nominating process that remains competitive for a longer period of time in order to give the public a greater opportunity to engage the campaign and to become informed about the candidates.” --Vanishing Voter Project, Kennedy School of Government	Yes. A graduated schedule allows campaign competitiveness to be sustained over a longer portion of the primary season. The plan gives candidates a chance to bounce back from early defeats.	Marginal. A graduated schedule promotes campaign competitiveness; however, even the first “pod” contains large numbers of states, making campaigning costly.	No. Competitive campaigning ends with the first regional primary. The remaining regional primaries are virtually uncontested.
“A briefer interval between the decisive contests and the conventions in order to help people sustain the levels of public engagement and information they had attained when the nominating campaign peaked.” --Vanishing Voter Project, Kennedy School of Government	Yes. The decisive contests do not occur until near the end of the primary season.	Yes. The decisive contests do not occur until near the end of the primary season.	No. The decisive contests occur at the beginning of the primary season.

<p>“A system that increases the likelihood that voters in all states will have an effective voice in the selection of the nominees.”</p> <p>--Vanishing Voter Project, Kennedy School of Government</p>	<p>Yes. A graduated schedule allows campaign competitiveness to be sustained over a longer portion of the primary season, and increases the likelihood that voters in all states will have an effective voice in the selection of the nominees.</p>	<p>Marginal. A graduated schedule allows campaign competitiveness; however, with a large first “pod” campaigning is costly and candidates are likely to withdraw, or not even enter the race.</p>	<p>No. In effect, the first region to vote chooses the nominee. Most other candidates drop out of the race. The remaining 3/4 of the country are left with few choices, if any.</p>
<p>Changes made to the '04 schedule were supposed to front load delegates and essentially end the nomination battle early so energy could be focused on Bush. The commission seemed to think this idea failed.</p> <p>--DNC Commission on Presidential Nomination Timing and Scheduling</p>	<p>Yes. The plan is specifically designed to end front-loading.</p>	<p>Yes. The plan is specifically designed to end front-loading.</p>	<p>No. The plan institutionalizes front-loading by having 1/4 of the country vote on the same day. In comparison, after more than a month of voting, by March 1, 2004, the Democratic Party selected 23% of its delegates in the most front-loaded schedule in history.</p>
<p>There was some sense that a longer selection process helps: deflate the importance of earlyacting states, candidates get better known, issue positions get better developed and better understood by voters.</p> <p>--DNC Commission on Presidential Nomination Timing and Scheduling</p>	<p>Yes. A graduated schedule reduces the importance of earlyacting states. A protracted, competitive campaign increases discussion of the issues and vetting of the candidates.</p>	<p>Yes. A graduated schedule reduces the importance of early-acting states. A protracted, competitive campaign increases discussion of the issues and vetting of the candidates.</p>	<p>No. Competitive campaigning, and therefore the discussion of issues and vetting of candidates, ends with the first regional primary.</p>

Source: *Ops-Alaska, FairVote*⁸⁶

The table leaves out positive advantage of states that are geographically close to each other and hold the primaries together (Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan) and therefore have much lower travel expenditures for each round. Moreover gives the American Plan credit for giving the large states a good opportunity to participate early by making them eligible in the 3rd and the 4th round, respectively, but does not stress out the fact that only one of those large states would be eligible at a time (unlike under the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan).

⁸⁶ Available online on: http://pweb.jps.net/~md-r/ps/AmPlan_ES_Comparison.pdf

4.4. Other Proposals

Besides the Delaware Plan, the Graduated Random Presidential Primary System and the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan, there have been some other suggestions issued in the past one or two decades. Apparently, although each plan offers a good amount of solution, none of them has really satisfied a majority and therefore more and more ideas are discussed in order to find the best suitable candidate selection system as possible.

National Primary

Caroline J. Tolbert and David P. Redlawsk of University of Iowa analyzed basic differences between a rotating states primary system and a national primary. Holding all primary elections on one day was firstly suggested by Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 but was subsequently declined by incumbent president William Howard Taft. But no serious interest of Congress or parties has been noticed since then (Tolbert, Redlawsk 2009).⁸⁷ Is squeezing the whole primary elections season into just one day the right solution for the US current struggle in selection system? Maybe. It certainly brings some significant advantages.

Firstly, the system would undoubtedly be cheaper. Holding a one day primary compared to a four-month marathon definitely makes a noticeable difference.

Secondly, front-loading would not be mitigated but would be entirely eliminated. No advantages for states going first and disadvantages for states going last. No more concerns about Iowa and New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation positions, no more concerns about large states voting in the middle of the season or at the end.

Tolbert and Redlawsk assume that the turnout would also increase. They built this opinion on the fact that there has been an evidence of the Super Tuesday having a larger turnout compared to other primary election days. For example, according to FairVote, average turnout for 2008 Republican primaries through February 5 (Super Tuesday) was 12.6% and after February 5, when John MacCain secured his nomination, the turnout

⁸⁷ Available online on: http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1085&context=polisci_pubs

dropped to only 8.4%. On the other hand, average turnout for 2008 Democratic primaries was 17.7% before February 5 and 23.6% after February 5 (FairVote, 2009).⁸⁸

All the votes would be equal, no one would have a more meaningful share than others, that truly is an important argument.

On the other hand, the chances of not well-known candidates would probably be lower. Having just one national primary provides an advantage to those who already are often seen in media and whose faces have been known by public. The same applies for dark horse candidates because their chances are therefore eliminated as well. In short, national primary eliminates long-term deeper selection of a candidate of “large quality” (Tolbert, Redlawsk 2009). According to a survey done by Tolbert and Redlawsk on which reform American population is willing to support, most of the population (over 70%) supports either any kind of rotating system or national primary, meaning that people want and are eager to support changes. More supportive to the reform are either states which are smaller and have less influence on final candidate-selection, or states which are larger, but come later in the season and therefore don’t have much influence either. More interestingly, Tolbert and Redlawsk found out that the enthusiasm people show toward the reform is closely connected to how important role the state they live in plays in primary season and in this case they put a state interest in front of national interests. The public wants a reform but will not support it if means reduction of influence of their state (Tolbert, Redlawsk 2009).

Summing up, it is not really clear what exactly stands behind not implementing this proposal. I assume that when the suggestion was introduced and then discussed at the Symposium, participants just couldn’t make a decision together. I think this is what we see happening with each of those plans already mentioned because every single proposal has and will have different impact on different states.

Interregional Primary Plan

Congressman Sandy Lavin created one more presidential primary reform proposal which is again based on geographical aspect. According to this plan, the country would be divided into six regions and each of those regions would be divided into six sub-regions. The idea is that in six rounds of primaries held from March till June always at

⁸⁸ Available online <http://www.fairvote.org/primary-power-to-the-people#.UEUPYCLdPCM>

least one state from each region votes. The order of sub-regions would be determined by lottery and for all subsequent primary seasons would rotate. To make the system clearer, here is how Lavin divides the country (FairVote 2012):

- REGION 1: 1 – Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont
2 – Massachusetts
3 – Connecticut, Rhode Island
4 – Delaware, New Jersey
5 – New York
6 – Pennsylvania
- REGION 2: 1 – Maryland
2 – West Virginia
3 – Missouri
4 – Indiana
5 – Kentucky
6 – Tennessee
- REGION 3: 1 – Ohio
2 – Illinois
3 – Michigan
4 – Wisconsin
5 – Iowa
6 – Minnesota
- REGION 4: 1 – Texas
2 – Louisiana
3 – Arkansas, Oklahoma
4 – Colorado
5 – Kansas, Nebraska
6 – Arizona, New Mexico
- REGION 5: 1 – Virginia
2 – North Carolina
3 – South Carolina
4 – Florida
5 – Georgia
6 – Mississippi, Alabama

- REGION 6: 1- California
 - 2 – Washington
 - 3 – Oregon
 - 4 – Idaho, Nevada, Utah
 - 5 – Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming
 - 6 – Hawaii, Alaska

While having those main regions and sub-regions, the primary season schedule, as Levin suggests, would be divided into six rounds held approximately two to three weeks apart on:

- Second Tuesday in March
- First Tuesday in April
- Fourth Tuesday in April
- Second Tuesday in May
- Fourth Tuesday in May
- Second Tuesday in June

This proposal, unlike the national primary, did not really get too much attention. Professional public knows that it exists but for some reason has never come through it. I think what we have been facing since monitoring all proposals is, that in fact they all seem to be pretty similar and the diversity is just marginal. But with this suggestion, it seems like we made one step back to where the Delaware Plan and the American Plan, which we found not too supportive, were, because of the geographical distance among states participating in each round and therefore for being too expensive and difficult to hold a primary in.

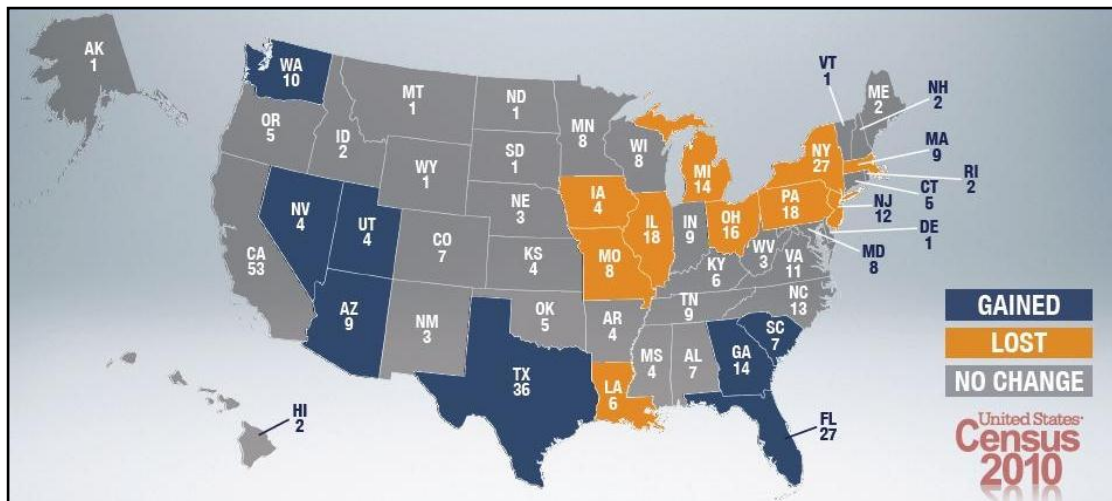
4.5. New Ideas

Considering everything that has been said, proposed or suggested so far, we clearly see that it is not easy to come up with a solution that would fit the whole nation, satisfy each state and help to make primaries more democratic. But having so many ideas and knowing their pros and cons gives us a unique chance to look at the best of advantages each proposal has and try to find another system comprising most of them.

We had the American Plan which eliminates front-loading very well by making larger and larger groups of people vote one by one through the season. The Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan was very well designed to support geographical basis of each region to eliminate expenses and to help politicians focus on local issues. Further on that, lottery system avoided inequity, and national primary was undoubtedly the cheapest option. Trying to create a completely new system, we should have these suggestions in mind.

I will use the map of congressional districts below for counting districts and for other examples while suggesting other options and brainstorming about potential reforms of presidential primaries system.

Division of Congressional Seats according to States



Source: United States Census 2010

Multiple regional groups with a pre-primary

We need a key how to divide the whole country and we learned that geographical level worked very well. Maybe we could create different groups of states, let's say three or four, and choose a group of four states which have a borderline with other three states from different groups. If we drew lines from North to South and then from West to East to keep a relatively same amount of districts in each group and also have small states in the middle, we might get four groups of states (North-West, South-West, North-East, South-East) which would geographically meet around Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and

Missouri. Those four states could therefore handle a sort of pre-primary to allow retail politicking and then all the regions one by one would hold their primaries.

The problem with this idea is that the four regions don't have a similar amount of districts. North-East region would then have twice as many districts as North-West and all votes would then not be equal or at least have the same influence. Besides that, the problem of four selected states holding a pre-primary would probably be similar as with Iowa and New Hampshire nowadays, because those two states don't represent American population very well.

But if we stick with this idea which is just a variation of the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan, we might create three more uniform groups of states and then select three states in which a pre-primary would be held. The first group would include the whole South from Arizona to North Carolina, altogether comprising of a total of 144 districts in 13 states. The second group, created of North-Western states from California to Illinois including Alaska and Hawaii, would have 145 districts in 20 states and lastly the group of North-Eastern states would include states from Kentucky to Maine, a total of 146 districts in 17 states. The division seems to work very well. Moreover, in each group there is a large state, South has Texas and Florida, North-West has California and North-East has New York. But unlike the previous suggestion, the three states we would choose to hold a pre-primary don't have a very convenient borderline. In the geographical point where all regions meet more than three states are located; Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas. Illinois has 18 districts which would be too much for holding a pre-primary, I think it should only be based on states up to ten districts. Knowing this, a trio of Missouri, Kentucky and Arkansas would be the option. But again, are these states proportional enough according to the rest of the US population to hold primaries before the rest of the nation? Probably not.

Having a sort of pre-primary is a good way how to do retail politicking but on the other hand increases front-loading. The question is: How to hold a pre-primary without front-loading? To decrease negative impact of front-loading, we would probably have to select "typical" American states to hold their primaries first. If we found a few "typical" American states with proportional demographic ratio, various economical indexes, population, etc., those states, if there are any, would mostly likely be located far away

from each other and it would be difficult to find such states having not more than 10 districts.

Largest cities first

Let's find another way. Are there any other places in the United States which would be similar in all states? Is there anything that is present in each state, that each state has that would help us? Yes, there is. Each state, no matter if located in the North, South, West or East, no matter if divided into 1, 10 or 30 districts, no matter if having predominantly black or white population, has a place which can be singled out to hold a pre-primary. The place is the capital. The most important offices and places are usually located in capital cities, many times most of the people live there, that's what applies for many countries but unfortunately not for American states. Thinking about the US capitals, we easily get to a point that many states chose not the largest city to be the capital. In accordance to specify my thought of gathering the most important cities of the US for the first primary, I would set the criteria for the city which can participate in the first round to be the capital city in case it is also the largest city. If the capital is not the largest city, then the largest city is eligible for voting. Because having Tallahassee (the capital of Florida), Springfield (the capital of Illinois) or Sacramento (the capital of California) in the first round does not correspond with my original idea of having Jacksonville, Chicago or Los Angeles included.

And we don't even have to call it a pre-primary. What I am suggesting is that the largest cities of all 50 states would hold a primary first. In a total, it would be more than 50 districts because the most populous cities are divided into more than one district. I think this would eliminate a front-loading effect because each state would participate in the first primary. And as every state acts as a whole in the primary season, the front-loading is eliminated. In case a state forms only 1 district, it would go in the first round with the largest cities (capitals).⁸⁹ Putting all major cities of the US together for one primary day creates a unique link among states and certainly eliminates front-loading from the point that every state participates in this round (unlike having Iowa and New Hampshire going first).

⁸⁹ Seven states plus territories create only one district: Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and Delaware.

So at this point we have set that the largest city of each state would vote in the first round before the rest of the country. The question now is when the rest of the nation would vote and under which conditions. Keeping all four points of Vanishing Voter Project in mind (shorter campaign, long-time competitive system, brief interval between primaries and effective voice of everybody), and after having said pros and cons of each proposal, the system should be designed on geographical basis and should include a rotation or a lottery principle. At the beginning of this part, three regions composed of 144, 145 and 146 congressional districts might vote. If we expect the group of the largest cities to go first, then each of those previously suggested regions might follow one by one. The groups would be created as follows:

- 1- Largest city (or capital) of each state, Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, Delaware
- 2- North-East – Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky
- 3- South – Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
- 4- North-West – Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Hawaii

The primary season would start in the largest cities on the first Tuesday in March of the election year. Then it would be followed by three weeks of primary elections in each region forming groups 2, 3 and 4. The Election Day would always be on Tuesday, i.e. the second, the third and the fourth Tuesday of March. The order of the groups would be determined by lottery, specifying that the region which in previous primary season succeeded the largest cities is excluded from the first lottery round. In other words, if the North-East region holds primaries the second Tuesday in March (after largest cities), next time the first round of lottery will happen between South and North-West. The reason is simple – to avoid the same region going first twice in a row.

This system would greatly meet three out of four Vanishing Voter Project's requirements. The campaign would be shorter (just four weeks), the nominating system would be competitive for the whole time and the interval between contests would be just

one week and therefore short enough to maintain people's attention. Plus all states would participate in the first round having their most populous cities "representing" them.

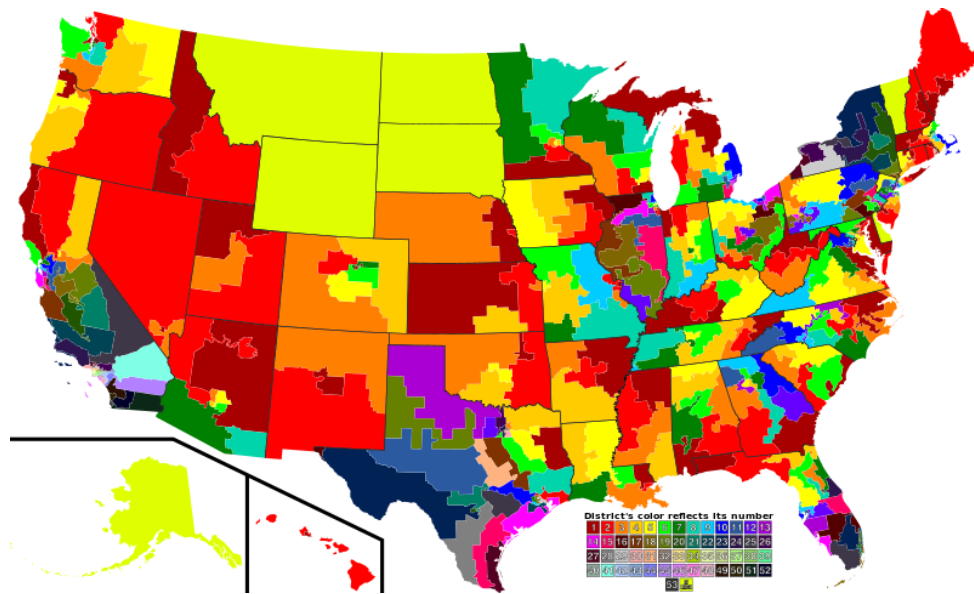
Just like all the previous suggestions, some disadvantages apply for the "Largest Cities First" system as well. Almost every state would technically hold two primaries, which might be taken as a negative feature. I don't think it is, especially because of the fact that the first contest happens in the capital (or the largest city) and the next contest happens in the rest of the state. Also, the first round involves pretty large amount of population (unlike the Delaware Plan for example) which might be taken as a disadvantage from financing point of view.

Population-wise it might seem like front-loading in case of for example the state of New York where the most populous city – New York City – would vote in the first round which would mean that almost half of the districts would already cast a ballot. Fortunately this does not apply for other large states like California, Texas or Florida where the ratio between the largest city population and the state population is much higher.

Another problem might be the fact that after excluding the districts of the largest cities, the groups might not have such similar amount of districts like 144, 145, 146 and the difference might be higher. And lastly, the most populous cities altogether would create a group of a total amount of districts being about one third of all. Which might then mean that in the moment the first regional group votes the rest of the nation is marginal and basically excluded from the process, which is against point 4 of the Vanishing Voter Project. This also applies on the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan, the voice of each state is not the same. To make all votes as equal as possible and to give a chance to the rest of the nation to have a meaningful voice in each primary season, the second, third and fourth round of primaries would have to be held at one time, let's say two weeks after the most populous cities vote. By doing this, everybody would have a meaningful voice in the process and nothing would be decided until the rest of the nation votes. It is not a national primary but the system is very close to it. Only two days when the whole nation votes would be set – the first and the third Tuesday in March, largest cities would go first, the rest of the nation would be eligible in the next round.

The picture below shows the division of current congressional districts in the US. The most populous cities are clearly divided into numerous districts according to number of inhabitants.

Map of the US Congressional districts



Source: US Census Bureau

Summing up, the suggestion we have reached by weighing all different possibilities of how to reform primary system is holding only two rounds of primaries, in the first one only the largest city (or capital, if it is the most populous city at the same time) would vote and two weeks later the rest of the nation would participate. The process would be shorter, less expensive as a whole, effective and in both rounds the whole country would be involved. On the other hand, from traditional point of view, the system might seem to be too short mainly because it eliminates weeks of campaigning around the country. At this point, including the rotating part with three groups of states might seem to be a better idea for those who prefer longer campaigning.

We have learned that each suggestion has its pros and cons, each suggestion enhances certain aspects of the system but usually at the expense of other features and therefore none of those plans sounds like the best of all. The thing is that at this point it is necessary to weigh what the most important requirements are. Do we want all people to have a meaningful voice rather than to a font-loaded system? Do we want the system to be maximally equal rather than to have a possibility to do retail-politicking in certain

states and therefore be closer to local people? The fact that different people, and states actually as well, have different answers to these questions, is the reason why none of the suggestions mentioned in the fourth chapter of this paper has ever been implemented.

Conclusion

American selection system has gone through significant changes since the time of the first president George Washington to presence when 44th president Barack Obama is holding the office. At the end of 18th century, Founding Fathers aimed to create a selection system based on five criteria that fulfill the idea of democracy to make sure the right candidate will be chosen. Running for president in the system where no political parties existed yet was therefore different and in many ways easier because basically anybody, who met legislative requirements, could be a candidate. After people of similar opinions and political points of view started gathering and formed first political parties, the system of caucuses emerged. The idea, however, barely lasted for more than two decades because as soon as the Federalists formally stopped existing as a party, overall criticism of the system arose aiming to emphasize the original idea of the selection system not being a function of Congress. 1824 election year was the last one when party caucuses were held.

The idea of giving more power to people was supported by introducing new system of national conventions and nominations were then given directly by people instead of legislative caucus. This idea spread from state level to the national level very quickly and main political parties each held their first convention in 1831-1832, most important being the National Republican Party and the Democratic Party. In the years of reconstruction, during the second half of the 19th century, the political system experienced a “lack of interest” as the civil war and other historical issues gained more attention, but strong Republicans remained one of the characteristics of that period.

By the end the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, respectively, the selection system moved to its next phase by slowly implementing primary elections. Firstly appearing on a state level, gradually being adopted by more and more states and eventually spreading to the national level in the second half of 20th century. What I think contributed to long-time evolution of the selection system is mainly the large area that the US covers, the process of implementing different rules as well as historical facts. On the other hand it is very relative to judge the system as a long-time evolution because compared to Europe the US has had the same constitution for the last more than two hundred years and politicians have been making changes under one regime,

although many countries in Europe went through more regimes and were based on various constitutions until they finally reached democracy.

Modern selection system as we know it nowadays consists of two parts: primaries and national conventions. Primary elections are mainly in hands of each state and that is why they differ and that is why some states still prioritize caucuses. There are certain rules about timing primaries, but any other specifics depend on each state's organization. Other major influence of the way how primaries are organized depends on each political party. The structure, open or closed primaries or the electoral formula are the main characters. There is no strict rule for choosing either winner-take-all method or proportional representation, but the Republicans probably chose the first one to select a candidate very quickly and then focus only on him and his winning the office.

From three case studies introduced in the last part of the thesis we have learned that different strategies led to different results of the selection systems in 1960, 1980 and 2008 primaries. Kennedy was a charismatic leader of the Democratic Party who was highly supported by media and new rise of television broadcasting. Reagan was a great speaker who overshadowed his more experienced colleague(s) in various debates and clinched himself a nomination in early period of primary election season, while Obama, having a strong opponent within his own party, focused on careful preparation and explored his chances in each state separately and then based his strategy on the results.

For more than past decade, politicians and party officials have been trying to propose a presidential primary reform to change current system. One of the main reasons for doing so is the advantage that Iowa and New Hampshire get every season when they hold first-in-the-nation caucus and primary. One of the first proposals was the Delaware Plan, dividing the whole country into four groups according to their population. Every election year, the least populated states would start and the most populated states would go last. The suggestion has never been implemented, but surely made a base for other upcoming ideas. The next one was the American Plan, based on number of congressional districts each state has and therefore creating groups of states to be eligible for voting during different parts of the primary season. The plan brought a non-steady schedule to the discussion and moved the discussion further. And lastly, the third "large" plan was the Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan which divided the US into four regions which would rotate in voting every four years.

According to my research of other various suggestions added to the discussion over the past years, I have submitted an idea of creating the first eligible group for voting by the largest city (or the capital, if it is the largest city at the same time) of each state, called “Largest Cities First”. The rest of the nation would then vote either in rotating principle according to which states would be divided into three groups, or one single primary for the rest of the nation would be held. The system would eliminate front-loading by giving every state a chance to participate in the first round, each voter would have a meaningful voice and if there were just two rounds or primaries (largest cities first, the rest of the nation then) it would also be cheaper.

There have been tens of ideas proposed but none of them has ever been implemented. I certainly don't think the Delaware Plan is a good suggestion because it lacks rotation or lottery principle and large states would always be disadvantaged. The American Plan has some good ideas, but would be very expensive and campaigning would last a really long time (20 weeks). The Rotating, Regional Presidential Primary Plan is a better suggestion in his modified form based on a lottery principle when the schedule isn't known years earlier and the position of Iowa and New Hampshire is not preserved, otherwise I don't see it as a solution either.

As for the last research question, yes, there are options how to make primaries more effective and democratic, the option is a national primary, but again, then the whole primary season lacks excitement, retail-politicking, deep selection of the best candidate, etc.

The future development of the primary system, and mainly of the reform, will be connected to what American nation's priorities really are. And as I suppose that those priorities were set by the Vanishing Voter Project (including shorter campaign, competitive nominating process involving public, briefer interval between primaries and meaningful voice for everybody), is it very unlikely that national primary will be implemented. Desired retail politicking in the beginning of campaign creates front-loading, long-term competition eliminates chances for all the voices to be meaningful for the whole season, etc.

At this point, choosing the right solution is not about implementing suggestion with all pros anymore, we have to realize that it is about implementing a suggestion with least cons.

Summary

“The US Presidential Nomination System in Its Three Dimension: Past, Present and Future” covers two and a half centuries of historical development of American selection system and provides detailed analysis not only of historical background, but mainly of political progress and changes and determines main drivers that contributed to current form of selection system as we know it and, moreover, analyses main reform proposals and gives own ideas on potential future development. In four main chapters the final paper provides in-depth exploration of historic factors and describes modern nominating system and its features. Implementing the theoretical scope to practical situation the thesis is enriched by case studies of two seasons of the Democratic and one season of the Republican primary elections. In the conclusion future vision of the whole nominating process is provided.

Resources

Monographs:

BISHOP, Joseph B. (1916): Presidential Nominations and Elections: A History of American Conventions, National Campaigns, Inaugurations and Campaign Caricature. New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons.

CEASER, James W. (1979): Presidential selection: theory and development. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. ISBN 06-910-7602-2.

CROTTY, William J, JACKSON John S (1985): Presidential primaries and nominations. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN 0-87187-260-9.

GANGALE, Thomas (2008): From the primaries to the polls: how to repair America's broken presidential nomination process. Praeger. ISBN 03-133-4835-9.

HOADLEY, John F (1986): Origins of American political parties, 1789-1803. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky. ISBN 08-131-1562-0.

KARAS, Petr, KUPKA Karel (2005): Atlas prezidentských voleb USA: 1904-2004. Praha: P3K. ISBN 80-903-5870-5.

KREJČÍ, Miloš (2009): Jak se "dělá" prezident Spojených států amerických: průvodce americkým volebním systémem od zřízení funkce prezidenta po souboj Barack Obama versus John McCain. V Mladé frontě vyd. 1. Praha: Mladá fronta, 247 s. ISBN 978-802-0419-354.

KERNELL, By Samuel (2006): Going public: new strategies of presidential leadership. 4. ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN 15-680-2899-7.

LEVINE, Myron A (1992): Presidential campaigns and elections: issues, images, and partisanship. Itasca, Ill: F.E. Peacock, 267 s. ISBN 08-758-1357-7.

NORRANDER, Barbara (2010): The imperfect primary: oddities, biases, and strengths of U.S. Presidential nomination politics. New York: Routledge, 157 s. ISBN 02-038-8767-0.

POLSBY, Nelson W, WILDAVSKY Aaron B (1991): Presidential elections: contemporary strategies of American electoral politics. 8th ed. New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 440 s. ISBN 00-292-2786-0.

RUBIN, Richard L. (1981): Press, party, and presidency. 1st ed. New York: Norton, 246 s. ISBN 03-939-5206-1.

SCHLESINGER, Arthur M (1996): Robert Kennedy and his times. 1st Ballantine Books trade ed. New York: Ballantine Books, 1066 s. ISBN 03-454-1061-0.

SCHLOZMAN, Kay Lehman (1987): Elections in America: the 200-year history of the Democratic Party. Boston: Allen, 336 s. ISBN 00-449-7023-4.

TOLLIVER, Julia (2011): Distinguishable Gentleman and the Presidential Race of '08. Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation. ISBN: 9781453587904.

WHITE, Theodore H. (2009): The making of the president, 1960. First Harper Perennial Political Classics Edition. New York: HarperPerennial Political Classics, 400 s. ISBN 978-006-1900-600.

Liberty, equality, power: a history of the American people. 6th ed. Australia: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2008. s. 463. ISBN 04-959-1588-2.

National Party Conventions, 1831 - 1992. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1995, s. 7-8. ISBN 08-718-7856-9.

Of the people: the 200-year history of the Democratic Party. Los Angeles: General Pub. Group, c1992, 220 s. ISBN 1-881649-00-8.

Documents:

The Constitution of United States of America

Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Detroit

(<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25970#ixzz1uGzMyS6O>,
retrieved April 29, 2012)

American Rhetoric 2012, John F. Kennedy Democratic National Convention
Nomination Acceptance Address

(<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfk1960dnc.htm>, retrieved May 1, 2012)

Iowa Caucuses & New Hampshire Primary Guide

(http://msnbc.zendesk.com/attachments/token/w02nlnlnazkr2dv/?name=2012_IANH_book_FINAL_1_.pdf, retrieved May 1, 2012)

Republican Delegate Selection and Voter Eligibility

(<http://www.thegreenpapers.com/P08/R-DSVE.phtml>, retrieved April 25, 2012)

The Green Papers: 2008 Presidential Primaries, Caucuses, and Conventions

(<http://www.thegreenpapers.com/P08/D.phtml>, retrieved April 25, 2012)

Presidential Elections in the United States: A Primer

(<http://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/RL30527.pdf>, retrieved April 28, 2012)

Gallup 2012

(<http://www.gallup.com/poll/124922/Presidential-Job-Approval-Center.aspx>,
retrieved May 1, 2012)

1960 Presidential Election Primaries

(<http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/JFK-Miscellaneous-Information/Primaries-1960.aspx>, retrieved April 15, 2012)

Thomas Gangale: The California Plan: A 21st Century Method for Nominating
Presidential Candidates, 2004

The Report of the National Symposium on the Presidential Selection, 2001

(<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/downloads/rnsps.pdf>, retrieved July 15, 2012)

Kathleen E. Kendall: Communication Patterns in Presidential Primaries 1912-2000:
Knowing the Rules of the Game

(http://shorensteincenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/r19_kendall.pdf, retrieved July 15, 2012)

Robert D. Loevy: Small States First – Large States Last: The Republican Plan for Reforming the Presidential Primaries

(<http://faculty1.coloradocollege.edu/~bloevy/bookweb/Appendix.pdf>, retrieved July 20, 2012)

Zachary Conine-Rapin: Presidential Primary Reform in the United States

(http://www.indiana.edu/~spea/pubs/undergrad-honors/honors_vol.2_no.1.pdf, retrieved August 3, 2012)

Caroline J. Tolbert and David P. Redlawsk: Reforming Presidential Nomination: Rotating State Primaries or a National Primary?

(http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1085&context=polisci_pubs, retrieved August 5, 2012)

Ops-Alaska, FairVote: The American Plan Presidential Primary Reform

(http://pweb.jps.net/~md-r/ps/AmPlan_ES_Comparison.pdf, retrieved August 5, 2012)

Online articles:

CNN, March, 6 2008

http://articles.cnn.com/2008-03-06/politics/florida.michigan_1_florida-and-michigan-primary-date-jennifer-granholm?_s=PM:POLITICS, retrieved May 3, 2012

Boston Globe, January, 3 2008

http://www.boston.com/news/politics/politicalintelligence/2008/01/obama_says_time.html, retrieved May 3, 2012

ABC News, January 5, 2008

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/DemocraticDebate/story?id=4092530&page=12#.T5Rw8tndPCM>, retrieved May 3, 2012

CNN, August 20, 2008

<http://edition.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/results/state/#SC>,
retrieved May 3, 2012

The Washington Post, January 15, 2008

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/14/AR2008011402926_pf.html, retrieved May 5, 2012

The New York Times, February 5, 2008

<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/results/votes/index.html>,
retrieved May 5, 2012

CNN, August 20, 2008

<http://edition.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/>, retrieved May 5, 2012

The New York Times, June 4, 2008

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/04/us/politics/04elect.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all,
retrieved May 5, 2012

The New York Times, June 7, 2008

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/07/us/politics/07text-clinton.html?pagewanted=all>),
retrieved May 5, 2012

Other online sources:

www.democrats.org

www.republicans.org

www.gallup.com

www.whitehouse.gov

www.fairvote.org

www.fixtheprimaries.com

www.census.gov

www.ops-alaska.com