

# The social disconnect

Sociology



The social disconnect that exists between the ruled and the rulers can be abridged by developing mechanisms that allow for ventilation of ideas, frustrations and aspirations. If the avenue for a constructive feedback from the ruled to the rulers is absent, then social strife and anarchy is bound to occur (Abramowitz & Kyle, 1998). Thus it is important for the leadership of a country to create institutions that can effectively gauge the feelings of the population and analyze such feedback into a coherent action plan so as to satisfy the goals of the ruled.

The ruled should feel that their role in the running of government is effective through the actions of their elected representative. To ensure that such persons once elected perform to the expected levels, the constitution provides for the recall mechanism. This intervention ensures that those who forget their obligations to the electorate can be removed before the expiry of their term. Referendums and plebiscites involve the people in decision making process by ensuring that far reaching legislative changes are put to a popular vote.

In this way the electorate cannot accuse the executive of dictating decisions to them. Affirmative action initiatives and social welfare programs also help to strike a balance of power between those deemed to be disadvantaged in society and those who are privileged. By attempting to improve the opportunities for social mobility for those worse off in society, the government seeks to give everyone a fair chance of rising to the pinnacle of their careers. Barrack Obama is a prime example of the level playing field that allows a black man to be at the fore front of a presidential campaign.

Reserving seats in state and federal legislative bodies for the underprivileged, helps to give a voice to those who would otherwise remained unheard. Despite these developments, there are few pertinent questions that need to be asked about the whole process of trying to balance out the competing interests between the ruled and the rulers. Beneficiaries of affirmative action are uncomfortable with the policy because the pejorative connotation that the person is not qualified and occupies a certain position just to fill the ethnic balance.

This may not be the case and the beneficiary feels slighted to be considered undeserving. Diversity training and implementation policies are addressing the issue with a view to correcting the misconceptions that developed out the affirmative action program. Referendums come close to allowing for the population to participate in the decision making process. However the numbers of issues put to the electorate to decide are few while the issues of campaign funding raise important questions. For the most part, the lobbyists with the most resources are usually able to convince the electorate to vote in a certain way.

This raises the matter of whether a poorly funded campaign can turn the tide in a hotly contested referendum. If the answer to that question is a resounding No! , then the truth of the matter is that the propertied will always have their way despite the cosmetic mechanisms the ruling elite put in place to convince the masses that the ruled are in control of the governing process. Minorities will continue to suffer the effects of oppression until they get their representatives to actively agitate for their welfare.