

Pure democracy assignment



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In a time where all forms of government seem to fail, I can only think of one form of government that seems to be better off than the rest. It is Modern Direct Democracy. I choose Modern Direct Democracy because it truly gives the power back to the people. With Modern Direct Democracy people will not be subjected to follow the laws which only the politicians wanted, but instead will follow the laws which they have helped create or approved of. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau once said, “ No act of theirs (government) can be a law unless it is ratified by the people in person; and without that ratification nothing is a law. It is also a government that remains loyal to the spirit of democracy: For the People, By the People, and Of the People. A government made to serve and not to be served. But my favorite thing about this form of government is its oneness. How a decision and all its possible consequences are shouldered by all and not only by the government officials, or the representatives. Modern Direct Democracy is currently being practiced by countries like U. S. A, Canada and (most dominantly) Switzerland. Direct democracy in its traditional form is “ rule by the people through referenda”.

The people are given the right to pass laws, veto laws and withdraw support from a representative (if the system has representatives) at any time.

Modern direct democracy is characterized by three pillars: * Initiative – provides a means by which a petition signed by a certain minimum number of registered voters can force a public vote on a proposed statute, constitutional amendment, charter amendment or ordinance. * Referendum (including binding referenda) – a direct vote in which an entire electorate is asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal. Recall – a procedure by which voters can remove an elected official from office. Modern Direct

Democracy (like all forms of government) is not perfect therefore has its own PROs and CONs: PRO * While politicians try to determine what's in the best interests of citizens, citizens themselves are better at making these kinds of determinations. * Citizens might not be well informed or might be too emotional/selfish to make a good policy or judgment. * It calls the people to be more informed when it comes to the matters of the state. * Direct democracy avoids appointment of unaccountable officials.

All officials must be chosen and appointed by the people. * All are given equal political powers to participate. * Cuts the pressure strings of the rich and powerful groups on the government since the final decision lies with the people. * Less chances of corruption. CON * Voters may choose incoherent policies: for instance, a majority may vote in favor of reducing taxes, while a majority may also vote for increasing expenses for public education. * Chances of corrupted re-calls * Citizens might not be well informed or might be too emotional/selfish to make a good policy or judgment. * Can result to a Tyranny of the majority. Direct Democracy is a slow process and can be expensive in large scales. * Referenda are often a malignant form of protestation. * Direct democracy avoids appointment of unaccountable officials. All officials must be chosen and appointed by the people. * All are given equal political powers to participate. * Voters may choose incoherent policies: for instance, a majority may vote in favor of reducing taxes, while a majority may also vote for increasing expenses for public education. One of the major arguments about Modern Direct Democracy is the “ common” people's ability to contribute to the governing of the state.

The argument is that the general public is not well informed enough to judge appropriate actions of the government or to make good political decisions, but isn't this statement underestimating the masses and at the same time overestimating the government officials? How could a group of 50 something men understand what's in the best interest for millions of men? A lot of government has already proven to us numerous times that they are incapable in making Political Decisions, so why are we still so focused in over-estimating their skills in running a state?

They say the public is uninformed but this is mostly because the government doesn't like to share and loves to hide their tracks. In a Direct Democracy, it would be a government's job to share and inform the people making it easier for the people to understand what's going on around them and to give them the chance to join in the decision making. We live in the Information age. It's not that hard to share and gain information anymore. Another matter was the incoherency, but problems of inconsistency are not only present in Direct Democracy.

Switzerland is a good example to prove the effectiveness of Modern Direct Democracy. Currently, Switzerland is one of the richest countries in the world. Zurich and Geneva have respectively been ranked as the cities with the second and third highest quality of life in the world. It is also one of the most peaceful countries in the world. It is also a country that is self-sufficient in many ways. (It has rejected invitation to the EU since the 1990s) and does not rely heavily on other nations. All this things were not achieved by the Swiss government alone but by the combined efforts of the government and the people.

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