Theoretical Underpinnings of a Pure Digital Democracy Model of Government

PRELIMINARY VERSION

A Hypothetically Superior Way of Structuring the Legislative and Executive Branches of Government

BY EWAN MCINNES

The OBJECT of this paper is to:

a) outline the conceptual framework for a radical new theoretical form of direct democracy called a **PURE DIGITAL DEMOCRACY**;

b) describe the comparative advantages of the new model over current representative models of government; and

c) put forth the case for the new model's potential to ultimately replace current representative models of government.

NOTE

This is a preliminary shortened version of the paper - a sort of progress report, if you will. It only gives a brief overview of the model and does not contain details of the decision-making processes that it will use.

A complete version should hopefully be ready by early next year (i.e. early 2020). A list of the contents that that version should contain is included in the appendix of this paper along with a brief summary of my plans once the paper is complete.

- Ewan McInnes

ABBREVIATIONS

DMP	Decision-Making Process
EDCU	Executive Department Chief Undersecretary
OCDB	Open Citizenry Decision-Making Body
PDD	Pure Digital Democracy
TSD	Temporary Solution Directive
VC	Virtual Committee
VEC	Virtual Executive Cabinet
VEDH	Virtual Executive Department Head
BCR	Basic Colour-Rating (vote/method)
SCR	Schulze Colour-Rating (vote/method)
SPCR	Schulze Pairwise Colour-Rating (vote/method)

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CHAPTER ONE

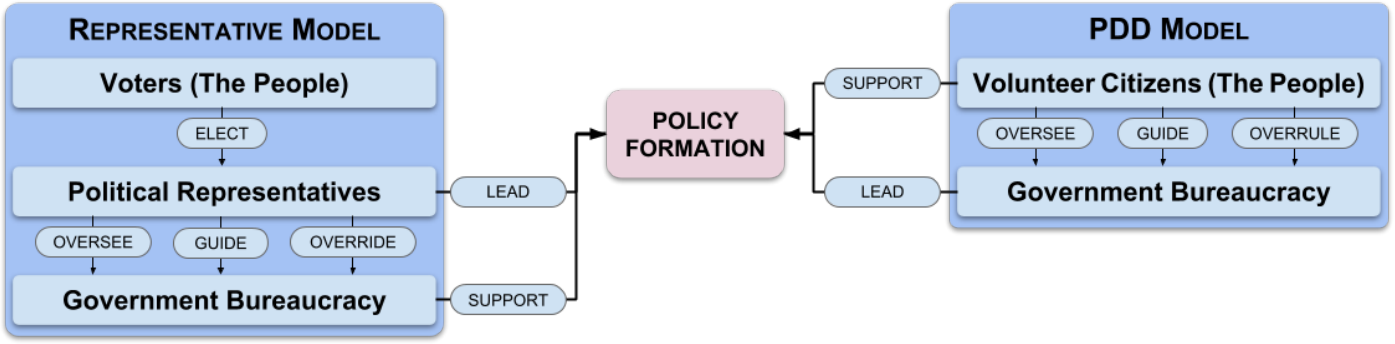
OVERVIEW OF THE PDD MODEL

What is a Pure Digital Democracy?

Basically, it's a radical new theoretical form of direct democracy in which the current physical legislative and executive branches of government (i.e. the congress/parliament and the cabinet) are both effectively replaced with virtual versions (i.e. websites/mobile apps) upon which millions of volunteer citizens, with the help of an empowered bureaucracy, collectively carry out the roles presently carried out by their political representatives (i.e. the politicians). Put differently, in a PDD, politicians, political parties and the election cycle are all made redundant and the government effectively becomes a single, massive, ongoing, online collaboration project that any citizen is allowed to participate in at any time however much they please.

A key principle of the new model is that all political power, with the exception of the judiciary, is spread evenly amongst the populace so that every single citizen has exactly the same capacity as every other citizen to participate in every decision of government at every point in the decision's decision-making process. In other words, the distribution of political power within the PDD system is absolutely flat. The model is also pure in two senses: it is purely digital in that all decision-making processes take place in an online environment and it is purely (or rather fully) democratic in that all political power, with the exception of the judiciary, is ultimately held by the people, not just in principle but in actuality.

PDD model vs current representative models in a nutshell



In current representative models of government, the people (as voters) **elect** their political representatives. Those representatives (at least some of them) then **oversee** the government bureaucracy's operations and *strongly* **guide** those operations through direct orders and the creation and modification of numerous key planning and policy documents. Representatives also take the leading role in determining government policy with the bureaucracy supporting their initiatives. Representatives also have the power to **override** practically any bureaucratic decision with their own.

In the PDD model, on the other hand, the people (as volunteer citizens) directly **oversee** the government bureaucracy's operations and *weakly* **guide** them through the creation and modification of a handful of top-tier planning and policy documents. The bureaucracy also takes the leading role in determining government policy with the citizenry playing a supporting role in the formulation of initiatives selected in part by the bureaucracy and in part by the citizenry. The citizenry also has the capacity to collectively **overrule** (i.e. reject or veto) any bureaucratic decision including any proposed policy formulated by the bureaucracy, in effect giving it ultimate political authority in the system.

Role of the Citizenry and Bureaucracy in a PDD

While the citizenry plays a relatively major role in PDD government decision-making, its role is still curtailed in large part because large-scale collective decision-making in which everyone has equal power is an inherently arduous and time-consuming endeavour. In a PDD, even what would normally be a relatively simple task for an individual or small team can take an inordinate amount of time for the citizenry to collectively carry out. For example, it takes three weeks for the citizenry just to form a vision statement, mission statement and list of core values for the government's main strategic planning document even though the task only involves three basic steps.

One of the primary reasons it tends to take volunteer citizens so long to carry out tasks in a PDD is because in order to ensure every citizen has a decent opportunity to participate in every decision of government at every point in the decision's decision-making process, every step of every decision-making process, regardless of how trivial, effectively has to take at least one day. For example, it is unfair to hold a vote in the morning then have another subsequent vote based on the results of that first vote in the afternoon, especially in jurisdictions with multiple time zones.

To make matters more difficult, some steps in some important decision-making processes need to be carried out by as many citizens as possible in order to maximise the decision's legitimacy. Such steps essentially have to take between three to seven days (i.e. half a week to a week). This ultimately puts severe restrictions on the number and complexity of decisions that volunteer citizens in a PDD can make by themselves.

In a PDD, to get around these inherent limitations, the citizenry collaborates with bureaucratic officials on practically every complex task it undertakes while focusing its own efforts on carrying out the most important parts of the most important tasks and leaving the parts of tasks that would generally take it too long to carry out itself to the bureaucracy. The calendar on which the government operates is also extended from 12 months to 18 months in order to permit longer and more thorough decisions.

The key tasks the citizenry in a PDD will focus on include:

- identifying and quantifying societal problems;
- formulating the government's overarching strategic planning document;
- filling vacant senior government official, governing board and advisory council positions;
- setting the government's agenda;
- acquiring, assessing and prioritising information relevant to agenda items; and
- setting spending levels in the government's budget including for new programs and projects.

The role of the citizenry and the bureaucracy in the formulation of general government policy depends on a number of factors, namely the type of policy being formulated, the likely degree of complexity of the policy in its final form and whether the process is subject to time restraints.

Jointly Formulating Policy with the Bureaucracy

The PDD model espouses four potential processes for jointly formulating policy with the bureaucracy. They are the Standard Inquiry, Standard Review, Open Review and Predefined Review.

The **STANDARD INQUIRY** mimics the format of inquiries performed by committees in current representative models. The process starts with citizens acquiring, assessing and prioritising information relevant to the inquiry including potential solutions to identified problems sourced from other websites (i.e. civil society). At the same time, participants break off into small groups and discuss the topic of the inquiry in their group's own discussion forum including any potential solutions that tickle their fancy. The bureaucracy then uses the sorted information and the aggregate data from the forum discussions to produce a report containing the inquiry's findings and recommendations. Citizens then review and, if warranted, revise the report's findings and recommendations. The bureaucracy then decides which recommendations to implement. If the citizenry is unhappy with the bureaucracy's decision not implement a certain recommendation, it can subsequently overrule the bureaucracy and force it to implement the recommendation.

In a **STANDARD REVIEW**, the topic of the review is framed as a problem in need of a solution. The process starts in a similar fashion to the Standard Inquiry. Citizens acquire, assess and prioritise (by voting for and rating) relevant information including any potential solutions and solution ideas sourced from other websites while at the same time discussing the topic of the review in their group's own discussion forum. The bureaucracy then takes all the available information including citizens' most preferred potential solutions and solution ideas under advisement and formulates one or more solutions of its own. It then presents that solution or solutions, each possibly with a number of options (i.e. variations of the same solution), to the citizenry that then reviews them and votes for their preferred solution and options. The bureaucracy then implements that solution with those options.

The Standard Review is best used for when the problem and its root causes are clearly defined. When the problem is unclear, the Standard Inquiry is most likely the better choice.

In an **OPEN REVIEW**, citizens systematically engage in multiple, successive rounds of discussions, negotiations and votes to gradually build consensus amongst one another. The process starts like the first two processes. Citizens acquire, assess and prioritise relevant information and discuss the topic of the review in their group's own discussion forum including any proposed solutions that have been put forth. Each group of citizens then selects a single proposed solution to use as their group's starting point for deliberations. Each group is then given an opportunity to make modifications to their initial position before they begin the negotiation rounds. In the negotiation rounds, each group endeavours to merge their group's solution with that of another group, in effect doubling the size of each group while halving the total number of groups each round. The negotiating groups continue iteratively merging their positions until there are only two groups left in the final round. The merged solution that emerges from the final round is then implemented by the bureaucracy.

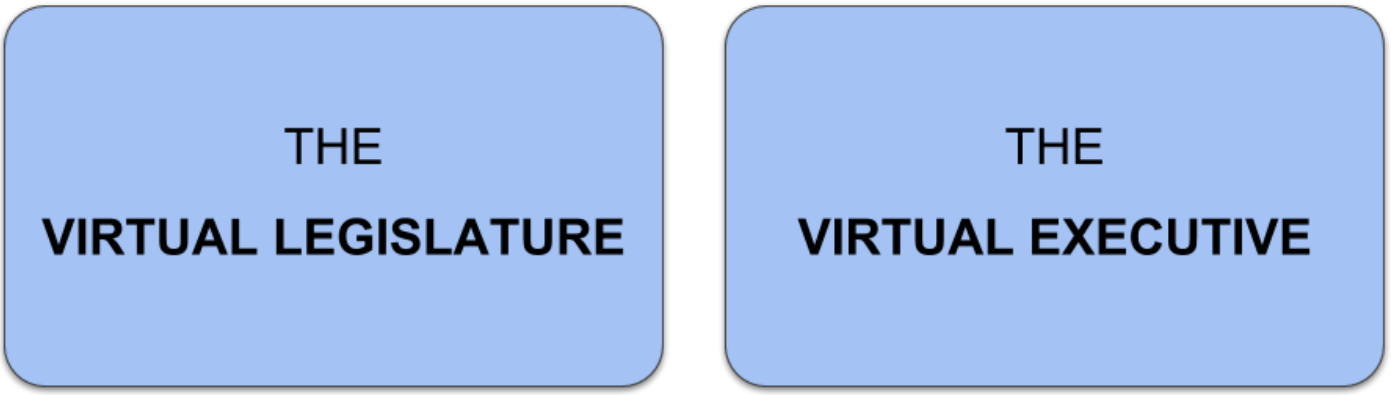
Of the four types, the Open Review gives the citizenry the most control over the content of policy. However, it's also the most laborious and takes the longest and is generally only suitable when the end document is liable to be of only moderate complexity. It's not well-suited for formulating highly complex policies.

The **PREDEFINED REVIEW** is similar to the Open Review except that the initial policy document is defined instead of undefined. In other words, every participating group in a Predefined Review uses the same policy document as a starting point. Like the Open Review, each group is initially given the opportunity to make modifications to their version of the document before the start of the negotiation rounds. The negotiation rounds then proceed in a similar fashion to the Open Review. However, because there is liable to be far less variation in the positions of different groups on account of every group starting with the same position, a Predefined Review should generally only take a fraction of the time and effort of an Open Review.

The Predefined Review is most commonly used for relatively low-level documents drafted by the bureaucracy.

The PDD Model

In the PDD model, the roles and functions of the legislative body (i.e. the parliament/congress) and the executive body (i.e. the cabinet) are effectively carried out in two virtual bodies:



The **VIRTUAL LEGISLATURE** is essentially responsible for handling all decisions related to the exploration and formulation of new government plans, policies and laws plus the review of old ones while the **VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE** is essentially responsible for handling all decisions related to overseeing the government bureaucracy's execution of those plans, policies and laws.

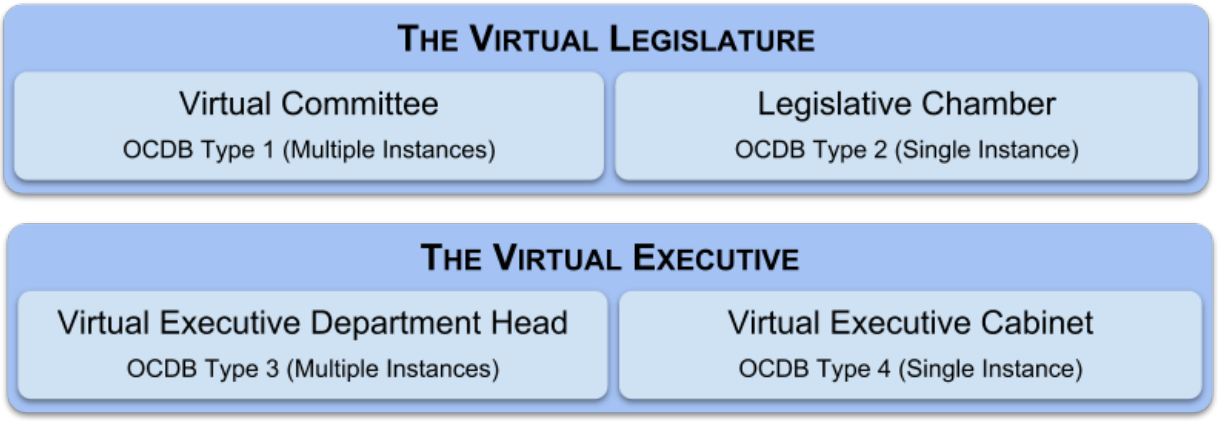
Within the two virtual bodies, virtually all non-bureaucratic executive and legislative branch decision-making is collectively carried out exclusively by volunteer citizens in collective decision-making bodies known as **OPEN CITIZENRY DECISION-MAKING BODIES (OCDBs)** with each individual decision carried out in its own **DECISION-MAKING PROCESS (DMP)** that may or may not take place in more than one OCDB.

Open Citizenry Decision-Making Bodies (OCDBs)

As their name suggests, OCDBs are open to all members of the citizenry meaning any citizen who wants to join a specific OCDB is free to join that OCDB as well as any other OCDB that their heart desires. Every member of an OCDB is also free to join and participate in as few or as many active DMPs within their desired OCDBs at any point of time in those DMPs as they like. OCDBs also have no membership limit meaning every citizen in a PDD is capable of simultaneously being a member of the same OCDB and simultaneously participating in the same DMP in that OCDB. The distribution of power within every DMP in every OCDB is also completely flat meaning every participant in every decision-making process has exactly the same capacity to both provide input into the process and influence its outcome as every other participant in that process.

Every DMP in every OCDB also uses natural language at every point in the process. This includes all policies, plans, programs and projects formulated in such processes. Participants in such processes would most likely never directly assess the legislative underpinnings of their decisions even when the new policy, plan, program or project they are voting on required legislative changes. Basically, the formulation and management of government legislation in a PDD is treated as an administrative task to be carried out exclusively by the bureaucracy with participants altering the plain language versions of legislation and the bureaucracy transcribing those alterations into legislative language.

There are essentially four types of OCDBs: two in the Virtual Legislature (the Virtual Committee and Legislative Chamber) and two in the Virtual Executive (the Virtual Executive Department Head and Virtual Executive Cabinet).



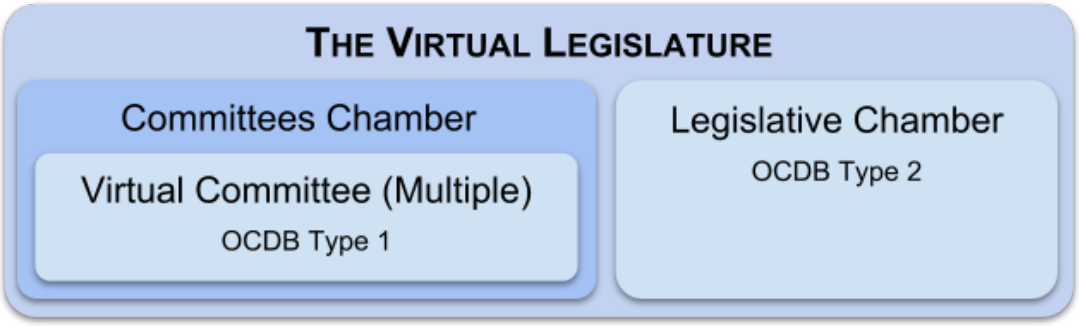
In a PDD, there are multiple instances of both the Virtual Committee and Virtual Executive Department Head OCDBs but only a single instance of both the Legislative Chamber and Virtual Executive Cabinet OCDBs.

Role of the PDD Model's Four Core OCDBs in a Nutshell

The Virtual Legislature	The Virtual Executive
VIRTUAL COMMITTEES formulate and modify government policy.	**VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT HEADS** oversee the bureaucracy's execution of government policy.
The **LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER** decides whether to approve or reject legislative changes put to it by virtual committees.	The **VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE CABINET** makes a small number of relatively important executive-level decisions.

The Virtual Legislature

The Virtual Legislature consists of two separate and independent virtual chambers.



The first is called the **COMMITTEES CHAMBER** and comprises exclusively of a multitude of the Virtual Committee OCDB type. It's essentially responsible for handling all decision-making processes related to the exploration and formulation of new government plans, policies and laws along with the review of old ones.

The second is called the **LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER** and is itself the sole instance of its OCDB type. It's essentially responsible for handling the final round of voting for Committees Chamber decisions that require legislative changes.

Virtual Committees (VCs)

In current legislatures, the task of evaluating both potential and existing government policies, programs, projects and laws in any one area is often delegated to a small group of politicians known as a parliamentary or congressional committee. In a PDD, these committees are each essentially replaced with an instance of the Virtual Committee OCDB. Compared to current parliamentary and congressional committees, VCs in a PDD play a much larger and much more authoritative role in practically every facet of government decision-making. Instead of simply evaluating certain government policies referred to them by the larger legislative body then recommending changes, VCs will:

- set the government agenda;
- formulate ALL new government plans, policies, programs, projects and laws;
- review ALL existing government plans, policies, programs, projects and laws;
- review ALL internal policies, plans, programs and projects for all government departments and agencies; and
- determine the government budget.

Basically, VCs are the engine horses of the PDD political system.

While the Virtual Legislature's Committees Chamber comprises maybe two dozen VCs, each with multiple complex independent DMPs, the Virtual Legislature's Legislative Chamber comprises a single simplistic DMP exclusively for approving or rejecting proposed changes to legislation.

The Legislative Chamber is effectively the only OCDB with the authority to enact legislation. For a bill to become law in a PDD, it has to be approved in the Legislative Chamber.

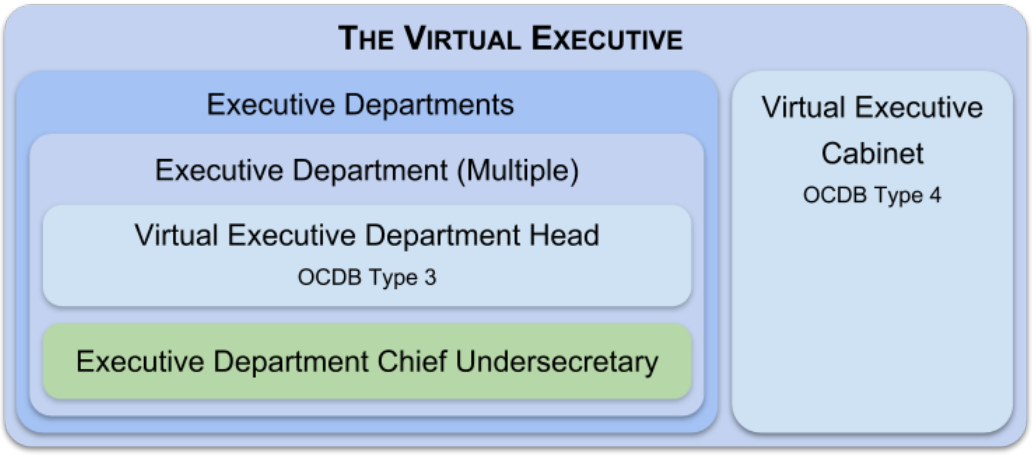
Bills tabled in the Legislative Chamber would be accompanied by a document written in plain language explaining the bill's purpose and function as well as what changes are being made to what current policies. While participants in the Legislative Chamber would still have access to the bill, they would base their vote on the plain language version of the bill.

Votes in the Legislative Chamber would be simple up/down votes. Participants would only be able to either approve or reject a bill. They wouldn't be able to modify the bill in any way, although when they vote a bill down they would be able to state why they were rejecting a bill. Bills that failed to pass the Legislative Chamber would be sent back to the VC from whence they came along with the collated data on why participants who turned it down, turned it down. Participants in that VC, who would be some of the same people that participated in the Legislative Chamber vote, would then have the option of trying to modify the bill using the rejection data as reference before sending it back to the Legislative Chamber for another vote.

Other than to formally alter legislation, there are two other reasons for putting VC decisions that require legislative changes to a final vote in the Legislative Chamber. The first is to try to ensure there is nothing in the decision the wider population finds overly objectionable. The second is to try to maximise the number of people who vote on and approve legislative changes in an effort to maximise the legitimacy of each of those legislative changes in the eyes of the people. Because part of the purpose of the Legislative Chamber votes is to maximise the legitimacy of legislative changes in the eyes of the people, the PDD platform would actually systematically encourage as many as citizens as possible to vote on as many pending legislative changes in the Legislative Chamber as they can each week. In particular, the platform would encourage citizens that have been recently active on the platform. As a result, the number of people liable to participate in any one Legislative Chamber vote is liable to be at least half a dozen times the number that voted in the final vote to approve the decision in the VC that the particular proposed legislative change originated from.

The Virtual Executive

Like the Virtual Legislature, the PDD's Virtual Executive consists of two main components.



The first is the **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS** and comprises a multitude of executive departments, each with its own **VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT HEAD (VEDH)** OCDB and special government official known as an **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT CHIEF UNDERSECRETARY (EDCU)**. The purpose of the VEDH and EDCU in each executive department is to jointly oversee the bureaucracy's execution of government policy that is presently carried out by a member of the executive cabinet in their capacity as head of an executive department.

The second component is the **VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE CABINET (VEC)** and is itself the sole instance of its OCDB type. Its purpose is to make a small number of relatively important executive-level decisions that are presently made by the executive cabinet.

Roles and responsibilities of VEDHs

Compared to current executive department heads, the roles and decision-making responsibilities of VEDHs in a PDD are significantly reduced due in large part to the fact that responsibility for formulating virtually all government policies, plans, programs, projects and legislation in a PDD is held by the Committees Chamber (i.e. the Virtual Committee System) of the Virtual Legislature. Still, each VEDH in a PDD will have a number of responsibilities including:

- ensuring every department and agency in their portfolio continuously operates at optimal levels;
- filling vacant senior government positions within departments and agencies in their portfolio;
- filling vacant positions on governing boards and advisory councils that operate within their portfolio;
- authorising individuals to act and negotiate on the government's behalf at inter-government meetings on subjects covered in their portfolio;
- signing off on new policies and plans that affect one or more departments or agencies in their portfolio;
- signing off on large procurements by departments and agencies in their portfolio;
- ensuring approved policies and plans are properly implemented by the relevant departments and agencies within their portfolio; and
- ensuring government programs and projects being administered by departments and agencies in their portfolio are being administered effectively.

In order to fufil these roles and responsibilities, VEDHs will have the capacity to:

- put motions to overturn or override decisions made by senior government officials or governing boards in their portfolio to a vote in the VEC;
- question subordinates about their work by either submitting questions to them that they subsequently respond to in due time or questioning them in live virtual interviews for an immediate response; and
- issue limited directives to subordinate departmental officials.

Roles and responsibilities of EDCUs

As VEDHs will not be able to effectively fulfil every role and responsibility currently fulfilled by individual cabinet members in their capacity as head of each of executive department, each VEDH will likely delegate any and all roles and responsibilities that it cannot effectively carry out itself to a government employee in the VEDH's executive department called a chief undersecretary or EDCU. As the job title suggests, the chief undersecretary will be subordinate to the executive department's VEDH (i.e. the citizenry) but above any other secretaries in the department.

EDCUs will have a number of responsibilities including:

- acting as the primary liaison between their executive department and its VEDH;
- putting any decisions that the VEDH needs to make regarding executive department operations on the VEDH's schedule;
- overseeing the successful day-to-day running of the executive department by the EDCU's immediate subordinates;
- overseeing the successful implementation of new policies and plans approved by their VEDH;
- ensuring limited directives handed down by the VEDH are followed by all relevant government departments and employees;
- recommending to the VEDH people to fill some vacant senior government positions within departments and agencies in the same portfolio; and
- recommending to the VEDH people to fill certain vacant positions on governing boards and advisory councils that operate in the same portfolio.

For the most part, EDCUs will likely have a high degree of autonomy and will be able to carry out a large chunk of their roles and responsibilities without any formal direction from their VEDH, although occasionally they will need to get approval from their VEDH before taking certain actions such as ones that entail significant expenditures and ones that might run counter to an approved plan or policy.

Roles and responsibilities of the VEC

While the executive cabinet in current models plays a key role in practically all major executive branch decisions, the role played by the Virtual Executive Cabinet in a PDD will be far more restricted and limited to making a small number of executive branch decisions that either other OCDBs are incapable of making alone or that are of too great a consequence to be left to another OCDB.

In a PDD, the VEC is the supreme body within the Virtual Executive and effectively acts as the supreme arbitrator in non-legislative disputes in the PDD system (with legislative disputes being handled by the judiciary). As a result,

decisions made in the VEC take precedence over any decisions made in a VEDH, effectively meaning the VEC will have the capacity to override decisions made in a VEDH that it sees as illogical.

Like the Legislative Chamber, the VEC will have only a very limited capacity to schedule its own business with the vast majority of its business being scheduled through other OCDB decision-making processes.

The VEC would hold votes on:

- approving new policies and plans that affect departments or agencies in multiple portfolios (put to it by VCs);
- motions to overturn or override a decision made by a senior government official or governing board (put to it by VEDHs);
- motions to overturn a VEDH decision that allegedly exceeds its authority (put to it by VEDHs);
- temporary solution directives instructing the bureaucracy to come up with a temporary solution to an issue (put to it by itself); and
- temporary policy solutions (put to it by bureaucrats in response to the above kind of directive).

VEC: Temporary solution directives

There will inevitably be occasions when the government will need to quickly come up with a complex policy solution to address a sudden or unexpected problem. Unfortunately, coming up with complex policy solutions in a short span of time is not really the PDD model's strong suit as such solutions ordinarily have to be hashed out in a VC. Hence, people in a PDD will have the capacity to quickly issue a special type of government directive through the VEC called a **TEMPORARY SOLUTION DIRECTIVE (TSD)**.

In all likelihood, PDD participants will be able get a TSD aimed at addressing a particular problem put to the VEC for a vote within 24 hours of that problem arising while the voting period for such votes could be as short as 24 hours meaning TSDs could be approved within 48 hours.

The TSDs themselves will most likely not prescribe any actual policy solutions or suggest any possible policy options, although they could possibly prescribe the parameters that bureaucrats formulating the solution will need to adhere to. TSDs will also most likely avoid stating which government department should take the lead in formulating the solution as there will probably be a good chance a lot of the people participating in the formulation of a directive will not know the right answer meaning participants could end up putting the wrong department in charge if they tried specifying the lead department inside the directive. Participants would probably also avoid trying to specify why the issue is problematic as sometimes the reasons will be obvious while other times it may be disputable leading participants to waste time trying to agree on the exact reasons the issue is problematic when that time could be better spent on matters of substance.

While the short duration of the DMP for a TSD effectively limits the level of consensus that participants in the process can achieve, it should still be possible to get consensus on TSDs several paragraphs long if the SPCR voting method is used. In any case, every TSD will say at a minimum "This issue is a problem that needs to be addressed ASAP. Find a viable solution to it as quickly as possible then present the solution possibly with options to the Virtual Government".

Once government bureaucrats have come up with a viable policy solution, the solution would be put to the VEC for approval. If the solution put forth contains no policy options, participants in the VEC will simply vote 'up' or 'down' on the measure. However, if the solution comes with policy options, VEC participants would vote using the SCR voting method. As a rule, all solutions put forth by the bureaucracy in response to a TSD and subsequently approved by PDD

decision-makers will automatically include a sunset provision limiting the timeframe in which the solution will be in effect to something like no more than six months. As soon VEC participants approved a temporary solution, a review of the solution along with full analysis of the underlying problem would be immediately scheduled in the relevant VC.

VEDHs: Hiring and dismissing senior government officials

One of the core roles and responsibilities of each VEDH will be to hire their executive department's EDCU as well as the other senior government officials that operate within their jurisdiction.

Instead of being selected by a prime minister, president or other cabinet member, VEDHs will directly select senior government employees, including each's EDCU, using a process closer to a standard hiring process than an election. In order to prevent the hiring process from becoming like an election, applicants for a position would most likely not be allowed to make any public statements that might be construed as trying to influence citizens' choice for the position. Applicants would also most likely be given between two to four weeks to submit their job application for the position to the PDD platform. Meanwhile, senior department officials would be permitted to submit applications on behalf of subordinates, in effect putting them up for promotion.

After applications for a position closed, individual VEDH participants would compare random pairs of applicants with one another and select which of the two applicants has the superior application and they would collectively carry out these pairwise comparisons thousands or even hundreds of thousands or even millions of times (depending on how many applicants there were and what the position was). Every applicant would be compared the same number of times with every other applicant so that all the applicants were compared the same number of times overall. After VEDH participants had compared each applicant a sufficient number of times, probably the top four to eight applicants with the best comparison record would advance to the next stage of the hiring process. VEDH participants would then spend a week conducting collective interviews of each of the remaining candidates (see Chapter Two: Other Aspects of the PDD Model for more details). VEDH participants would then hold a second round of voting with the winner of that second round securing the position (see Chapter Three: Primary Voting Methods for more details on the exact voting method used).

In addition to having the capacity to hire people to fill senior government positions, the citizenry, through the relevant VEDH, would also have the capacity to dismiss underperforming or misbehaving senior government officials including chief undersecretaries if it had just cause to do so. The process for dismissing such employees could take one of several forms. The process could simply entail giving the VEDH the authority to dismiss subordinates without having to justify their actions much like the President of the United States. Alternatively, it could entail the unsatisfactory employee being referred to either a public service arbitrator or small group of randomly selected volunteer citizens who then either decide the fate of the employee or make recommendations to a wider public body (either the VEDH itself or the VEC) that then decides their fate.

VEDHs: Overturning senior government official decisions

A pivotal power of VEDHs will be the ability to instigate proceedings to retroactively overturn or override any decision made by any senior government official under their employ including those made by their EDCU and those made by any board under their jurisdiction excluding those with legally guaranteed independence such as the governing board of the federal reserve.

Essentially, all government departments and agencies and governing boards in a PDD will be required to regularly upload a list of recent major decisions made by senior departmental officials along with the reasoning behind each of those decisions to the PDD platform. Once a department, agency or board informs the VEDH of a major decision, the citizenry is then provided with a limited opportunity to try to overturn that decision.

VEDHs: Authorising individuals to act on the government's behalf

Another key power VEDHs will have is the power to authorise individuals to act and negotiate on the government's behalf at inter-governmental meetings. In most cases, the VEDH will probably simply choose their executive department's EDCU. However, it will have the capacity to choose someone else. The most likely process would involve the EDCU being required to put forward several names alongside their own.

Role of Government Employees in PDD DMPs

As legitimate members of the citizenry, government employees will be allowed to fully participate in all PDD decisions of government including ones that affect their own department or agency.

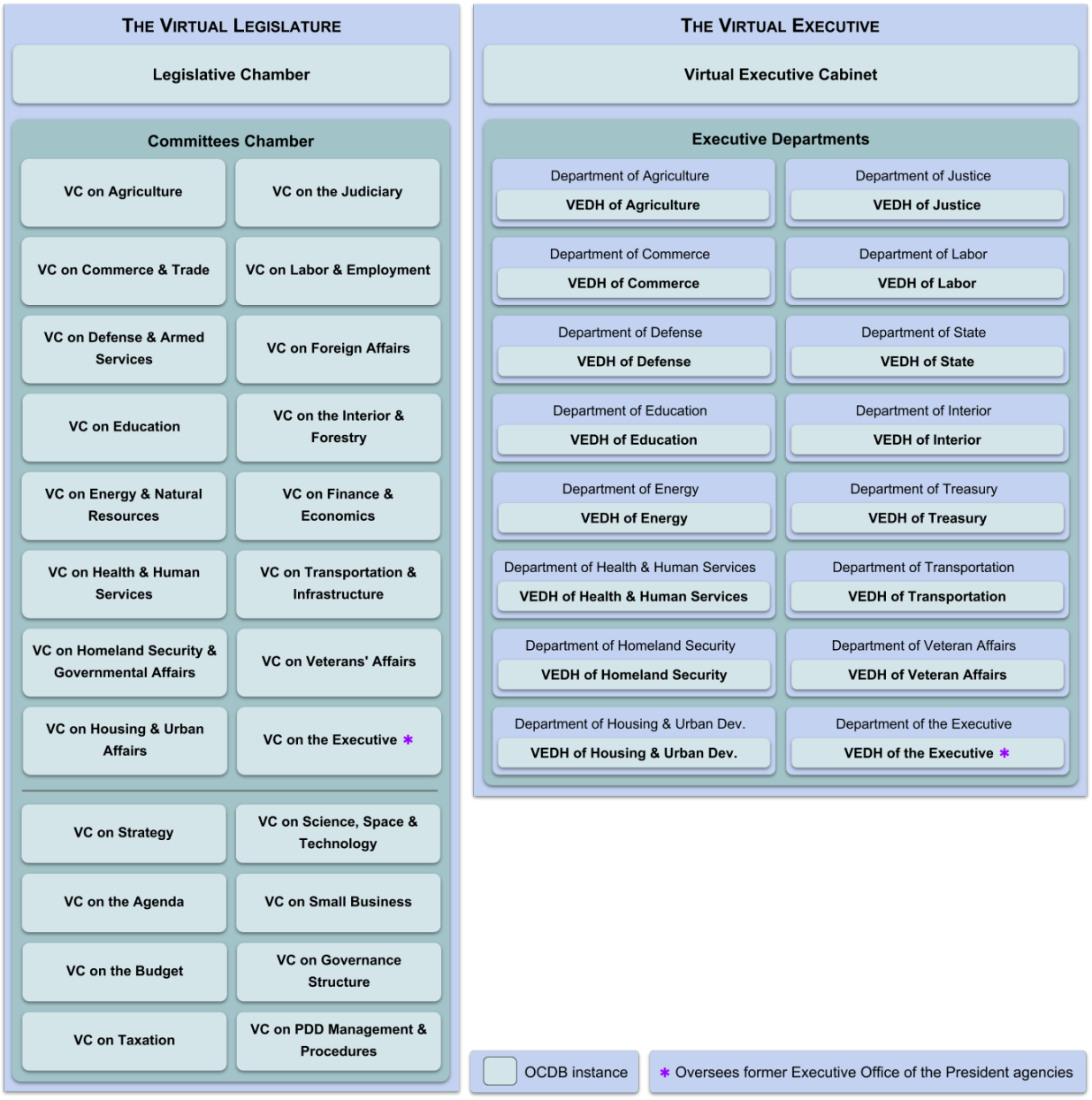
As a lot of PDD decisions that affect a department or agency will affect employees throughout those departments and agencies from the top down, employees of departments and agencies affected by a decision are liable to constitute a sizable share of the volunteer citizens participating in such decisions. In some cases, they are even liable to constitute a majority of the DMP's participants. The upshot is government departments and agencies in a PDD are liable to operate in a quasi-self governing manner with rank-and-file employees essentially becoming their boss's boss's boss.

Allowing government employees to play a strong role in the formulation of policies, plans and decisions that affect their own department or agency is surprisingly uncontroversial. Indeed, there appears to be numerous benefits in allowing government employees to participate in decisions determining departmental policy and direction and no perceivable downside. One benefit is that department employees will obviously have a much better understanding of the department's inner workings, capabilities and needs than people outside the department leading to more efficient and effective decisions and policies.

Letting rank-and-file departmental employees play a prominent role in directly approving departmental policies should also lead many of them to take 'ownership' of those policies, subsequently increasing the likelihood that they will genuinely endeavour to see approved policies implemented in full. Letting rank-and-file departmental employees play a prominent role in deciding who leads their department will also help legitimise the authority of whoever is in charge of the department in the eyes of the rank-and-file, in effect increasing the number of rank-and-file employees who will be liable to happily follow orders from their department's leaders. Allowing rank-and-file departmental employees to participate in VEDH decisions will also give them a way of potentially removing and replacing departmental leaders who are widely seen as incompetent by people inside their own department. Allowing rank-and-file departmental employees to participate in VEDH decisions will also give them a way of potentially overturning decisions by senior department officials that they believe to be ill-conceived. Allowing rank-and-file departmental employees to participate in VEDH decisions will also give them a way of potentially challenging their superiors' methods and decisions by questioning them during virtual interviews and inquiries. The empowerment of departmental employees in a PDD should ultimately lead to a substantial increase in government employee job satisfaction.

The PDD Virtual Government

Example of Possible OCDB Structure for a U.S. Federal PDD Virtual Government



All instances of the four types of OCDBs (VC, Legislative Chamber, VEDH and VEC) collectively constitute the **PDD VIRTUAL GOVERNMENT**. When combined, OCDBs collectively wield absolute control over virtually all decision-making in both the legislative and executive branches of a PDD government at all times. In a PDD, virtually every major government decision either requires the approval of at least one OCDB before it is actually made or can be subsequently overturned by one or more OCDBs after the fact. Furthermore, in a PDD, literally all decision-making powers enjoyed by members of the bureaucracy is entirely delegated to them by the PDD Virtual Government with the PDD Virtual Government having the authority to rescind any of those decision-making powers at any time. Moreover, as every single OCDB in a PDD is collectively controlled exclusively by the citizenry itself and all citizens in a PDD have the exact same capacity to influence every OCDB, citizens as a collective will effectively possess absolute control over their entire government's operations. Accordingly, in a PDD, there is effectively no separation or differentiation between the people and the government. In a PDD, the people collectively are the actual government and a **'Government of the People, by the People, for the People'** is not just an ideal, it's an actuality.

The Speed “Problem” (and Essential Processes)

The speed “problem” is a problem in the PDD model that arises as a result of the slow nature of PDD decision-making. Basically, the problem is that in a PDD that operates on a standard 48-week calendar year (assuming four weeks off a year), there is not enough time in the schedule to comfortably fit all the necessary decision-making processes. In other words, PDD decision-making processes take too long to fit into a normal yearly schedule.

In a PDD, there are four essential DMPs that all have to held at different times from one another because they are each dependent on at least one other. They are:

- The Problem Identification Process (PIP) - 3 weeks
- The Strategic Plan Major Review Process (SPMRP) - 15 weeks
- The Agenda-Setting Process (ASP) - 10 weeks
- The Budget Formulation Process (BFP) - 12 weeks

In the **PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION PROCESS (PIP)**, which should take approximately three weeks to complete, participants basically try to identify and quantify as many current problems as they can.

The **STRATEGIC PLAN MAJOR REVIEW PROCESS (SPMRP)**, which should take approximately 15 weeks to complete, would actually only be carried out every third, fourth or fifth year. In other years, the model would actually use the more regular standard **STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW PROCESS (SPRP)**, which is somewhat shorter in duration. However, as it’s obviously no good having a schedule that doesn’t fit every single year, the SPMRP has to be used as the standard. In the SPMRP, participants essentially collectively formulate and update the government’s overarching strategic plan that guides the entire government’s operations. The plan includes the government’s vision and mission statements, shared core values, medium and long-term goals, key performance indicators for those goals, which of those goals to strategically prioritise and top strategies for achieving those goals. The SPMRP has to take place after the PIP as, obviously, it’s nearly impossible to establish worthy and achievable goals without knowing what the problems are.

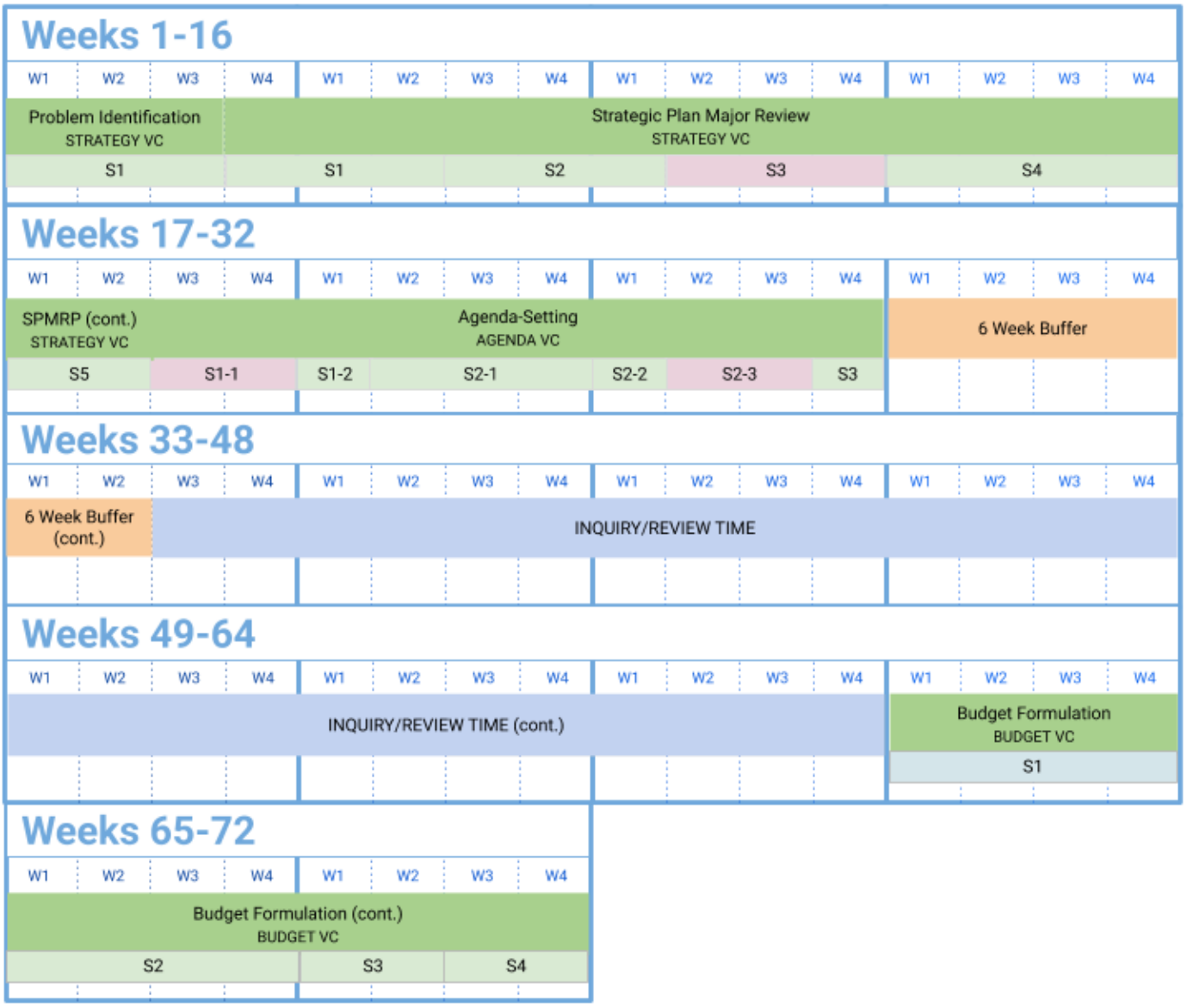
In the **AGENDA-SETTING PROCESS (ASP)**, which should take approximately 10 weeks to complete, participants don’t just set the agenda. They also create and sort a knowledge repository of information relevant to each scheduled topic and establish each review and inquiry’s terms of reference, target outcomes and solution criteria. The ASP has to take place after both the SPMRP and PIP because it’s the strategic plan and problems that people have that are used as the basis for determining what topics to put on the agenda.

In the **BUDGET FORMULATION PROCESS (BFP)**, which should take approximately 12 weeks to complete, participants basically focus on determining which programs and projects to fund and to a lesser extend how much funding to give to each of those programs and projects. The BFP has to take place after the end of reviews so that the outcomes of those reviews can be incorporated into any budget decisions.

The problem is these four essential decision-making processes alone take a total 40 weeks of the schedule. An annual schedule in which participants had four weeks off a year would have 48 weeks total leaving only eight weeks to carry out reviews and inquiries. The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the full agenda (which includes the terms of reference for each scheduled review and inquiry) is not actually definitively set until the very end of the Agenda-Setting Process, in turn making it difficult for civil servants, civil society and PDD participants to begin preparing for complex reviews and inquiries before the very end of the ASP. As a result, it is necessary to add a buffer period of approximately four weeks after the ASP ends but before any scheduled sophisticated reviews or inquiries in order to give officials, third-parties and participants enough time to prepare. This effectively leaves only four weeks to carry out actual reviews and inquiries. Obviously, that's not nearly enough time.

Solution to the speed “problem”

The easiest and most viable solution to the speed “problem” is to simply extend the calendar on which the government operates an additional two quarters, in effect expanding the PDD schedule an additional 24 operating weeks per operating period from 48 weeks to 72 weeks (with people getting four weeks off a year).



Obviously, decoupling government revenue and expenditure policies from the larger economy would not really be simple but there does not appear to be any fundamental reason why it could not be done nor any reason to believe that doing so could be so devastating to society as to render all the advantages of the PDD model moot. Indeed, it could actually be easier than it sounds as it will probably be possible to leave some or even most annual revenue policies in place. In any case, extending the PDD schedule an additional 24 weeks would effectively give the schedule 32 unassigned weeks to carry out reviews and inquiries, which should be enough time to carry out even the most comprehensive Open Review with a six week buffer beforehand.

CHAPTER TWO

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PDD MODEL

Artificial Intelligence

The PDD software platform would be heavily reliant on artificial intelligence to help participants formulate effective decisions. Indeed, nearly every decision-making process on the platform will incorporate AI at least to some degree. Amongst other things, the platform's AI will need to be able to identify qualitatively identical opinions and positions and tally them, simplify the wording and complexity of individual options in a vote as well as minimise the number of options in each vote, identify logical inconsistencies within a position as well as between two or more positions including in numerical information, collate survey questions and generalise them if necessary and provide analytical data on the status and progress of ongoing deliberations.

Application Programming Interface

The platform would also have its own API that would allow developers of external websites to make select content on their websites capable of being directly imported and referenced on the platform.

Blockchain Voting

The PDD platform would also utilise blockchain technology to create a verifiable public record of every single vote held on the platform.

Blockchains are essentially digital ledgers for recording information that are impervious to tampering. Each record or 'block' added to a blockchain incorporates the previous block's cryptographic hash effectively making it impossible to change any record in the blockchain without also changing every single previous record. Blockchain ledgers can also be distributed among multiple servers effectively enabling control of them to be jointly shared by multiple independent parties, thus making it impossible for any one party to falsify records in a blockchain without the support of all the other parties.

Every vote held in every decision-making process would essentially have its own blockchain with a unique ID number and every participant's vote in every vote would be immediately recorded in that vote's blockchain as a block. Each block would include how the participant voted and the exact time that they cast their vote along with the participant's own unique identifier. Upon voting, participants would also immediately be issued their own record of their vote that would include the vote's unique ID number, how the participant voted as well as the exact time they cast their vote that they could then cross-reference with public records to verify that their vote was indeed cast.

Discussion Forums

Most PDD decision-making processes will also likely incorporate some form of discussion forum that participants would be able to use to discuss the decision-making process's topic amongst one another. Unlike regular discussion forums, however, in which a single thread is dedicated to each topic and everybody discussing that topic posts messages to that single thread, forums for PDD decision-making processes will have multiple threads dedicated to the same topic that each contain a geographically limited number of people. In other words, instead of having a single group of a million people try to discuss a topic in a single global forum, PDD decision-making processes might have, say, 4,000 groups of 250 people each discussing the topic in their group's own localised and isolated forum.

Virtual Inquiries

In order to be able to ascertain specific information from specific individuals including senior government officials and other persons of interest, the platform would also incorporate a system for collectively asking individuals questions via virtual inquiries (not to be mistaken with the Standard Inquiry mentioned in chapter one). This virtual inquiry system would likely run on a two week cycle starting on a Sunday and ending two Saturdays later. Having the process run in cyclic fashion would effectively enable officials to anticipate when they were most likely to receive a virtual inquiry and to manage their schedule accordingly in order to allow them to respond ASAP.

The platform would also most likely include a special fast track version of the process exclusively for making inquiries into recent events. This version of the process would likely take only two to three days to complete but would be limited to asking questions about recent events of consequence.

To negate the need to for participants to have to issue a virtual inquiry then wait for a response, government officials would be strongly encouraged to preempt virtual inquiries by preemptively posting the answers to questions about their operations that they believe could be asked in an upcoming virtual inquiry.

Virtual Interviews

In addition to being able to use virtual inquiries to ascertain specific information from specific individuals including senior government officials and other persons of interest, participants on the platform would also be able to collect information in real-time via virtual interviews. The process for forming the initial questions list for a virtual interview would essentially be the same as the process for the virtual inquiry. The actual virtual interviews would be conducted in either one of two ways. The first way would be via one-way video that incorporated speech recognition software in which the interviewee gave their answers orally. The second way would be via instant messaging in which the interviewee gave their answers in writing. In either case, during the interview the platform's AI would sequentially ask the interviewee each question on the list as if the questions were being asked by a single individual. If the interview is being conducted the first way (i.e. orally via a video link), each question would most likely also be read to the interviewee using a speech synthesiser so that the entirety of the interview would be discernible just from the audio of the interview.

During the interview, participants would also have access to the list of questions the platform was preparing to ask the interviewee in the order that it plans on asking them and participants would be allowed to add follow-up or additional questions to the list in real-time. They would also be able to vote to remove questions from the list such as questions that have already been answered or awkward or inappropriate questions that somehow managed to make their way onto the list. Basically, if enough participants voted to block a pending question, that question would be removed from the list and not asked. Participants would also be able to collectively re-propose questions already asked if they were not satisfied with the answer given by the interviewee the first time around.

Internal Surveys and Polls

In an effort to collect useful information on the issue under discussion, participants in certain PDD decision-making processes would also be able to collectively formulate a survey then administer it to the wider participating body. This ability to easily gather information directly from the public at key points during a decision-making process should take a lot of the guesswork out of a lot of decisions. In certain PDD decision-making processes, specifically some of those related to overseeing the government bureaucracy, participants would also be able to use surveys to collect information directly from government employees. Such surveys may or may not be compulsory for government employees to fill out. The process for collectively formulating a survey should take a minimum week and a half (or ten days) and would essentially be the same as the process for carrying out a virtual inquiry except participants would also be able to add options to each question.

Q&A Sessions

To help participants better understand the issues that they are discussing, PDD participants would also engage in question and answer sessions. The sessions would most likely operate in a similar way to popular Q&A forums such as StackOverflow and Yahoo Answers. An individual would ask a question. The platform would then check to see if that question was qualitatively identical to any other question that had already been posted and if not it would then post that question online. Other participants would then write answers to that question or vote up (and down) the answers they did (and didn't) like resulting in those answers that garnered the most positive votes being subsequently featured most prominently in participants' user interface.

Fact-Checking and Reputations

The PDD platform would also enlist the help of a myriad of independent fact-checker sites to help gauge the factual accuracy of any questionable claims made about an issue in an effort to help weed out misinformation from PDD decision-making processes. Participants will be encouraged to read multiple external fact-checker sites in an effort to gauge the validity of relevant unverified claims then register their conclusion on the PDD platform. Each conclusion would also probably rate the claim on the following scale: completely false, mostly false, partly false, partly true, mostly true and completely true. The claims would then be displayed in participants' UI when making a relevant decision along with the percentages of participants who concluded the claim was completely false, mostly false, partly false, partly true, mostly true and completely true. Clearly erroneous claims would subsequently be disregarded by the larger decision-making body.

Participants will also be able to see the overall reputation of external sources of information. Each external website, for example, will have a reputation based on the combined assessments of all the pages fact-checked by PDD participants. Each different author on a site will also have a reputation based on the combined assessments of all his or her pages fact-checked by PDD participants.

As a result, PDD participants will likely be able to use three different measures to gauge the quality and trustworthiness of each fact-checked piece of information: participants' collective evaluation of the piece, the piece's author's reputation and the piece's site's reputation.

Local Districts

The platform would only incorporate a single type of geographical unit: the local district. Local districts are essentially predefined geographical areas that each contain a near identical number of people. They are similar to electorates in current representative models of government. Their inclusion in the system serves only two real purposes. The first is to encourage participation and cooperation by pitting local districts against one another (see **Scoreboards, Rankings and Awards** below). The second is to help facilitate certain DMPs, specifically Open Reviews and Predefined Reviews. Because of the way Open Reviews and Predefined Reviews work, the total number of local districts in a PDD system must be equal to a multiple of two (256, 512, 1024 etc.).

Scoreboards, Rankings and Awards

The platform would also incorporate a range of scoreboards, rankings and awards at both an individual and district level as a way to encourage participation and cooperation.

At an individual level, individuals would be openly ranked on their level of contribution to the platform and they would be able to see where they rank on a list of contributors in both their local community (i.e. their local district) and on a global level. Individuals will also earn virtual awards for doing things such as, say, voting a total of 100 times or voting in every single round of an Open Review. Some awards, such as the latter of the two just mentioned, could be awarded to the same individual multiple times. This awarding of awards for contributions to the platform will give individuals a sense that they are achieving something, in turn spurring them to continue contributing.

Each person's awards would also be prominently displayed on their profile page. This type of open recognition of people's contributions to the platform is pivotal in getting them to continue contributing to the platform. As it turns out, without public recognition for their efforts, many participants would find it hard to justify contributing to the platform on a continuing basis. The primary reason is people are inherently social creatures who crave social status within their community and the PDD platform is essentially an online virtual community. The public recognition of participants' contributions to the platform in the form of awards is effectively a way of granting those individuals who contribute more to the platform a higher social status within the PDD community that, as it turns out, is a key factor in people's decisions to continue participating to the PDD platform over the long-term.

At a community level, each local district will also be openly ranked on both its participation rate and its negotiating success rate. This ranking of districts should result in many districts actually priding themselves on their participation rate and their ability to successfully negotiate with other groups, in effect encouraging them to be open to compromising at each point in a decision-making process. Conversely, the ranking of districts should also make many districts with less stellar records of cooperation more open to compromise in an effort to boost their own ranking.

Internal Self-Policing

Unlike other social networks, the PDD platform would not use moderators or administrators to police the behaviour of participants as using such moderators or administrators would violate the PDD principle of maintaining a completely flat distribution of political power within the system by giving certain users greater say over what passes for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Instead, participants on the platform would police themselves using a code of conduct that the participating body as a whole would collectively agree to abide by prior to first using the platform and which every participant on the platform would have exactly the same amount of power to enforce as

every other citizen. No individual participant would be able to either single-handedly launch an investigation into a possible violation of the code by another individual or single-handedly determine the outcome of such an investigation. Instead, in order for an individual to be investigated for a violation of the code, a set number of other participants would have to make the same complaint against that individual. If a set number of people make the same complaint against the same individual, that individual would subsequently be investigated by a set odd number of volunteer adjudicators from outside the compromised process in which the allegation of misconduct allegedly took place. To prevent individuals from selectively investigating only individuals of a different political persuasion, volunteer adjudicators would not be given details of the alleged violation of the code until after they agreed to adjudicate it. They would also not be allowed to repeatedly volunteer to adjudicate a dispute if they have a history of not successfully completing previous investigations. To ensure each volunteer adjudicator properly evaluates the legitimacy of the dispute, each adjudicator will most likely also need to provide a brief explanation of the reasoning behind their final decision at the time they make it as well as register a verdict of either guilty or not guilty. If a majority of the judicators conclude the accused is guilty then the accused would be found guilty. However, if a majority conclude the accused is not guilty then the accused would be found not guilty.

Naturally, as maintaining a high degree of civility on the platform will be crucial to the workability of the platform's decision-making processes, a PDD platform's participating body would not only need to adopt a code of conduct that incorporates a very high standard, they would also need to rigorously enforce the code at all times.

Outstanding Task Register

In order to encourage participants to complete certain tasks that needed to be complete, those tasks would be put on a special global register of outstanding tasks called the **OUTSTANDING TASK REGISTER (OTR)**.

Individuals would be able to complete outstanding tasks on the OTR in one of two ways. The first would be by going to the OTR directly and directly picking tasks off of it to complete. The second would be by responding to a request to complete an outstanding task sent via the PDD mobile app. Basically, participants would register their willingness to be sent requests by the PDD app on their phone to complete outstanding tasks that no one else was completing the first way. In the event no one completed a specific outstanding task immediately, the platform would essentially respond by sending notifications to registered individuals requesting that they log in and complete the task. To help encourage participants to complete tasks on the OTR quickly, participants would receive a generously high number of points for completing outstanding OTR tasks the first way and even more bonus points for completing outstanding OTR tasks the second way. The system would basically ensure that every OTR task is completed within a certain timeframe.

Most tasks added to the OTR would be short verification tasks such as the task to verify a new question in a virtual inquiry that would ideally be carried out ASAP. However, the OTR would also include tasks such as helping to mediate a violation of the code of conduct that ideally would only need to be carried out within a day or so.

The OTR will play an important role in controlling the quality of information on the PDD platform. In a high functioning PDD, verification tasks put on the OTR could be completed within minutes enabling participants to get on with the next step of a task quickly.

Real-Time Data Analytics

The platform would also incorporate analytical tools for active decision-making processes in part to allow participants in a process to assess the current general state of the process's deliberations but also in part to allow media outlets to keep the wider public informed on the progress of important PDD decisions. Some important statistics and analyses that people will likely be able to pull up for decision-making processes include the participation rate at each point in a process, the most popular and least popular policy ideas currently being supported and opposed by individuals in a process, the most contentious issues being debated in group forums in a process, the current biggest sticking points between positions in a process and the most likely end position of a process based on current trends.

Participant Metadata

Individual participants would also have the capacity to voluntarily add certain information about themselves to the platform, possibly including their ethnicity, religion, estimated personal income, estimated household income, living arrangements, educational attainment, current and past job information and status, relationship status and family information. Unlike other social networks, however, this personal information would not be available to the public or to other participants. Instead it would be used purely to enhance the data analysis capabilities of the platform. For example, using the additional metadata, participants and the media will be able to ascertain what percentage of people with a certain level of income support or oppose a particular aspect of a proposed position currently being considered. Obviously, due to the sensitivity of the information involved, the platform will need to incorporate comprehensive security measures in order to minimise the chances of such personal information ending up in the wrong hands.

Transparency

In a PDD, all top-tier government decisions (with the exception of decisions related to national security) and the reasoning behind each of them would be 100% transparent and accessible to all citizens for analysis and review at all times. That being said, however, in the interests of avoiding cross-contamination, the activities of different groups in the same stage of the same process might in some cases be temporarily hidden from one another until the end of the stage.

Open Platform

Practically all communications on the PDD platform would be accessible to the public. The platform wouldn't have any private messaging system or closed groups in which individuals would be able to have private conversations. There is simply no reason to allow people to have private conversations and a bunch of reasons not to let them.

Forced Individualism

Participants in a PDD would also be intentionally prevented from forming community groups based on either a shared identity or a common interest. In fact, outside local geographical districts, there would be absolutely no groupings of people of any kind in any decision-making processes on the platform. There are a couple of obvious reasons for doing this. The first is that it will prevent participants from establishing information bubbles in which all the information they receive on a topic ends up coming from either a single source or a single homogenous group of people. A second reason is that it will prevent people from making assumptions about the intentions and values of

the individuals that they are communicating with and ultimately trying to negotiate with. A third less obvious reason is that allowing people to form relations with other like-minded people on the platform will inevitably lead some of the participating citizenry to believe that certain adverserial identity groups are somehow trying to unfairly game the system. This *forced individualism* is a crucial aspect of the PDD model without which participants on the PDD platform would likely continue to formulate biased opinions of people in out-groups.

Privacy

While the platform would probably display each participant's full name in a process while that process is active, it would probably remove their last names once the process has been completed in order to help protect people's identities. The same process of anonymisation will probably also apply to the profile photo that is likely to be displayed next to each of a person's posts. People will probably also not be able to search or lookup the history of individual participants unless the individual enables such searches in their settings.

Legal Grounding

The server-side web software, websites and mobile apps that constitute the PDD software platform would not be like ordinary software, websites and mobile apps. Their powers would be enshrined in the country or region's constitution (or in legislation if the country or region has no constitution) while the processes governing the platform would be prescribed in legislation. Membership to the platform would also be administered by an independent commission, most likely the government's old electoral commission, which would also be underpinned by legislation. Any attempts to unfairly or dishonestly manipulate decision-making on the platform, whether by trying to bribe or coerce participants to vote in a particular way or by trying to hack the system, would be considered as serious an offence as present-day electoral fraud.

Advisory Councils

While the participating citizenry as a whole would have full discretion over each and every decision on the PDD platform and each participant would have the exact same amount of power as every other participant throughout every decision-making process, that does not preclude the citizenry from establishing "advisory councils" (or small groups of experts) to advise citizens on specific matters. Most advisory councils would likely be permanent although some could be created specifically for a particular process. They could include select government employees and even people from outside the citizenry such as renowned international experts. Their members could be both paid and unpaid.

Moreover, while current government advisory councils are generally limited to 10 to 20 experts, PDD advisory councils could contain hundreds or even thousands of experts. Such large advisory councils would effectively use the platform's collaborative decision-making processes to collectively formulate their advice and recommendations. As the name suggests, the councils would play an advisory role only. Citizens and the bureaucracy would retain full discretion over whether to take up a council's advice or recommendations.

National Security Issues

National security matters will be handled by VCs with hundreds or thousands of specially selected vetted volunteer citizens as members.

Institutionalised Strategic Planning

Unlike most current representative governments, which do not have an internal department dedicated exclusively to strategic planning, PDD governments will have a **Department of Strategic Planning (DSP)** devoted entirely to carrying out the heavy-lifting of strategic planning operations. The DSP's three main functions will be to:

a) create and maintain a central database of all the government's goals;
b) act as the government's official strategic planning think tank; and
c) help PDD participants formulate the government's strategic plan.

Basically, the DSP will evaluate the feasibility of a range of potential strategic goals and objectives then put those goals and objectives to the citizenry who would then select which goals and objectives to set and prioritise.

Foreign Relations

In a PDD, the way in which the government conducts its foreign relations would be significantly different to the way current governments conduct their foreign relations.

When it comes to decisions governing a country's foreign relations, there are essentially three kinds of decisions:

- ones to do with the formulation of foreign policy;
- ones to do with government responses to international events; and
- ones to do with the negotiations of international agreements.

In a PDD, the first kind of decisions, those related to the formulation of a country's foreign policy, would be handled by the Foreign Affairs VC.

The second kind of decisions, those related to government responses to international events, would be handled by the Foreign Affairs VEDH. Rather than relying on diplomats and ambassadors to pass a message to another national government on behalf of theirs, citizens in a PDD would collectively formulate such messages on the PDD platform before conveying the message to the other national government digitally. Naturally, as the composition and tone of such messages can have significant international ramifications, the decision-making processes for crafting such diplomatic messages would allow seasoned diplomats to play a prominent role. As a rule, PDD governments would only issue statements through their Foreign Affairs VEDH in response to international events including diplomatic acts by other countries. They would not use it to create new international events as such unprovoked instigations would be tantamount to formulating new foreign policy, which would be the jurisdiction of the Foreign Affairs VC. The type of decision-making process used to formulate a diplomatic response is liable to depend on how urgently the government needs make the decision. In situations where the government is under no external pressure to formulate a position, the decision-making process would likely be spread out over several weeks. In situations where it was pivotal for the government to formulate a response to an international event in a timely manner, the decision-making process would likely simply entail either a diplomat or the Foreign Affairs EDCU drawing up one or more responses one day then having citizens vote to approve one of those responses either that same day or the next day.

The third kind of decisions are those related to the negotiations of international agreements. In a PDD, the way in which such decisions are handled would depend on whether the other countries are also PDDs and whether an automatic translator between the languages of the participating countries is incorporated into the PDD software. If the countries involved are all PDDs and either share a common language or have a suitable automatic translator incorporated in their PDD network, such negotiations would likely take place online in an international PDD meeting, most likely using a modified version of the Open Review. If either any of the other participating countries did not have a PDD or the participating countries did not have a suitable automatic translator incorporated in their PDD network, either the Foreign Affairs VEDH or the Virtual Executive Council would select an individual to attend the meeting and negotiate on the people's behalf. In a fully realised PDD world (i.e. a world in which all governments are PDDs), governments might be able to ditch physical international intergovernmental meetings of individuals altogether and instead conduct their relations people-to-people, rather than person-to-person, in an entirely online environment using a network of integrated national PDD platforms underpinned by a universal translator.

Role of the Judiciary

The judiciary in a PDD would remain a separate and independent branch of government. The PDD platform, as it stands, would not infringe on the autonomy of the judiciary in any way. Like current representative models of government, the judiciary in a PDD would have the power to overturn any executive or legislative branch action that it found to be in violation of any law including those governing decision-making processes within the PDD platform.

The Head of Government and State

In all likelihood, people in a fully realised PDD will probably have no legitimate reason to continue having someone serve as head of government on a permanent basis and, thus, would likely opt to only authorise someone to act as head of government when they needed someone to attend an international intergovernmental meeting attended by other individuals also acting as the heads of their government. Even then, to say that that authorised individual is the head of the PDD country's government is quite misleading as they would still be at all times subordinate to the people and only have the authority to make decisions on the people's behalf at that intergovernmental meeting. They would no longer have that authority when they returned home or any authority to make domestic decisions on the people's behalf while any agreements they reach during the intergovernmental meeting would still likely be subject to approval by the PDD Virtual Government. For these reasons, such designated individuals might be more appropriately titled the country's temporary head of bureaucracy (as they would most likely be a high-ranking member of the country's bureaucracy). In any case, the real head of government in a PDD would, in practice, perpetually be the people themselves collectively.

As for whether a fully realised PDD government would bother retaining a head of state, it would probably depend on whether the state has someone suitable for the position. In some cases like the U.K. and other commonwealth states, the head of the British monarchy could effectively continue serving as the country's ceremonial head of state. In presidential systems like the United States and France, however, the head of state and head of government are both the same person, the president, so unless a superseding PDD government decided to keep the position of president as a ceremonial head of state, which seems unlikely, the citizenry in such countries are likely do away with the concept of a head of state altogether, although they may designate someone to temporarily act as head of state for a particular occasion such as a ceremony. Still, like individuals acting as head of government in a PDD, individuals acting as head of state would be the head of state in name only. The real head of state in a PDD would, again, be the people themselves collectively.

Compatibility with Federalism

While the PDD model will be compatible with federalism and could be utilised at both a state and federal level, it is incompatible with state-based legislatures at the federal level (such as the U.S. Senate) because such legislatures violate the PDD principle of keeping the distribution of political power completely flat that is pivotal to the model's viability.

Compatibility with Local Government

The PDD platform should also be capable of being deployed at a local level provided the population within the local government area is large enough. If the population of the local government area is too small, there is a risk that some decisions will wind up being determined by a handful of people with no real oversight. In general, local level PPDs will need to be proportionally larger than PDDs at a regional and national level because local level decisions tend to be much more trivial meaning relatively fewer people are liable to participate in them.

CHAPTER THREE

PRIMARY VOTING METHODS

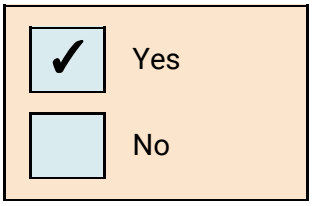
PRIMARY VOTING METHODS

The actual voting method used for a particular vote in a PDD decision-making process likely depends on the following five factors:

1. the number of options in the vote;
2. the number of people expected to participate in the vote;
3. the degree to which each participant is expected to participate in the vote;
4. the nature of the decision being voted on; and
5. the number of other votes being held in the same voting session.

Two-Option Winner-Takes-All Method

If the purpose of the vote is simply to decide whether to accept something or not in a simple 'yes/no' fashion then it will use the **two-option winner-takes-all voting method** in which participants simply choose either 'yes' or 'no' like such:

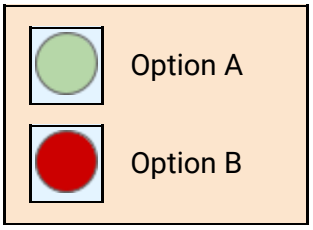


And the option with the most votes at the end wins the vote.

Two-Option Colour-Rating Method

If the vote comprises two options and its purpose is to decide which of the options is the better of the two, it will instead use the **two-option colour-rating voting method**. Basically, instead of simply selecting the option they most prefer, participants in a two-option colour-rating vote rate both options using the following colour-rating scale:

Like such:



If at the end of voting only one of the options has received over 50% green rating, that option will be considered the winner of the vote. If, however, both options receive over 50% green ratings, the green ratings for each will be tallied with each "acceptable" rating counting as one point and each "highly acceptable" rating counting as two points. The option with the most points will subsequently be considered the winner of the vote. If neither of the options receives at least 50% green ratings (i.e. they both receive a majority red ratings) then most likely neither option will be considered the winner of the vote and either one of two things will happen depending on the circumstances of the vote. If the vote occurs within a decision-making process in which selecting a definitive option is absolutely essential, the process will temporarily stall and the process's participants will subsequently be forced to go back and reevaluate the vote's options and schedule a new one. If, on the other hand, the vote occurs within a decision-making process in which choosing a definitive option is not absolutely essential in order to proceed, the process will proceed to the next step but the vote's outcome will be tagged as "possibly yet to be determined" and participants will subsequently be given the opportunity to reevaluate the options down the line.

Key Advantages of the Colour-Rating Method

The recording of participants' levels of acceptability for each option in a colour-rating vote gives colour-rating votes at least three major advantages compared to both winner-takes-all and rank-choice (i.e. votes in which participants rank each option numerically) votes.

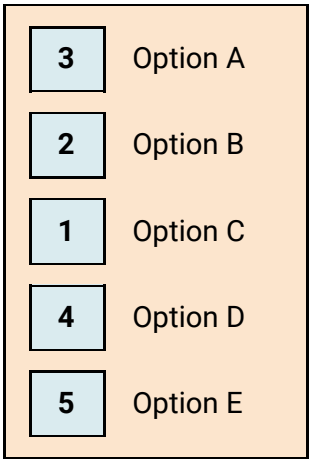
The **first major advantage** is that it enables participants to verify that the option they ultimately choose is actually supported by a majority of participants, which is something that is not actually possible with either winner-takes-all or rank-choice votes.

The **second major advantage** of recording participants' level of acceptability for each option in a colour-rating vote is that it makes it much easier for those participants to review already assessed options and decisions, which is particularly important in Open Review and Predefined Review processes as constant changes in the composition of groups means participants will often have to revisit options and decisions they already assessed and voted on in a previous round. The recording of a participant's previous appraisal of the acceptability or unacceptability of each option in a vote effectively enables the participant to avoid having to appraise any of those same options again if any of them appear in a subsequent vote. Again, neither winner-takes-all nor rank-choice votes afford participants the same opportunity.

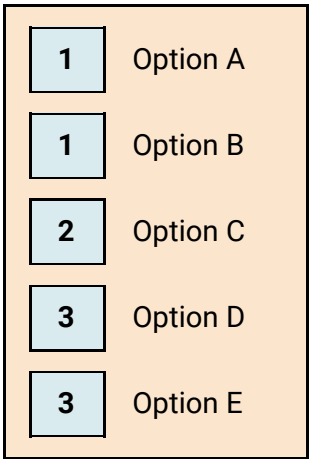
The **third major advantage** of recording participants' level of acceptability for each option in a colour-rating vote is that it subsequently allows the platform to more accurately calculate the chances of an option that came in second or worse in a vote held by one of the negotiating group's participating groups in a previous round (Open Reviews and Predefined Reviews) coming in first in a subsequent vote by that negotiating group. Such calculations are liable to play a pivotal role in determining whether participants will be permitted to re-add an option their group has already voted down in a previous round.

Multi-Option Schulze Colour-Rating Method

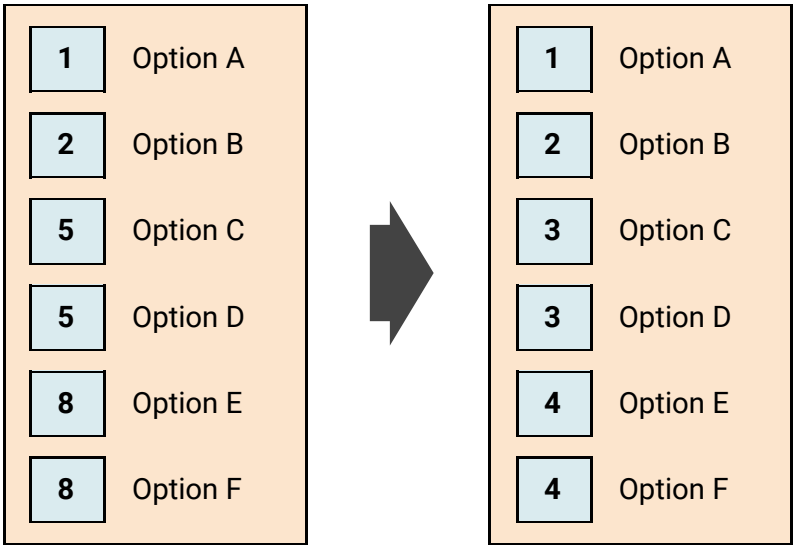
If the vote comprises three or more options and the ratio of expected participants in the vote to number of options in the vote is not excessive then the vote will use an variant of the colour-rating voting method that incorporates the Schulze rank voting method called the multi-option **Schulze Colour-Rating (SCR) voting method.** In a standard Schulze rank vote, participants effectively aim to rank each option numerically from most preferred (first) to least preferred (last) like such:



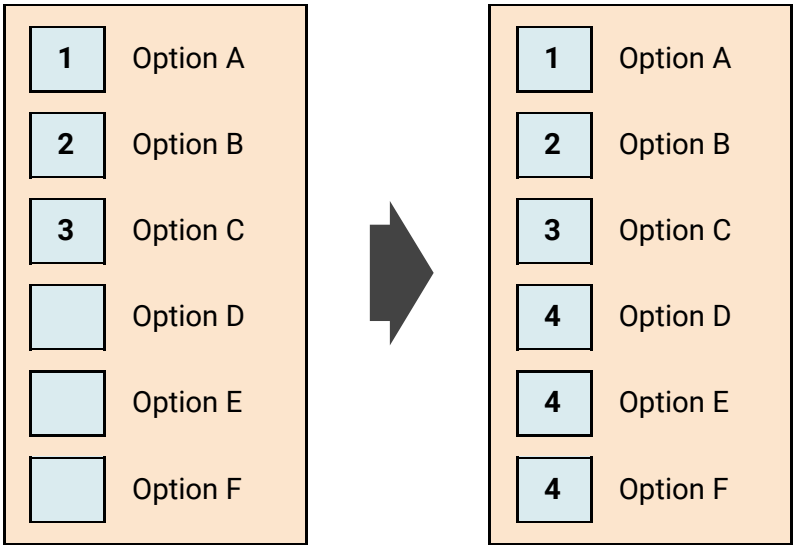
However, participants are allowed to give the same numerical preference to more than one option if they consider the options equally preferential like such:



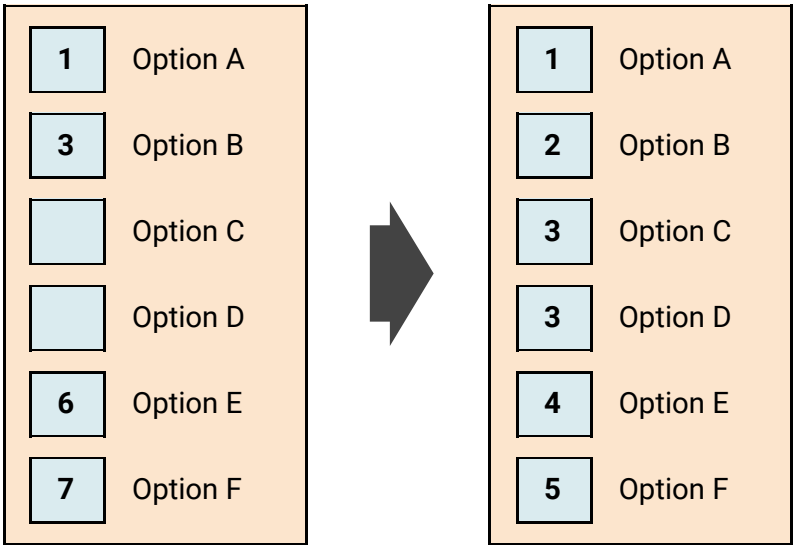
Participants are also permitted to use both non-consecutive numbers and numbers outside the range of options to express preferences. Hence, the following vote on the left would be equivalent to the one on the right:



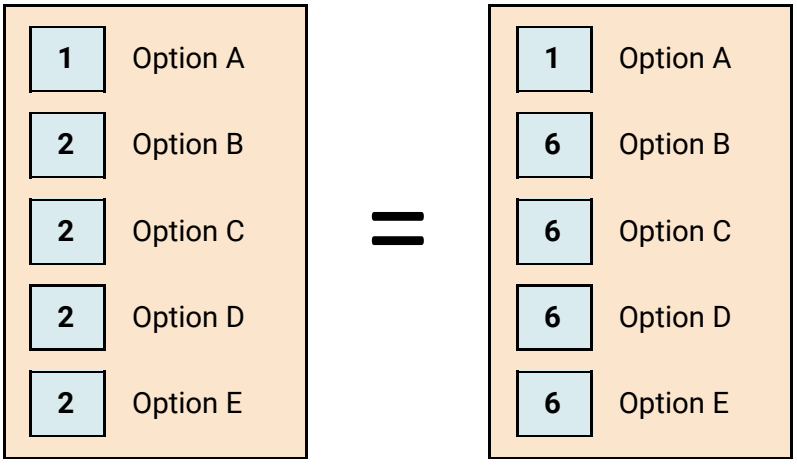
Participants are also permitted to leave some options unranked. Thus, the following vote on the left would be considered the same as the one on the right:



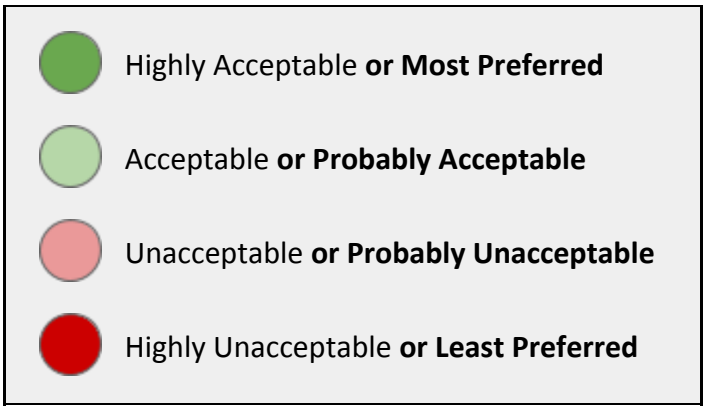
Generally, any unranked options would automatically be considered least preferred. However, in cases where the participant also ranks some of the options numerically last, the unranked options will be considered the more preferred options. Hence, the following vote on the left would be the same as the one on the right:



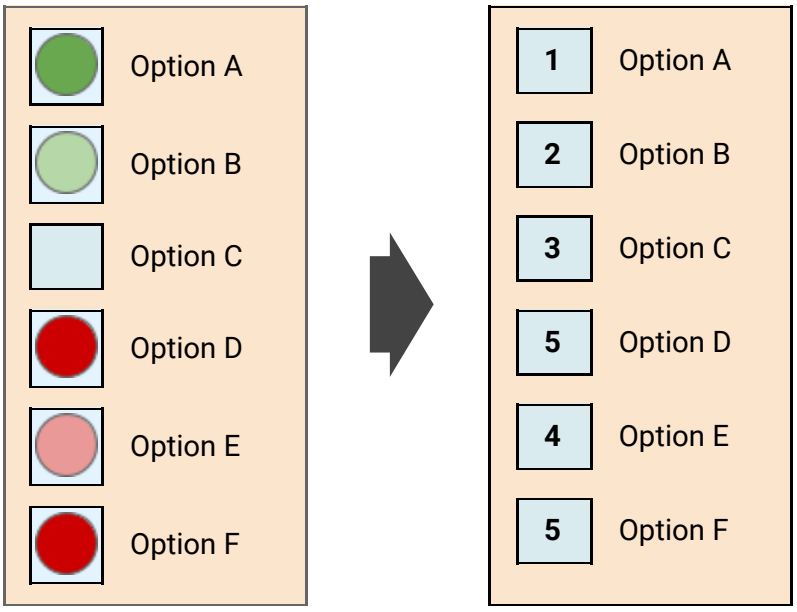
The reason participants are able to get away with what are effectively incomplete votes is because the numerical rank of options in Schulze rank votes is actually irrelevant. Only their relative numerical order is important. Thus, the following two votes are actually identical:



In multi-option SCR votes, however, instead of ranking each option numerically from first to last, participants rate each of the options using the following slightly modified colour-rating scale:



The colour-ratings are then translated into Schulze numerical rankings (with unrated options being ranked between the positive and negative ratings) like such:



Compared to standard Schulze rank votes, SCR votes should be:

a) markedly easier for citizens to participate in;
b) take markedly less time to carry out; and
c) produce results that are either just as or more effective.

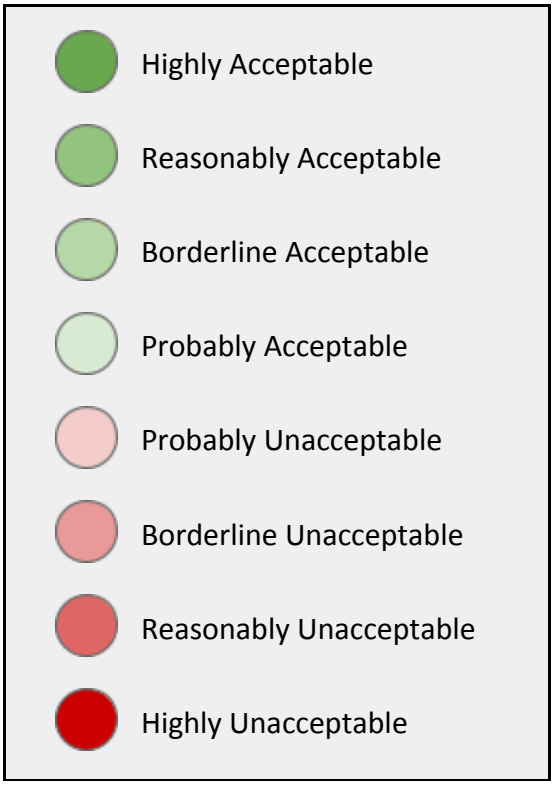
Multi-Option Schulze Pairwise Colour-Rating Method

Arguably the biggest shortcoming of the multi-option Schulze color-rating voting method and other rank voting methods is that they are not very good at handling votes that include either a myriad of options or a number of relatively complicated options or both.

Even with the use of the simplified SCR method, the number and complexity of options in each individual vote is effectively constrained by the limited time and mental energy participants in the vote will have. Realistically, even if every option in a SCR vote is as basic as possible, participants are still liable to only be able to effectively assess 10-15 options at most with that number dropping considerably as soon as any complexity is added to the options. As a rule, the greater the number of options in a vote and the greater the overall complexity of the options, the more time and mental energy it will take each participant to cast an effective vote.

This potential to have overly complicated votes in a PDD is further exacerbated by the fact that participants will often need to carry out multiple votes in the same session meaning the amount of time and mental energy they have to expend on voting will often be divided among several votes. This problem of participants not having enough time and energy to vote in full will also inevitably cause participants to become much more averse to reading and assessing relatively complex and unfamiliar options in order to save time, in effect making them prone to favouring relatively simple options that they are already familiar with over more complex and unfamiliar ones even when one of the more complex and unfamiliar options is actually the best option.

To overcome these problems, the PDD model utilises a variant of the SCR voting method called the **Schulze Pairwise Color-Rating (SPCR) voting method**. The SPCR voting method effectively exploits the numerically large numbers of participants in individual decision-making processes to reduce the workload each individual participant in a process has to undertake. It does this first by expanding the color-rating scale it uses from four to eight like such:



Then, instead of asking participants to compare and rate every single option simultaneously in a single vote the way participants are in votes that use either the SCR or a rank voting method, it simply asks participants to rate one randomly selected option at a time and only asks participants to carry out a pairwise comparison of two options when they give the second option the same rating that they gave at least one other previously.

To elucidate, the first time a participant in a SPCR vote gives an option the same rating that they gave a previous option, they will be asked to subsequently carry out a single pairwise comparison of those two options in order to determine which of the two is better. If they subsequently give an option the same rating a third time, they will then be asked to carry out either one or two subsequent pairwise comparisons in order to determine where the third option ranks compared to the other two. Whether the option requires one or two pairwise comparisons essentially depends on the results of the first. If the option is compared with the higher ranked of the two other options and is found to be better than that other option, it will only require a single pairwise comparison. However, if the option is found to be worse than that other option, it will essentially require a second pairwise comparison with the other other option to determine whether it should be ranked above or below that option.

So, for example, a participant in an SPCR vote might assess their first randomly selected option and decide to give it a **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE** rating. They might then give the second option an **ACCEPTABLE** rating and the third an **UNACCEPTABLE** rating. They might then assess a fourth option and decide to give it a **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE** rating like the first. Because they had already given the first option the same rating, the participant would subsequently have to carry out a pairwise comparison of the first and fourth options to decide which is the better option of the two. The option that wins would subsequently be given the internal ranking of **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R1** while the other would be given the internal ranking **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R2**. The participant would then go back to assessing and rating individual randomly selected options one at a time. Let us say they do that and rate the fifth randomly selected option also **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE**. They would then be required to carry out either one or two subsequent pairwise comparisons. The first would be with **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R1**. If they decided the fifth option was better than **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R1**, the fifth option would become the new **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R1** and the two other **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE** options below it would each be downgraded one numerical rank. However, if the participant decided **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R1** was better than the fifth option, the fifth option would subsequently be put to a second pairwise comparison this time with **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R2**. If the participant decided the fifth option was better than **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R2**, the fifth option would become the new **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R2** while the previous one would be subsequently downgraded to **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R3.** Otherwise the fifth option would simply be given the ranking of **HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE R3**.

The aim of participants in SPCR votes is essentially to collectively carry out enough pairwise comparisons to complete multiple full Schulze votes (i.e. to collectively rank every option numerically from first to last with no duplicate rankings multiple different times). To elucidate, in SPCR votes, the task of color-rating all the options is divided amongst multiple participants so that each participant only has to complete a fraction of the total number of unique pairwise comparisons needed to complete a full Schulze vote. The total number of unique pairwise comparisons that have to be carried out in order to complete one full Schulze vote is exponentially tied to the number of options in the vote.

TOTAL NUMBER OF UNIQUE PAIRWISE COMPARISONS WITH EACH ADDITIONAL OPTION

Number of options	Total number of unique pairwise comparisons
2	1
3	3
4	6
5	10
6	15
7	21
8	28
9	36
10	45
11	55
12	66
13	78

Number of options	Total number of unique pairwise comparisons
14	91
15	105
16	120
17	136
18	153
19	171
20	190
21	210
22	231
23	253
24	276
25	300

Number of options	Total number of unique pairwise comparisons
50	1,225
100	4,950
200	19,900
300	44,850
400	79,800
500	124,750
1,000	499,500
2,000	1,999,000
3,000	4,498,500
4,000	7,998,000
5,000	12,497,500
10,000	49,995,000

For example, participants in a vote with five options would be required to carry out the following 10 unique pairwise comparisons to complete one full Schulze vote:

1v2 | 1v3 | 2v3 | 1v4 | 2v4 | 3v4 | 1v5 | 2v5 | 3v5 | 4v5

Fortunately, the use of color-ratings to rank options in SPCR votes greatly reduces the work participants have to put in in order to carry out multiple unique pairwise comparisons. In fact, with an eight point color-rating scale, a participant in a SPCR vote will actually be able to carry out 28 unique pairwise comparisons by rating just eight options individually, provided they gave each option a different rating. In practice, however, the more options a participant rates, the greater the chances they will end up giving two or more the same rating and the more pairwise comparisons they will be liable to have to perform.

To try to further minimise the workload for each individual participant, the platform would also essentially drop options from SPCR votes dynamically during the vote that either repeatedly lost out in pairwise comparisons or were repeatedly rated poorly. For instance, an option that repeatedly got rated as ‘highly unacceptable’ and an option that lost 20 of out 30 matchups would probably both be dropped from the vote. This effectively saves participants from having to rate and compare options that already have no chance of winning. In jurisdictions with multiple time zones, however, such dynamic dropping of options would need to be used with caution as people in different parts of a country often have dramatically different preferences.

In any case, participants in SPCR votes would be free to carry out as many pairwise comparisons as they wanted up to the total number of unique pairwise combinations (which is a full Schulze vote).

SPCR votes with a high number of options would also most likely be split into two or more rounds with voting in each of the rounds but the last encompassing multiple isolated groups. For example, say an SPCR vote contained 100 options. A participant in such a vote would need to carry out 4,950 unique pairwise comparisons to complete one full Schulze vote. As that is arguably too inefficient (3,000 participants carrying out an average 28 pairwise comparisons each would produce only 17 full Schulze votes), what the system would likely initially do is divide the options into, say, three groups (with 33 options in one group, 33 in the second and 34 in the third). Participants would then enter the fray and the system would then more or less put a third of participants in each of the three groups. Participants within each of the groups would then rate and carry out pairwise comparisons only on those options assigned to their group. If 3,000 participants participated in the round, each group would contain roughly 1,000 participants. If each of those participants carried out an average 28 pairwise comparisons each, each group would produce roughly 53 full Schulze votes (meaning every option in each group will have been compared with every other option in the group roughly 53 times), which is roughly three times the number of full Shulze votes that would have been cast had the options not been split up. The top, say, three options from each of the three groups would then go on to the second round. In the second round, participants would effectively do the same thing they did the first round except there would only be one group with only nine options. If 3,000 participants again participated in the round and carried out an average 18 pairwise comparisons each (effectively half a full Schulze vote each), the participating body would produce roughly 1,500 full Schulze votes at the end of the second round. The 'winner' of that second round would become the selected option.

If the SPCR vote contained, say, 5,000 options, the system would likely use a three round format with the first round being used to whittle the number of options down to around 300-600 and the second round used to whittle the number down to about 8-50, depending on the nature of the vote. In some votes, it will be important to have every participant actually vote for their preferred option by casting a full (or near full) Schulze vote in order to maximise the legitimacy of the chosen option in the eyes of participants. In those kinds of votes, the number of options in the final round needs to be no more than 8-12 so that every participant in the round has a decent chance of casting a full Schulze vote and in turn voting directly for their most preferred option. In votes where the legitimacy of the option is not that important, the number of options in the final round can probably be stretched to 50 without compromising the accuracy of the vote. In any case, an SPCR vote with 5,000 options would need to have a lot more participants than an SPCR vote with 100 options as it would be a 50 fold increase in options. For the sake of argument, let us say the SPCR vote garnered 100,000 participants and the number of options in the final round needed to be no more than 10. The system would first split the 5,000 options into, say, 100 groups each comprising 50 options. The system would then split the 100,000 participants amongst those 100 groups giving each group 1,000 participants each. If each participant then carried out an average 28 pairwise comparisons each, it would give each group approximately 23 full Schulze votes each (though probably roughly 27-32 full Schulze votes once dynamically dropped options are taken into account). The top, say, four options from each of the 100 groups (so 400 options in total) would then advance to the second round. If 100,000 participates again participated in the round and carried out an average 18 pairwise comparisons each, the participating body would effectively produce about 23 full Schulze votes at the end of the second round. The top 10 options of that second round vote would then proceed to the third and final round with the 'winner' of the third and final round becoming the selected option.

Overall, the SPCR voting method should have a number of significant advantages over the SCR voting method including that it should:

- dramatically simplify the complexity (and therefore difficulty) of individual votes;
- enable participants to carry out more comprehensive assessments and comparisons of individual options;
- enable each individual option in a vote to be relatively more complex (probably 10+ pages in votes with, say, less than 20 options and a high participation rate);
- enable votes to incorporate a much greater number of options (100+ options); and
- significantly increase the overall participation rate in votes (due to the increased simplicity and easiness of individual votes).

Modified Quadratic Method

Another voting method used in PDD decision-making is a modified version of quadratic voting inaptly called the **Modified Quadratic (MQ) voting method**. In standard quadratic voting, voters are each given a set amount of points that they can 'spend' allocating to any options they prefer. However, for each additional point they allocate to a single option, they are penalised so that it costs them more and more points for each additional allocated point. The amount they are penalised for each additional point is calculated using the quadratic formula meaning the total points for casting a set number of votes to a single option is that number of votes squared. Hence, the quadratic voting point system has the following values:

Number of votes	Points cost
1	1
2	4
3	9
4	16
5	25
6	36
7	49

However, the quadratic formula results in penalties that are arguably too harsh and that overly disincentivise voters from casting multiple votes for the same option. Hence, the PDD system uses a less harsh formula that basically just exponentially raises the amount penalised one point per vote cast so that the voting point system has the following values:

Number of votes	Points cost
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10
5	15
6	21
7	27

CHAPTER FOUR

KEY ADVANTAGES OVER CURRENT REPRESENTATIVE MODELS OF GOVERNMENT

Compared to current representative models of government, the PDD model appears to have no less than **36 MAJOR ADVANTAGES**.

1) Eliminates the need for an elite political class

As the model makes political representation obsolete, there is effectively no longer any reason whatsoever to retain either politicians or political parties in a PDD. This means people would no longer have to put up with politicians and political parties perpetually squabbling over power and policies at the expense of good government, continue tolerating their unscrupulous behaviour or continue listening to them frame every issue day and night, year in, year out, in purely political terms. The elimination of the political class would essentially eliminate one of the key societal tension points that has existed since the dawn of civilization and that is the tension between the ruling class and the masses.

2) Eliminates the need to hold expensive and generally off-putting elections

As there's no longer any need to have political representatives in a PDD, there is also no longer any need to hold expensive and generally off-putting elections. That means citizens in a PDD will not have to put up with shoddy electioneering from politicians seeking to obtain or retain power at elections nor will they have to subject themselves to overly negative ad campaigns that systematically spread misinformation about the character and policies of political opponents for months or even years on end. The money saved from not having to have elections alone would go a long way towards funding and maintaining a PDD platform.

3) Eliminates the need to hold expensive plebiscites

In a PDD, there's no longer any need to hold expensive ballot-based plebiscites as such plebiscites could easily be held on the PDD platform for virtually free instead.

4) Eliminates political corruption

The transparent nature of PDD decision-making coupled with the complete lack of any degree of concentration of political power anywhere in the system makes it virtually impossible for any individual or group of individuals to consolidate political power for their own ends.

5) Eliminates undue influence of special interest groups

Outside information provided by government officials, information gathering on the PDD platform will effectively be carried out exclusively by the participating citizenry itself. The participants themselves will collectively decide which pieces of information to bring to the attention of the larger body of decision-makers based on their collective evaluation of the merits of each piece of information to the issue under discussion. Moreover, all decision-making power on the platform will be held at the individual level with outside organisations having virtually no capacity to compel a participant to vote in a particular way or to promote a piece of information that the participant themselves did not want to promote of their own volition. Accordingly, in a PDD, special interest groups will effectively have zero capacity to exert undue influence over any government decision-making processes.

6) Inherently encourages cooperation among decision-makers instead of non-cooperation

Arguably the biggest flaw in current representative models of government is that they embed division within the political decision-making process in the form of opposing political parties. Politicians from political parties not in government have an inherent incentive not to cooperate with the party or coalition in power as doing so makes the ruling party or coalition look good, subsequently decreasing the likelihood that voters will throw that ruling party or coalition out of power and replace it with the politician's own party. The PDD model overcomes this shortfall by effectively eliminating political parties and by making cooperating and compromising on positions a rewarding experience while simultaneously making not cooperating or compromising an unrewarding experience.

7) Massively increases the political power of the average citizen

In a PDD, the ability of virtually every citizen (not part of the political class) to influence government decisions increases by arguably a million fold, essentially going from being able to cast a single vote once every two to four years on whether they would like to keep Political Party A in power or swap it for Political Party B or vice versa to being able to directly participate in and influence the outcome of every single government decision at every single point throughout that decision's decision-making process.

8) Massively reduces the level of anger people feel every time a government policy or program falls short

A key consequence of having political power completely flat is that it effectively eliminates people's capacity to blame shortfalls in government policy on anyone but themselves. Neither the people who failed to participate in a decision-making process nor the minority of volunteer participants who did participate but opposed a final decision have anything to gain by trying to blame the majority of volunteer participants who did support a government decision that subsequently turned out to be bad. In a PDD, the only thing anyone can really do is blame, or rather lament, either people within their own identity group for not participating or the citizenry at large for not participating. Paradoxically, those who do not participate in a decision-making process actually become more blameworthy for any subsequent bad policy than those who do both participate in and support the bad policy because all participants in a PDD are volunteers effectively depriving non-volunteers of the required moral authority to be able to successfully lay the blame at those who did participate. The upshot is that, in practice, no one in a PDD can get mad at or blame any other individual or group for any shortfalls in government policy. All anyone can do is either get involved in a subsequent process aimed at fixing the shortfall or stay mum. This inability to 'blame-shift' will have the effect of greatly reducing the amount of anger and resentment people feel and publicly express every time a public policy falls short because there is essentially no one for them to direct their anger at.

9) Massively increases the number of people both assuming responsibility for and working towards resolving societal problems

The PDD model basically overcomes one of the fundamental problems of human society that has existed since the dawn of civilization and which has traditionally made governing humans so problematic and that problem is the lack of personal responsibility people take in fixing their own society's problems. One of the greatest paradoxes of human society is that while people see their own society as belonging to them, they do not take personal responsibility for fixing any of its problems. Throughout history, responsibility for fixing societal ills has always fallen to either a small group of political elites or a single individual leader. Every time a societal problem has arisen, the people of that society have always laid the blame at someone else's feet and have always expected someone else to fix the problem. Moreover, because people currently do not feel personally responsible for societal problems, they not only make no personal effort to help resolve them, they also resist solutions that might potentially cause them or anyone close to them any degree of personal hardship.

However, the main reason people currently do not take responsibility for problems within their own society is essentially because they cannot. Every human society to date has been governed by an elite political class that has held virtually all political power within the system. Even in today's so-called "democracies", the combined political authority of the people is effectively limited to deciding once every two to four years whether to keep Political Party A in power or swap it for Political Party B or vice versa. Even when governments provide public consultations and give the public an opportunity to provide input into some aspect of government policy under review, the current political establishment still does not relinquish any degree of actual political power. Input from the people is strictly advisory and politicians are under no obligation to actually adhere to the will of the people with power over the final decision remaining theirs and theirs alone. The reality is people cannot take responsibility for fixing a problem when they have no real capacity to fix it themselves.

The PDD model increases the number of people both assuming responsibility for and working towards resolving societal problems by changing the dynamics of the situation in three ways. First, it gives people a much greater opportunity to actually fix problems themselves. Second, it eliminates people's capacity to avoid taking responsibility for problems by eliminating their capacity to shift blame to others. Third, it gives the people, not the politicians, the actual political power to make the decisions. A key consequence of this transfer of decision-making power to the people themselves is that it will effectively lead people who participate in a PDD decision-making process to take "ownership" of the resulting decision. In their minds, they will be the ones who are making the decision, not the politicians. As a result, each person who participates in a particular decision-making process ultimately comes to regard the decision as belonging to them (i.e. they "own" the decision), subsequently making them much more likely to feel responsible for fixing any problems that arise as a result of that decision. The upshot is that citizens in a PDD will end up being much more likely to take personal responsibility for fixing problems within their own society. This added sense of personal responsibility that citizens in a PDD are liable to feel for societal problems will also dramatically increase the likelihood that they will be willing to subject themselves to some degree of personal hardship in order to fix a greater societal problem, which is something that is sorely lacking in current systems.

10) Massively reduces the influence of political ideology

In current multi-party political systems, every political party, in order to survive in the long-term, must inevitably develop its own ideology (i.e. solid set of values) that appeals to a specific subset of voters so that those voters will repeatedly support the party across multiple elections. Each political party also inevitably has to try to differentiate its own ideology from competing parties in order to avoid competing for the same subsets of voters. Moreover, as a rule, a political party's ideology inevitably becomes more and more rigid over time as its leaders make both party membership and promotion within its ranks contingent on conforming with the party's established ideology. The end result is that all political parties in a multi-party system end up being ideologically distinct from one another while all the people within each individual party end up sharing the same ideological leanings and believing that their party's ideology is superior to the ideologies of every competing party. Obviously, if someone in a party thought another party had a better ideology, they would have joined that party instead (that is, barring a few opportunitistic exceptions).

One of the problems with having this inherent belief in the superiority of their own party's ideology is that it makes it very hard for people in political parties to support policy solutions that do not conform to their party's ideology. Moreover, because each party is ideologically distinct from one another and each party only ever puts forth policy solutions that are in line with the party's own ideology, people in political parties rarely ever wholeheartedly support policy solutions put forth by other parties, regardless of how good or effective the policy solution might actually be in practice. A major consequence of this tendency to reject policy solutions on ideological grounds is that it ultimately end ups dramatically limiting the range of solutions that people in governing parties are prepared to consider when formulating government policy while simultaneously making it harder for them to successfully introduce new policies that require the support of one or more opposition parties to introduce.

In addition to making it more problematic to govern effectively, the inherent ideological divisions between parties in current multi-party systems also inevitably leads to similar divisions forming within society. In current systems, politicians and political parties effectively dominate public discourse - or rather what passes for public discourse - on every issue meaning every issue is inevitably framed in ideological terms using political parties' own political terminology. Moreover, the terminology they use is also often used negatively in an attempt to undermine the appeal of opposition parties, political opponents and their policies. Inevitably, the political class's domination of public discourse leads ordinary people to also largely view public policy issues through the same polarised lenses as people in political parties. Politicians' persistent negative characterisations of their political opponents and their political opponents' policies also inevitably leads ordinary people to also view with similar disdain those who support parties and policies different from the one's they support. The current lack of any way for ordinary people with differing political viewpoints to come together and discuss issues themselves only further exacerbates the situation by preventing people on all sides from being exposed to information that might help them better understand why other people support different government policy solutions to the ones they support.

In a PDD, however, the elimination of a political elite combined with people's utilisation of the PDD platform to discuss issues with other sectors of society combined with the hyper focus on resolving issues in PDD decision-making should ultimately all but eliminate the negative influence of political ideology at both a government and societal level. In a PDD, political parties and politicians would no longer dominate public discourse on issues meaning people would no longer take up their ideologically charged viewpoints. The participation of people from all

walks of society in PDD decision-making should also lead people to better understand the views of others, in turn leading them to be more open to compromising on issues and less likely to simply dismiss those who hold positions directly opposed to their own as a bunch of morons or crazy people. The hyper focus on resolving issues in PDD decision-making should also makes it much harder for people to use ideologically charged words in their arguments. For example, there in no value in participants using words like 'liberals' and 'conservatives' or 'left' and 'right' to describe certain groups of people during a discussion of an issue in a PDD as such groups, even if they could be definitively defined, are incapable of playing any role in any solution to address the issue because PDD participants are intentionally prevented from forming groups based on identity. The lack of ideological convictions amongst the populace relative to the political class in a PDD also means decision-makers in a PDD are liable to be much more open to a wider range of policy solutions than decision-makers in multi-party systems as well as far less likely to reject a possible policy solution on ideological grounds.

Ultimately, the use of partisan ideological terminology in discussions on public policy issues should largely dissipate over time under a PDD. Even the entrenched extreme polarisation that currently tears at the heart of US society should largely disappear given enough time.

11) Enables the diversity of society to be reflected perfectly in all government decision-making

Assuming all identity groups in society more or less participate with equal gusto on the PDD platform, the diversity and composition of a society's citizenry should be represented perfectly in all government decision-making in a PDD.

This differs dramatically from current government models in which the vast majority of government decision-makers tend to largely be of the same sex (male), ethnicity and religion.

12) Greatly increases social harmony

Relative to existing models, the PDD model should help increase the level of harmony within society in a number of ways. First, it will eliminate the political elite class who are generally detested by the bulk of the population because they are widely seen as arrogant and self-interested. Second, it will eliminate the political parties, which inherently promote disunity and embed division within society along party lines. Third, it will negate the need to hold elections, which are generally divisive and have a tendency to bring out the worst in people. Fourth, it will use a political process that encourages consensus and compromise, instead of discord and intransigence. Fifth, it will use a political process that encourages the widespread participation of citizens and gives every person just as much opportunity to participate and have their voice heard as any other citizen leading to a generally far greater acceptance of government decisions amongst the populace. Sixth, assuming all groups in society participate equally in the process, the diversity of the citizenry will be represented perfectly in all government decision-making meaning no social group will be able to argue that they are not being fairly represented in government.

13) Massively reduces people's unrealistic expectations in government capabilities

Within existing models of government, politicians have an inherent incentive to promise the public more than they can deliver in order to outshine their political opponents and secure or retain control over the government. Sadly, this perverse incentive inevitably results in politicians convincing many people that the government is capable of doing things that it realistically cannot do such as massively expand government services while simultaneously returning the government budget to a surplus without raising taxes. In other words, politicians in current political systems have a habit of leading people to believe that they can have their cake and eat it too.

In a PDD, however, this kind of unrealistic expectation in government largely disappears once politicians are out of the picture. Meanwhile, the higher levels of public participation in government decision-making in a PDD will inevitably lead more people to have a more realistic understanding of the issues and challenges of governing a society. This is especially true when it comes to the government budget. A key consequence of giving people control over the government budget spending levels is that it forces them to confront the reality that there is no such thing as a free lunch. Money for new government services, as participants in a PDD will quickly learn, has to come from somewhere, specifically either from an increase in taxation or a reduction in some other area of government expenditure.

14) Maximises government transparency

For 99% of government decisions in a PDD, the entire decision-making process outside the bureaucracy from start to finish is 100% transparent. Only decisions related to national security are not fully disclosed to the public. This stands in stark contrast to current government decision-making in which decisions and the reasoning behind them are largely determined behind closed doors, usually in either a cabinet meeting or a party room meeting of the ruling party.

15) Maximises government accountability

Under a PDD model, the government essentially cannot not be accountable to the people for its own policies because the people in a PDD are the government and they hold ultimate political authority. Consequently, they effectively have no choice but to take responsibility for shortfalls in the government policies that they have approved.

16) Maximises the level of consent given by the governed

All PDD government decisions and policies will have the popular consent of the governed, or at least as much consent of the governed as is realistically possible. In a PDD, as many people as possible are encouraged to vote in the final round of major decision-making processes so as to maximise the level of consent that the governed give to each of those government decisions. As logging onto the PDD platform with your mobile phone and voting in the final round of a government decision could literally not be made any easier, it is essentially impossible for the government to be given any more consent for its policies, plans and decisions from the governed (barring the introduction of coercive measures that force more people to vote).

17) Maximises the legitimacy of every government decision

The practice of getting as many people as possible to vote in the final round of each decision-making process, particularly the important ones, also has the effect of maximising the number of people who will subsequently recognise the legitimacy of each of those government decisions. Obviously, pretty much anyone who votes in favour of a decision will subsequently recognise the legitimacy of that decision. People that recognise the legitimacy of a decision are more likely to comply with it without coercion from the state and are more likely to exert effort towards seeing that the decision is properly implemented.

18) Legitimises the government indefinitely

Provided the people see the PDD government as legitimate in the first place and the PDD platform continues to function as intended allowing everybody to participate equally in the decision-making process, pretty much the only way a PDD government can lose its legitimacy in the eyes of the people is if the people lose confidence in themselves, which is extremely unlikely to ever happen. People in a PDD will never want to overthrow the government because it would be equivalent to overthrowing themselves. The vast majority of people, especially in Western individualistic societies, will also be unlikely to ever believe that someone who they have never met and who hardly knows a single thing about them will be more capable of representing their interests in government than they would be themselves. Consequently, people in a PDD will never seek to change the power structure of the government back to one where their own capacity to represent themselves is diminished. This contrasts with current multi-party models of government in which governments tend to lose their legitimacy in the eyes of the people every few years and the only way for it to be restored is to replace the governing party with an alternative one at the next election, which can often be years after the government has lost its legitimacy.

19) Significantly increases the government's capacity to gauge both the likely and actual impact of its policies and programs on its citizens

In current models, government decision-makers often have only a vague idea of how and to what extent a new government policy or program is liable to impact specific groups of citizens before they implement it. As a result, certain groups of citizens often end up being unfairly impacted by the introduction of such new policies and programs. Furthermore, the technological limitations inherent in existing models of governments coupled with their relatively poor capacity to garner input from the wider public means that when the government does implement a new policy or program, it usually only puts in place very rudimentary mechanisms for garnering feedback and monitoring the effects of the new policy or program on its citizens. As a result, oftentimes a government will not find out exactly which of its citizens are negatively affected by one of its new policies or programs and to what extent until well after the new policy or program has been introduced. Oftentimes the government will not actually find out about the negative effects of its new policy or program or how inefficient and ineffective it is until after it carries out an audit of the policy or program, which in some cases is not for several years after it first introduces the policy or program. Indeed, sometimes a government will only find out about the extent to which one of its new policies or programs negatively affects certain groups of its citizens after those citizens complain about the policy or program to the government or media en masse. Regrettably, the longer a poor policy or program is in place, the more its shortcomings end up costing the government, the more detrimental its effects end up being on the lives of its citizens and the more problematic and expensive it becomes to fix.

In a PDD, however, government decision-makers will be afforded an unprecedented degree of insight into how and to what extent a new government policy or program is liable to have on each different societal group before it introduces a new policy or program as well as a much greater capacity to monitor and evaluate the effects of such new policies and programs on each relevant societal group after the government has introduced it. The two main reasons for this are the much greater incorporation of web collaboration and social media technologies in PDD decision-making and the much greater degree to which the public in a PDD is involved in decision-making.

One way PDD decision-makers will be able gain greater insight into the likely impact of potential new government policies and programs will be through the systemic administration of surveys to the wider public during the initial decision-making process to develop those policies and programs. PDD decision-makers will be able to cross-reference data collected from such surveys with participant metadata as well as past surveys to give them a detailed breakdown of how existing government policies and programs affect each relevant societal group and how changes to those policies and programs are liable to affect each of those same societal groups.

PDD decision-makers will also be able to use surveys to evaluate and monitor the impact of a new government policies and programs after they have been introduced. PDD decision-makers would essentially send one or more follow-up surveys to everyone who indicated during the initial decision-making process that changes to an existing government policy or program would likely affect them. Information obtained from such follow-up surveys could then be cross-referenced with previously sourced data as well as participant metadata to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's recent changes. The follow-up surveys would also provide citizens with the opportunity to bring to light any possible shortcomings in new government policies and programs. The relative ease with which it will be to respond to such follow-up surveys coupled with a feeling of "owning" the original solution and a belief that their feedback will actually be incorporated into any future decision-making aimed at fixing any shortfalls in government policy or program is liable to lead to a relatively high response rate to those follow-up surveys.

A second way PDD decision-makers will be able to gauge the likely effect of changes to a government policy or program will be through the personal stories posted by individuals during the information gathering stage of reviews. Such stories will help decision-makers identify the types of groups that are both affected by existing government policies and programs and liable to be affected by specific changes to those existing policies and programs. Participants will also be able to register the fact that they are in either the same or a similar situation as the individual who posted their personal story enabling decision-makers to get a rough idea of how many people are in each situation.

In a PDD, government programs would also incorporate directives for government officials from the department or departments responsible for implementing the program to periodically upload specific sets of data related to the administration of the program as well as formal reports on the program directly to the PDD platform. Decision-makers on the PDD would then be able to cross-reference that information with the data collected directly from participants to further gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of the program and identify any shortfalls in it.

20) Significantly increases the government's capacity to correct shortfalls in its policies and programs

In addition to greatly increasing the government's capacity to monitor and evaluate the impact of its policies and programs on its citizens and identify any shortcomings in such policies and programs, a PDD should also greatly increase the government's capacity to fix those shortfalls.

In current governments, the authority or capacity to rectify any shortcomings in a particular policy or program is usually limited to a single person, usually either a minister or a secretary. Sadly, that person can often be reluctant to rectify shortcomings in a policy or program that they are responsible for even after those shortcomings have been brought to his or her attention or complained about in the media. Oftentimes it is because they fear being publicly accused of backflipping by his or her political opponents while sometimes it is because the shortcomings in question specifically favour their party's voter base. Other times it is because they are either too busy or just unwilling to put in the effort necessary to fix the problem while other times still the only reason they do not act is because they are psychologically incapable of bringing themselves to publicly admit that they made a mistake. Regardless of the reason for their inaction, the upshot is shortfalls in government policies and programs often go unaddressed for a long time in current political systems.

In a PDD, however, fixing shortfalls in government policies and programs should be much easier to achieve for a number of reasons. First, shortfalls in a government policy or program should not just be much easier to identify in a PDD but much easier to identify in the early stages of the policy or program including before it is actually implemented. Second, rather than responsibility for fixing all the shortfalls in a government policy or program being given to a single decision-maker, responsibility for fixing shortfalls in a government policy or program in a PDD would be spread amongst thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions of decision-makers leading to a much greater likelihood that any shortfalls will be addressed sooner. Third, because no-one in a PDD is held personally responsible for bad decisions, decision-makers who initially support a decision that subsequently turns out to be bad will not feel as predisposed to defend their decision the way current decision-makers are whenever they make bad decisions. Unlike decision-makers in current systems, decision-makers in a PDD will not need to make a public admission of error, face public accusations of backflipping or be subjected to calls to resign from political opponents if they go back on a decision. As a result, decision-makers in a PDD should be generally less resistant to the idea of making subsequent changes to policies and programs that they previously approved.

21) Massively increases both the amount and quality of information being captured and incorporated into government decision-making

In current forms of government, the relatively primitive technology that is used when formulating decisions severely limits the amount of information that can be captured and incorporated into government decision-making processes. Aside from censuses conducted every few years and people's yearly tax returns, current governments do not tend to make any systematic effort to collect information directly from citizens, nor do they typically possess the means to do so. If a current government wants to collect information from people directly, it typically has has to conduct a manual survey of a random selection of the population either via telephone, which is increasingly difficult, or in person on the street, which is hardly random. Such surveys are typically very time consuming and expensive for the government to carry out, subsequently limiting how many they typically conduct in a year.

PDDs, on the other hand, will incorporate a fully integrated information and knowledge management system into every government decision-making process. The decision-making processes in a PDD will also be designed to systematically capture and incorporate copious amounts of data from a wide variety of sources as well as evaluate the quality of captured information so that quality information is prioritised. Overall, government decision-making processes in PDDs will generally incorporate both a far greater amount of information as well as a far better standard of quality of information than existing government decision-making processes.

One reason the amount and quality of information being captured and incorporated into government decision-making is liable to be so much greater in a PDD than current systems is that there will typically be a far greater numbers of information-gathers and evaluators in PDD decision-making processes compared to current government decision-making processes. Information gathering and evaluation in an existing government decision-making process might involve a small group of maybe five to 20 paid government employees. Information gathering and evaluation in a PDD government decision-making process, however, might involve a similarly sized group of government employees as well as a large group of possibly hundreds, thousands or even millions of volunteer citizens. The limited number of people involved in current government information-gathering and evaluating efforts severely limits the overall number of webpages and other sources of information that are evaluated and incorporated into the average decision-making process. The excessive number of volunteer information-gathers typical in PDD decision-making processes, on the other hand, will effectively permit a far, far greater number of webpages and other sources of information to be evaluated and incorporated into the average process.

Another reason the amount and quality of information being captured and incorporated into government decision-making is liable to be so much greater in a PDD than current systems is that much of the information given by volunteer citizens in a PDD is basically not obtainable through traditional information-gathering means. For example, traditional information-gathering means cannot produce a genuine list of people's shared values, which in a PDD is produced during the formulation of the Government's Strategic Plan.

Another reason the amount and quality of information being captured and incorporated into government decision-making is liable to be so much greater in a PDD than current systems is that PDDs will make extensive and systematic use of targeted surveys to collect information. In a PDD, surveys would form an integral part of many decision-making processes and provide one of the easiest ways for participants to contribute to a decision-making process and have their voice heard. For some decision-making processes, the number of people completing one of their surveys is liable to number in the hundreds of thousands or even millions. Information collected directly from PDD participants via surveys will also automatically come with a significant amount of metadata about the participant further boosting the quality of that information.

22) Massively increases people's trust and confidence in government

People's trust and confidence in government is liable to increase significantly under a PDD for a number of reasons.

The **first** is that people's level of trust and confidence both in individual decisions made by their government and in their government generally is inevitably tied to the level of trust and confidence that they have in the people making government decisions, which in current representative models is the politicians, who these days are seen as dodgier than car salesmen.

The **second** reason is that unlike current government decision-making, PDD decision-making will be both meticulously recorded as well as 100% transparent giving people the capacity to verify the motives and reasoning behind any government decision, which they cannot do currently because current government decision-making takes place predominantly behind closed doors.

The **third** reason is government decision-making in a PDD will not only incorporate input from a much greater number of people but also from a much wider variety of societal groups giving people not involved in a decision much more reason to believe that their interests will be taken into account when other people make that decision.

The **fourth** reason is that every person in a PDD will have the exact same capacity as every other person to provide input into every decision of government meaning any person has just as much opportunity to make a difference as any other person, in effect reducing the chances of people becoming disillusioned with the government on account of feeling powerless.

The **fifth** reason is that the much higher participation rate of citizens in government decision-making in a PDD is liable to result in a much better understanding of the likely implications of new government policies and programs amongst the populace at the time that those policies and programs are being introduced leading to less resistance to their introduction.

The **sixth** reason is that decision-making processes in a PDD lack any sort of grouping of decision-makers, in effect making it much more difficult for people to believe or argue that those behind a government decision are ideologically driven.

23) Significantly increases the internal cohesiveness and operational efficiency of government departments

The degree of internal cohesion within government departments as well as the overall efficiency and effectiveness of those departments' operations are also liable to increase significantly under a PDD for several reasons.

First, government departments in a PDD are liable to experience a lower staff turnover rate due to an increase in government employee job satisfaction (see below) resulting in them not losing as much productivity as a result of lost expertise.

Second, government departments in a PDD are also liable to experience a lower staff turnover rate due to the elimination of changes in government resulting in them not losing as much productivity as a result of lost expertise. In current systems, a lot of government employees often quit their job when a new government comes to power and decides to make wholesale changes to their department.

Third, the elimination of changes in government in a PDD should result in a significant reduction in the amount of time employees in government departments have to spend reorganising their workload as changes in government tend to lead to dramatic shifts in the direction and goals of government departments.

Fourth, the participation of rank-and-file government employees in decisions to determine their own department's mission and goals should increase the number of employees who genuinely believe in their department's mission and goals and role that it plays in bettering society, in turn increasing the department's cohesiveness.

Fifth, the participation of government employees in votes to adopt new departmental policies, plans and programs should inevitably lead large numbers of them to take ownership of those policies, plans and programs, in turn increasing both their acceptance of them as well as their willingness to implement them.

Sixth, the participation of rank-and-file department employees in the formulation of their own department's policies and plans should lead to a significant increase in the overall quality of many of those policies and plans, in turn increasing their effectiveness and efficiency.

Seventh, the mass participation of rank-and-file departmental employees in decisions to decide who to hire for upper management positions in their department should generally lead to better relations between upper management, in turn increasing departmental cohesiveness.

24) Massively increases government employee job satisfaction

Generally speaking, the level of job satisfaction amongst government employees in a PDD should increase significantly for a number of reasons.

The **first** reason is that the increased internal cohesiveness of government departments in a PDD should make operations within them run much more smoothly, in turn leading to greater stability and fewer disruptions to government employees' workflows.

The **second** reason is that the increased internal cohesiveness of government departments in a PDD should also decrease organisational conflict within departments, in turn leading to improved workplace relationships between government employees.

The **third** reason is that the elimination of changes in government in a PDD should result in a massive reduction in both the number of times that and the degree to which the goals and direction of government departments undergo sudden and dramatic shifts, in turn decreasing the likelihood that employees in those departments will at some point no longer believe in the goals and purpose of their department.

The **fourth** reason is that the participation of rank-and-file government employees in decisions to determine their own department's mission, goals and programs should increase the number of employees who genuinely believe in their department's mission and goals and role that it plays in bettering society.

The **fifth** reason is that the participation of rank-and-file department employees in the formulation of their own department's policies and plans should not only lead to a significant increase in the overall quality of many of those policies and plans but also lead to a significant increase in the ease with which it will be for departmental employees to ultimately implement them, in turn reducing employees' levels of stress.

The **sixth** reason is that the mass participation of government employees in votes to adopt new departmental policies, plans and programs should inevitably lead large numbers of them to take ownership of those policies, plans and programs, in turn increasing both their acceptance of them as well as their willingness to implement them.

The **seventh** reason is that the ability of rank-and-file departmental employees to fully participate in decision-making at the very top of the organisational hierarchy should not only give them a much greater capacity to influence their own work environment, it should also provide them a way of challenging decisions made by upper management that they strongly disagree with, in turn increasing the likelihood that they will feel that they have some control over their life, that their ideas and opinions about the workplace are worth something and that their actions do make a difference.

The **eighth** reason is that the mass participation of rank-and-file departmental employees in decisions to decide who to hire for upper management positions in their department should generally lead to better relations between upper management and rank-and-file employees for a number of reasons. For starters, rank-and-file employees should be more confident in the leadership skills of new upper managers as they will likely had a hand in vetting them. Rank-and-file employees will also be more likely to recognise new upper managers as a legitimate leader of the organisation from the get-go because they likely voted them as one of their top choices for the position. Rank-and-file employees will also effectively be able to prevent mid-management employees who they do not believe are upper management material from being promoted to upper management.

25) Significantly increases the overall quality, efficiency and effectiveness of government policies, plans, programs and projects

Under a PPD, the overall quality, efficiency and effectiveness of government policies, plans, programs and projects should increase significantly for a number of reasons.

First, the massive reduction of political ideology in PDD decision-making processes as a result of the removal of political parties should inevitably lead to more pragmatic and less ideologically-driven government decisions, policies and programs in PDDs compared to current systems.

Second, the elimination of political parties and the election cycle in PDDs means government policies and programs in a PDD will not be routinely scraped mid-execution the way they are in current multi-party representative models of government each time the government changes hands.

Third, the elimination of any and all undue influence of special interests over government decisions in a PDD should inevitably result in less government expenditure on frivolous programs and projects and more expenditure on government programs and projects that are more in line with the interests of the people than special interest groups.

Fourth, the far greater level of and quality of information being captured and incorporated into PDD government decision-making compared to government decision-making in current systems should inevitably lead to better government decisions, policies and programs in a PDD.

Fifth, the PDD model's far greater capacity to gauge both the likely and actual negative effects of new government policies and programs as well as its superior ability to fix shortfalls in those government and programs should also improve the general quality, efficiency and effectiveness of government decisions, policies and programs in a PDD.

Sixth, the participation of hundreds of thousands of citizens in the decision-making process to the formulate the government's budget in a PDD should lead to a much tighter oversight of the government's budget than that provided by the 50 or so parliamentarians in current political systems, in turn leading to a more efficient allocation of government funds in a PDD.

26) Massively increases the government's ability to adopt innovative governance structures

Compared to current models, the political environment in a PDD should be much more flexible and allow for much more experimentation with new innovative processes to tackle new and old problems. In current systems, it is effectively impossible to establish new innovative processes to take on existing and new problems because such processes necessitate changes to the political power structure and politicians, who currently hold virtually all the political power, are inherently highly resistant to such changes because they universally do not want to give up an inkling of political power.

The PDD model effectively solves this inherent resistance to experimentation by eliminating the political class and redistributing its political power (including its power to create new decision-making processes) evenly amongst citizens. Citizens in a PDD, unlike politicians in current systems, are unlikely to be predisposed to opposing new innovative processes because of a fear of failure since they will know that they will not be held personally responsible for any such failures. While that might sound dangerous on the face of it, the PDD platform would be designed with safeguards to ensure participants think through the risks before deciding whether to adopt and use an untried process. In any case, citizens in a PDD would likely be able to create customised process templates that they could then apply to individual processes. Citizens would be able to design these customised process templates however they wanted (the thinking through on whether to adopt them would come after). They would even be to able to create customised process templates that violated the PDD principle of equality if they wanted because even processes that violated the principle would not really violate the principle, as their powers would only be delegated. Citizens would retain the power to revoke that delegated power at any time. Such customised process templates would also likely be directly transferable from PDD platform to PDD platform allowing PDD participants to import innovative custom process templates designed by PDD participants on another PDD platform and, if necessary, customise it to suit their unique situation. The end result is what is essentially called *institutionalised innovation*.

27) Produces more ethical government decisions

In current government decision-making, decision-making processes are neither documented nor made available to the public, in effect enabling current government decision-makers to base their decisions on less than reputable reasons. Moreover, as current government decision-making tends to be carried out by a small group of like-minded individuals with interests of their own, current government decision-makers often either fail to properly understand the ethical implications of their decisions or largely ignore them if it suits their own or the group's interests.

In a PDD, however, the transparent nature of government decision-making processes makes it virtually impossible for decision-makers in a PDD to harbour ulterior motives when making a decision as the motive of practically every participant is easily discernible from their discussion of the issue and voting patterns. Moreover, the higher rate of public participation in PDD decision-making coupled with the participation of a much wider variety of people will not only make identifying potentially unethical consequences of government decisions much easier to identify but also much harder to ignore.

28) Allows the people themselves to set the government agenda

The citizenry in a PDD will also be able to decide for themselves which issues to put on the government's agenda. This stands in stark contrast to current political systems in which the political party or coalition in power effectively gets to set the government's agenda and the citizenry effectively has no say.

29) Allows the people themselves to decide the right balance between security and privacy

In current systems, politicians, particularly those who are heads of government, tend to be strongly inclined to sacrifice people's liberties and privacy in the name of national security because they know the public will likely blame them if a domestic terrorist attack happens on their watch, potentially ending their political career on the spot.

In a PDD, however, the people themselves would decide how much of their own liberties and privacy to sacrifice in the name of national security. Whether they would be any more rational or any less inclined to support extreme measures than current political leaders is unclear. Nonetheless, allowing the people themselves to determine the exact powers their intelligence services and local law enforcement agencies could use to try to counter terrorist and other crimes would have the benefit of legitimising the use of those powers in the eyes of the people. Basically, people would no longer see the government as violating their civil liberties because it would be the people themselves who gave their consent to the government to do it.

30) Moves society in one direction and one direction only: forward

Instead of the direction of public policy zig-zagging and moving back and forth as political power changes hands every few years between two dominant political parties with opposing views on what constitutes good government policy the way it does in current multi-party systems, the direction of public policy in a PDD would be by and large forward in a straight line with very little deviation.

31) Massively reduces the level of long-term change within society

Because political parties will not be constantly changing policies based on their ideological preference every time they return to power, both the number of changes in government policy as well as the average scope of each change are liable to see a significant reduction over the long-term in a PDD. This effectively means people in a PDD society will enjoy much less disruption to their lives due to less dramatic changes in government policy.

32) Enables a society to set medium and long-term goals for itself then makes it extremely difficult for it not to achieve them

In a PDD, the people themselves would collectively set their government's medium and long-term goals. A key consequence of allowing the people themselves to set their government's goals rather than the political elite is that it basically commits the people to achieving those goals whether they subsequently want to or not. Like decisions made in other PDD decision-making processes, the very act of letting the people themselves decide their government's goals effectively leads them to take "ownership" of their government's decision to commit itself to achieving those specific goals.

This concept of *ownership* is very simple but also very powerful and very important to understand. It basically states that if you let someone participate in the process of making a decision, they will be more likely to see the decision as ultimately belonging to them. In other words, they see it as a decision that they themselves made, not a decision that someone else made. It is their decision. They "own" it.

Anyway, because people are more likely to take ownership of decisions they are involved in, people in a PDD, at least those who participated in the approval of the government's overarching strategic plan that includes its long-term goals, will generally come to see the government's decision to commit itself to achieving a specific goal as a commitment by them to achieving that same goal. Basically, it changes the dynamic from "their" goal to "our" goal, in effect causing them to become quite averse to the idea of ultimately failing to achieve the goal because if they do, they will see it not simply as just a goal that their government ultimately failed to achieve, they will also see it as a goal that "we, the people" ultimately failed to achieve.

Moreover, in practice, in a PDD, any failure to achieve a government goal set by the people themselves is likely to have a detrimental impact on the psyche of the entire society because, in the absence of a political elite in a PDD, the people have no one else to blame for the failure but themselves. The reality is any such failure to achieve a government goal set by the people themselves in a PDD would inevitably end up featuring prominently in every paper and news network in the country or region that practically every person therein would end up reading, watching or hearing about and the absolute only thing any of them would be able to do is dwell and reflect on their society's collective failure to achieve that goal. Basically, a failure to achieve a government goal set by the people themselves becomes like a national tragedy.

Moreover, the way people go about setting government goals in a PDD effectively makes it all but impossible for them to subsequently abandon a government goal once they have set it. Basically, in order for people in a PDD to successfully abandon a government goal after they have already set it, they will have to collectively rationalise why they should abandon that particular goal after they had already collectively committed to achieving it. Realistically, a

significant chunk of the population is liable to oppose any attempt to abandon or reset an existing government goal as they will ardently believe it is a goal the government should be committed to achieving in full while another significant chuck of the population is liable to oppose any such attempt as they will firmly believe their government should follow through on its commitments. Essentially, straight off the bat a large chunk of the population is liable to oppose any attempt to abandon or reset an existing government goal, in effect making it extremely difficult for those pushing for such a change to get the 50% needed to make it a reality. Making such attempts even more difficult is the fact that it is actually very hard to put forth convincing and seemingly justifiable reasons for abandoning or resetting an already set government goal.

Consequently, people in a PDD will collectively possess an incredibly strong aversion to failing to achieve their government's goals. They will also be collectively all but incapable of abandoning or modifying such goals after they have set them. As a result, people in PDDs will almost certainly end up meticulously monitoring and measuring their government's progress towards achieving all their government's medium and long-term goals in order to ensure that they are all ultimately achieved, even going so far as to support the reallocation of resources from other government activities in order to ensure the goals are reached. This willingness by the people to sacrifice other government activities for the sake of achieving a set government goal, which is not present in current models, means people in a PDD will actually be able to set far more ambitious medium and long-term government goals while still remaining confident that they will ultimately be able to achieve them.

This ability for people in a PDD to set long-term goals for their society coupled with their inability to get out of trying to achieve a goal once they have set it is an extraordinarily powerful tool. If you want to know the key to avoiding catastrophic climate change, it is building this platform then deploying it. Once you have done that, all you have to do is convince people to set an extremely ambitious carbon reduction target for themselves and designate it a strategic priority then watch as they make whatever sacrifices are necessary to meet that target.

33) Allows for greater utilisation and social integration of immigrants and refugees

In current systems, despite being full members of their society, legal non-citizens including refugees and other permanent residents are generally forbidden from participating in the political system of their host country, be it the right to hold office, the right to vote or the right to join a political party. While there are some legitimate reasons for this practice such as protection against foreign subversion, the practice of completely barring non-citizens from participating in the political process of a PDD would probably be quite counterproductive.

For one, no society is so advanced that it does not have anything to learn from other societies meaning the inclusion of immigrants from other countries in a PDD country's decision-making processes would likely inject ideas and solutions into those decision-making processes that would otherwise not be injected.

Moreover, allowing legal non-citizens to participate in the PDD decision-making processes of their host country or region will give those non-citizens an unprecedented ability to both better familiarise themselves with and integrate themselves into their local community. At present, it is generally very difficult for immigrants with different cultural backgrounds to integrate themselves into the society of their host nation even when they are eager because of a lack of opportunity to connect with other people at local level. This inability to connect and feel like they are part of the community can sometimes lead immigrants to feel alienated from their host country's society, in turn increasing the chances that they will become radicalised and a danger to the community. The inclusion of immigrants in PDD

decision-making processes of their host country or region would not only allow them to connect with other members of their local community, it would also lead them to feel more like they are genuine members of the community, in turn reducing the chances of them becoming radicalised. The active participation of immigrants at the local level of PDD decision-making processes will also likely go a long way towards reducing the level of xenophobia and distrust locals in those local communities have towards the immigrants within their own community.

34) Allows a nation's foreign aid to no longer be justified strictly by the national interest

In current systems, governments generally have to justify the allocation of foreign aid to their people in terms of how it helps further the country's national interest. Under a PDD, however, governments will not necessarily need to make such justifications. For example, if decision-makers in a PDD think some foreign aid should be spent helping people in Africa grow crops so they can help feed their village even though that aid will not provide any measurable return to the donor nation, they are free to do so as they do not have to justify the decision to anyone. The end result is people in a PDD could wind up treating their nation's foreign aid program as more of a charitable fund administered by the people themselves.

35) Eliminates the potential for any group or individual to dismantle existing democratic institutions after coming to power

In current systems, political parties and individuals often use their power in government to try to dismantle existing democratic institutions in an effort to further consolidate their own political power. Consequently, such political systems tend to gradually become more and more undemocratic and dysfunctional over time as the changes brought about by such self-interested political parties and individuals tends to become the new modus operandi for politicians seeking to obtain and retain power in the aftermath of the demise of the self-interested political party or individual. In the worst case scenario, such representative systems can eventually devolve into authoritarian regimes.

In a PDD, however, it is virtually impossible for any group or individual to first obtain political power then consolidate that power by dismantling the process that allowed them to obtain it the first place for two basic reasons. First, the PDD system does not contain any degree of concentration of political power anywhere in the system and, second, it does not provide any opportunities for any group to consolidate any more political power than the sum of its individual members.

36) Massively reduces the likelihood of successful coups

As consolidating political power within a PPD system is virtually impossible, the only possible way a group or individual could seize power in a PDD is if they destroy the system entirely in a coup. However, countries should be able to minimise the possibility of successful coups by holding or backing up their PDD platform on servers in one or more trusted foreign countries and having automatic protocols in place to automatically distribute VPN software to its citizens in the event of an attempted coup. That way for a group or individual to successfully pull of a coup, they would effectively need to simultaneously take control of the country's entire internet infrastructure and cut off people's Internet entirely to stop the government from functioning. Further making it difficult for any individual or group to seize power in a PDD is the fact that no coup would ever have the popular support of the people and no individual or group would ever be able to stage one under the pretext of acting in the interests of the people.

CHAPTER FIVE

KEY CHALLENGES IN DESIGNING, DEVELOPING & DEPLOYING THE PDD PLATFORM

Keeping the distribution of political power completely flat

Giving every person the exact same ability to participate in every single government decision at every point in the decision-making process is a vital characteristic of the PDD model. Any person who has a greater capacity to affect the outcome of a decision is automatically more blameworthy for any resulting bad decision than every person who had less capacity than that person. If anyone is given more power than anyone else at any point during a PDD decision-making process, those with less power can and will avoid taking responsibility for any resulting bad decision by pointing to the person or persons who had more power and saying "they bear a greater responsibility for the bad decision because they had a greater say in it than me." Hence, it is essential that the distribution of power within every decision-making process on the PDD platform is completely flat in order to stop people blame shifting.

In practical terms, this means participants will not be able to delegate decision-making power at any point during a decision-making process. For example, a process cannot include the ability for groups of participants to nominate someone from their group to negotiate on their behalf at any stage of the process. Instead, every process will need to be designed in such a way so as to allow every participant to be equally able to participate in the collective manipulation of policy at every point that it is being manipulated.

Ensuring every step of a process is "time independent"

Every step in every PDD decision-making process will also essentially need to be "time independent" (that is to say, the point in time in which a person participates in the step should not significantly affect that participant's relative power in determining the outcome of that step). For example, a participant who participates in a step on the second day of that step should not have a significantly greater ability to affect the outcome of the step than a participant who participated on the first day of the step. In practical terms, this means the platform will not be able to use any processes that are "time dependent" such as the process Wikipedia uses for editing articles where the last person who edited the article effectively determines the article's content.

Ensuring a sufficient number of people participate in each decision-making process

Pretty much all decision-making processes in a PDD will rely on a certain level of participation in order to ensure potentially bad positions are identified and corrected before those bad positions get incorporated into any final decisions. In general, decisions made by a large numbers of participants should be fine. However, decisions made by only a small number of participants are liable to be less than ideal as participants of the decision's decision-making process will be much less likely to identify and correct shortfalls in their position at each point of the process. This is particularly true for Virtual Executive decisions as Virtual Executive decision-making processes comprise far fewer steps giving participants far less time to identify and correct shortfalls in their decision before they finalise it.

There are at least two potential ways to help shore up the number of people participating in each step of a process so that the number of participants is sufficient to result in optimal decision-making. The first is to send automatic messages to people with a history of participating in similar processes to a process currently in progress with an insufficient number of participants encouraging those people to come participate in the process. The second is to invalidate any decision made by an insufficient number of participants and then rewind the process for making that decision to an earlier stage and make participants try again.

Effectively designing the way in which the platform prompts individuals for input

In order for a PDD government to function effectively, the PDD platform needs a continuous supply of input from a wide array of citizens and in order to ensure that supply, it will inevitably need to incorporate some sort of automatic notification system that selectively prods people into providing input. However, if the platform prompts citizens to provide input too frequently and on too wide a range of issues, many citizens will inevitably become frustrated with the system, in turn leading them to turn off PDD notifications, in turn resulting in them being less likely to be informed about issues of interest being discussed on the PDD platform, in turn reducing their overall level of participation on the platform. People are certain to already have an incredibly low tolerance for unnecessary disruptions to their lives from the PDD platform as IT is already an overly disruptive force in many people's lives. Hence, in order to ensure maximum participation by the populace in PDD decision-making processes, the platform will need to be brutally efficient in the way it prompts citizens to provide input in a decision-making process. It will need to be able to prompt them just the right amount of times on just the right decisions and it will need to make it as easy as possible for citizens to customise the type of messages they receive and how frequently they receive them.

Minimising the complexity of votes

As a rule, the more options in a vote and the more complex each option in that vote, the more difficult it will be and the longer it will take each participant to effectively cast their vote. Moreover, as each PDD participant will only have so much time and energy to spend voting at any given point of time, the longer it takes them to cast an effective vote, the fewer votes they will capable of participating in at a time. Since the effectiveness of the PDD system is heavily reliant on having participants stick around to participate in multiple votes in the same session, it will be essential that the complexity of each and every vote is minimised as much as possible. In practice, this means minimising the number of options and minimising the complexity of each individual option in each vote without reducing the likelihood that participants in the vote will vote for the best option.

Limiting VEC votes to only the most important issues

Another key challenge will be limiting the number of votes the Virtual Executive Cabinet holds each week to only the most important issues. If the VEC holds too many votes in a given week not as many people will participate in each vote because each person each week only has so much time and energy to expend voting. Maximising the number of people who participate in a VEC vote is essential in order to maximise the legitimacy of that vote's outcome.

Developing the platform's artificial intelligence

The PDD platform will rely heavily on artificial intelligence to make many decision-making processes more fluid and user-friendly and developing the platform's AI to the point that it works with minimal mistakes is liable to take an extensive amount of work.

Amongst other things, the platform's AI will need to be able to:

- identify qualitatively identical opinions and positions and tally them;
- simplify the wording and complexity of individual options in a vote as well as minimise the number of options in each vote;
- identify logical inconsistencies within a position as well as between two or more positions including in numerical information;
- collate survey questions and generalise them if necessary; and
- provide analytical data on the status and progress of ongoing deliberations.

Developing the platform's document formulation, manipulation and merging software

The integrated software used to formulate, manipulate and merge documents on the platform will also need to be significantly more advanced than current web document technologies such as Google Docs but just as easy to use. For example, the software will need to be able to link dependent statements together within a document to form block statements as well as flag mutually exclusive blocks of statements both in the same document and in two separate documents so that participants can track and rectify logical errors. The software will also need to incorporate the capacity to collectively manipulate the content of documents by submitting and voting on individual proposed changes as well as handle and collectively manipulate documents that use advanced formatting such as government plans that contain elaborate page layouts, diagrams, tables and pictures.

Ensuring decision-making processes for decisions that need to be made quickly produce prudent decisions

Another key challenge will be transforming decisions that need to be made in a short time span into viable PDD decision-making processes. The short nature of such decision-making processes means they will not be subject to the rigorous scrutiny that longer decision-making processes will be subject to increasing the chances that sometimes such decisions will be ill-thought out. The challenge will be to minimise the chances that such bad decisions get made without blowing out the time it takes to make them. Any decisions that cannot be transformed into viable PDD decision-making processes would in effect need to be delegated to non-elected officials such as an Executive Department Chief Undersecretary.

Designing the platform's user interface for mobile phones

Another key challenge in building the PDD platform will be effectively designing the platform's user interface for mobile phones. Obviously, mobile phones have significantly smaller screens than PCs and tablets meaning they can typically only display in their user interface a fraction of the information that PCs and tablets can comfortably display in their user interfaces at any one time making designing an effective user interface for mobile phones significantly more challenging. Given the likelihood that a majority of participants on the platform will access it through their mobile phone, designing an effective UI for mobile phones with a high degree of functionality will be of utmost importance to the ultimate effectiveness of the platform.

Integrating government department and agency software systems into the platform

Before participants in a PDD will be able to take responsibility for and control of an executive department, the software system of each department and agency overseen by that executive department will most likely need to be at least partially integrated with the PDD platform so that participants on the platform can effectively communicate and share data with government officials in each of those departments and agencies. As every department and agency's computer system is liable to be different, integrating them all into the platform is liable to require a significant amount of custom programming as well as close cooperation and coordination with each government IT department in charge of the systems.

Testing the platform at large-scales before launching

Before the platform can be rolled out to the public, its decision-making processes will need to be strenuously tested on a very large scale to determine just how effectively each process is liable to be in practice. Testing will likely need to include at least one million participants from every societal groups and probably done in partnership with a government.

CHAPTER SIX

COUNTERARGUMENTS

"The general populace is not capable of engaging in calm, reasoned political discourse"

One argument against the feasibility of the PDD model is that the general populace is not capable of engaging in calm, reasoned debates about government policies and decisions. This argument is supported by:

a) the fact that there is currently very little genuine political discourse taking place within the general populace; and
b) the fact that the vast majority of "discussions" related to government policies and decisions in forums and comment sections across the web, particularly on news sites, is highly uncivilised and abusive.

Reasons for the current lack of political discourse within the general populace

One major reason so little genuine political discourse currently takes place within the general populace is that there are virtually no forums anywhere on the web or elsewhere within which a diverse group of individuals can engage in such discussions. Physical public forums suchs as town hall meetings cannot encompass nearly enough people while virtual publics forums like Twitter and comment sections in news and blog sites do not have nearly enough flexibility to permit robust discussion of complex issues. Discussions in Internet forums and on platforms like Facebook, meanwhile, not only also lack the necessary flexibility but also tend to take place inside their own bubble. Even in the few forums on the Internet where genuine political discourse does take place, it is usually only between people with the same political leanings. Another major reason so little genuine political discourse currently takes place within the general populace is that such discussions are by and large completely futile. The average citizen in current political systems has virtually no power to change or fix societal problems that they see on TV or read about in newspapers so why would they bother expending their time formulating a solution when they know it will have next to no chance of being implemented?

Reasons for the generally uncivilised behaviour of existing web users

The seemingly endless number of people who like to spit their highly ignorant and bigoted opinions in forums and comment sections across the web are actually, in truth, just a very vocal minority of netizens who love running their mouths. Fortunately, they are not representative of the population as a whole. In reality, the vast majority of people with actual reasonable and thoughtful views rarely ever bother trying to express them in public forums or comments sections on the net as they know full well that they are much more likely to receive an abusive response from a person from the vocal minority than they are to receive a thoughtful response from a person genuinely interested in engaging in discourse.

Naturally, the reason so many seemingly ordinary people misbehave online and say things that they would never say in a real world public discussion such as one at a town hall meeting is that the online environment in which they are saying these things not only allows them to say such things without consequence but also often rewards them psychologically for their efforts as well. If the online platform participants used to engage in political discourse did not allow participants to troll people without consequence and did not reward trolling participants psychologically, such behaviour would only occur in very small amounts.

Likely state of political discourse among participants on the PDD platform

Unlike people in existing online forums and platforms, participants on the PDD platform should by and large be perfectly capable of engaging in calm, reasoned discussions about complex social issues for two main reasons.

The first reason is the PDD platform will actually be specifically designed and structured to facilitate calm and civilised political discourse between people from every corner and sector of society, in effect giving it a much greater degree of functionality and flexibility, in effect affording participants on it a much greater capacity to engage in robust discussions.

The second reason is that unlike in existing forums and platforms, participants on the PDD platform who are only interested in spitting their own ignorant and bigoted views will not find any satisfaction in participating in discussions for a multitude of reasons. For one, the vast majority of participants on the platform will take their responsibilities very seriously and will not tolerate people who only want to undermine the process. Second, people on the platform will not be anonymous so their real names will go right next to each and every ignorant and bigoted comment that they make. Third, very few participants, if any, will be likely to support an antagonist's ignorant and bigoted comments. Instead, they will in all likelihood simply vote the antagonist's comments down en masse. Fourth, any abusive behaviour on the part of an antagonist will violate the platform's code of conduct inevitably leading other participants to censure them. Fifth, any continued violations of the code of conduct will inevitably result in the antagonist either having their privileges temporarily removed or being temporarily banned. Sixth, any antagonist will be expected (via requests from other participants) to provide evidence to support any unfounded claims they made, which, obviously, they will not be able to do, in effect discrediting them. Seventh, chances are someone who is much more knowledgeable on the issue under discussion will politely take any antagonist to school on the severe shortcomings of their position. In short, any individual who only wants to cause mischief on the PDD platform will most likely only end up embarrassing themselves and either never coming back or coming back and only participating in a civilised manner..

The bottom line is that unlike in existing political discussions on the web, participants engaging in political discourse on the PDD platform will in all likelihood be highly unlikely to have any problems whatsoever with systematically engaging in calm and reasoned discussions.

"Most decision-makers in a PDD will lack the necessary intelligence and critical thinking faculties to make prudent government decisions"

Another argument against the feasibility of the PDD model is that most decision-makers in a PDD will lack the intelligence and critical thinking faculties to make more prudent government decisions than decision-makers in current political systems. This argument is a favourite of politicians (though none would ever admit it) and is supported by:

a) the generally poor record voters have when it comes to plebiscites; and

b) the fact that the average citizen has significantly lower levels of academic attainment and success in life than the average politician.

The argument essentially rests on the assertion that politicians are more intelligent and possess better critical thinking faculties than ordinary citizens to the extent that they are collectively able to make more prudent government decisions within the current political system than ordinary citizens will collectively be able to make in a PDD.

Reasons for voters' generally poor voting record in plebiscites

While it is true that voters the world over have a generally poor record of voting in plebiscites, the reasons for their poor decision-making stem more from the way plebiscites are conducted and the environment in which they take place than from a general lack of intelligence and critical thinking faculties on the part of participating voters.

Essentially, voters in plebiscites tend to make poor decisions because they generally do not possess a clear understanding of the issue being voted on at the time they go in and vote. In current plebiscites, there is effectively no attempt to systematically inform voters about the issue being debated either in the weeks or months leading up to the vote or right before they enter the polling station. Instead, their knowledge of an issue tends to come almost exclusively from special interest groups including politicians and political parties who are generally not under any legal obligation to provide either accurate or balanced information. The lack of any legal obligations forcing advocates from either side of a debate to only provide accurate information allows advocates from both sides to publicly spread as much misinformation about the other side and its position as they can muster. As a result, a significant chunk of the information voters in plebiscites end up absorbing about the issue under debate tends to be either misleading or categorically false.

Unfortunately, even plebiscites in which the proposition is relatively straightforward and easy to understand tend to end up becoming incredibly difficult for voters to understand due to the deliberate spread of misinformation by individuals and special interest groups trying to influence voters' decision. A classic example would be the 2011 UK referendum on whether to replace the UK's current first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system with an alternative vote (AV) voting system. As any political scientist on the planet will tell you, the AV voting system produces on average better and more democratic results than the FPTP voting system essentially making the decision to switch to the AV system a no-brainer. In the opening stages of the campaign, a clear majority of UK voters supported making the switch to the AV system. During the lead up to the plebiscite, however, the 'NoToAV' campaign made numerous

false claims about the AV system including that it would cost £250 million to adopt because the UK would need to purchase electronic voting devices, which was categorically false. The campaign even suggested that a vote in favour of the AV system would result in British babies and soldiers dying because that £250 million would need to be taken out of other programs. On top of that, the campaign also claimed that the public in Australia, which uses an AV voting system, actually wanted to get rid of the system, which was also categorically false. The campaign also made the absurd claim that the AV voting system would allow some people to vote twice, which is essentially the same as arguing that people who voted in the first round of a presidential runoff election should not be able to vote in the second round because those people would be voting twice. The spread of misinformation in the run-up to the plebiscite was also not limited to the 'NoToAV' campaign. The ruling Conservative Party, despite originally promising to remain officially neutral, eventually decided to take part in the public "debate" on the issue because an AV voting system would have made it so that the share of seats each party won each election more closely matched the party's overall share of votes, in effect significantly reducing the number of seats the Conservative Party would have had in future parliaments. The sitting prime minister even publicly claimed AV voting was 'undemocratic, obscure, unfair and crazy', even though it is by and large significantly more democratic and fair and much less likely to produce results that could be considered 'crazy' than the UK's current FPTP voting system. The prime minister even repeated multiple times the patently absurd claims that AV voting would allow some people to have their votes counted twice and would require the UK buying voting machines. In the end, the proposition was heavily defeated.

The general difficulty voters have making prudent decisions in plebiscites is often compounded by the fact that plebiscites often try to reduce extremely complicated decisions into simple 'yes/no' propositions. A classic example would be the UK's 2016 referendum on whether the UK should stay in or leave the European Union. Voters were only given the choice of either staying in the EU or leaving it. They were not given any choices regarding the conditions under which the UK would leave or stay. As a result, the conditions under which the UK would leave the EU was never even properly discussed in public, let alone discussed by voters themselves. On top of that, there was virtually no formal evaluation of the likely implications of a decision to leave the EU carried out prior to the referendum. As a result, virtually no voters in the referendum had any real idea what a vote to leave the EU would actually entail for the UK at the time they voted.

General level of academic attainment of decision-makers: Current vs PDD

While the average politician has historically possessed a much greater level of academic attainment than the average citizen in centuries past, this is certainly no longer the case. The average citizen today is far better educated than the average citizen was in the 19th century or even the 20th century while the gap between the general level of academic attainment of politicians and the general level of academic attainment of the average citizen has shrunk dramatically. While most people are still less likely to possess a fancy degree from an elite university like most politicians, they are nonetheless still relatively well-educated. In the United States, for example, almost 90% of the adult population has at least a high school diploma or equivalent, almost 60% have completed at least some tertiary level education, nearly a third have at least a bachelor's degree and roughly 12% have an advanced degree. In all likelihood, the general level of academic attainment among citizens in other developed countries is liable to be more or less the same.

So, while the average decision-maker in a PDD is still liable to have a lower level of academic attainment than the average decision-maker in current systems, that does not necessarily mean that decision-makers at every point in a PDD decision-making process will have on average a lower level of academic attainment than current decision-makers because different PDD participants participate at different points in a decision-making process. People with lower than average levels of academic attainment will generally be far more likely to limit themselves to being light participants compared to people with higher than average levels while the vast majority of heavy participants will likely be people with higher than average levels of academic attainment, in effect meaning the majority of position manipulation on the platform will likely be carried out by college graduates with intelligence quotas comparable to or better than the average politician.

Diminishing effect of politicians' arrogance on their ability to think critically

One of the key indicators of an individual's intelligence is their level of academic attainment. In general, the greater a person's level of academic attainment, the greater their intelligence quota and critical thinking faculties. That being said, the critical thinking faculties of people with high levels of academic attainment is often diminished by the co-existence of arrogance in those individuals. This is particularly true of politicians in current systems.

Every politician, in order to secure their party's nomination and successfully get themselves elected, invariably needs to adamantly believe that they are the best person to represent the interests of the people in their district. In order to do this, they must adamantly believe that they will be better able to represent the interests of the people in their district than every other person in their party that is jockeying to be the party's candidate for that same district. Obviously, any individual who lacked an adamant belief in the superiority of their own candidacy would be unlikely to put themselves forward as a candidate in the first place and even less likely to stay in a race until the very end because at some point they will likely think another candidate is probably better able to do the job and drop out. Essentially, candidates running for office need to possess an inherent belief in their own superiority as they will generally have only a very limited understanding of the abilities of other candidates during the nomination process making it realistically all but impossible for any one candidate to discern with any reasonable degree of certainty whether they are genuinely the best suited person for the job, especially when there is a large field of candidates. Moreover, the very nature of election campaigns effectively means voters will practically always elect a candidate who is willing and able to assert with absolute certainty that they are the candidate most capable of addressing each of the major issues of concern over a candidate who is either unwilling or unable to emphatically make such assertions. Of course, like knowing that they are the best person in their party to represent the district, it is realistically all but impossible for any one candidate to know with any reasonable degree of certainty that they are definitely better placed to address the major issues of concern in their district than every other candidate. The upshot is practically all political candidates have to have an ironclad belief in the superiority of their own abilities in order to secure their party's nomination and successfully get themselves elected. In other words, they need to possess a certain degree of arrogance in order to win the candidacy, win office and become a bona fide politician.

While possessing an abnormally high degree of arrogance serves politicians well when it comes to securing and retaining political power, it inevitably significantly diminishes their critical thinking faculties often resulting in them making highly imprudent decisions. Their arrogance inevitably causes them to become haughty. Amongst other things, this haughtiness often leads them to be dismissive of the views, legitimate concerns and advice of experts. A

classic example is government policy regarding climate change. Even to this day, a disturbingly large number of politicians, particularly in countries like Australia and the US, believe human-induced climate change is a myth (though fewer and fewer will openly admit it) and block efforts to combat it despite the fact that the overwhelming consensus among scientists is that it is not a myth and the fact that virtually none of the politicians have any expertise in any climate-related field. This propensity to believe that they are actually better able to understand and determine the best course of action in areas of policy in which they have no real expertise than experts in those areas of policy can also cause politicians to not even seek input from such experts when making such policies. Politicians' haughtiness and tendency to look down on the average person also often leads them to be dismissive of the views and legitimate concerns of ordinary citizens regarding government policy. Indeed, many politicians believe the general populace (including people in their own constituency) are by and large a bunch of idiots who do not know what they want and do not know what is actually in their own best interests. Politicians' haughtiness also leads them to be generally dismissive of any ideas or policy solutions put forth by other political parties, especially if they do not align with the politician's party's own ideology, regardless of how pragmatic the ideas or policy solutions put forth actually are. Politicians' haughtiness also inevitably makes it much more difficult for them to change their position on an issue once they have expressed that position publicly even in the face of overwhelming evidence suggesting that their position is obviously misguided because such changes in position effectively require them to tacitly concede that people they consider to be their intellectual inferiors are in fact actually right. Politicians' haughtiness also leads them to generally only include and incorporate the opinions of a relatively small group of trusted individuals in a lot of major government policy decision-making processes. Unfortunately, even then, politicians' inherent belief in their own superiority and propensity to believe that they are smartest person in the room regardless of which room they are in can lead them to be dismissive of other individuals involved in such processes including other politicians from their own party if those individuals express views or advocate positions in direct opposition to the politician's own view or position.

Arrogance and ignorance of decision-makers in a PDD

Compared to the decision-makers in current political systems, decision-makers in a PDD will be much less likely to possess an inherent inflated sense of their own superiority. Nonetheless, they will most likely be susceptible to arrogance of a different kind: arrogance caused by the Dunning–Kruger effect. Because of their generally lower levels of understanding of the subject matter, PDD decision-makers will be more likely to underestimate the complexity of the issue leading them to dramatically overestimate their ability to grasp the issue and make decisions related to it. This type of arrogance, however, differs from the type of arrogance politicians typically possess. PDD decision-makers' susceptibility to the arrogance brought about by the Dunning–Kruger effect stems from a general ignorance of the subject matter, not an inherent sense of one's own superiority. The difference is crucial because one can arguably be overcome, the other cannot. PDD decision-makers' ignorance, on the one hand, should be at least partially possible to overcome through education as ignorant people should generally still be capable of being taught and persuaded using logical argument. Politicians' arrogance, on the other hand, is much harder to overcome because truly arrogant people are genuinely incapable of being educated or taught or persuaded using logical argument because not only do they not listen, they also have a much harder time conceding and admitting that they are wrong.

Intelligence and critical thinking faculties of decision-makers in a PDD

While the intelligence of the average decision-maker in current systems (i.e. the average politician) will probably still be superior to the average decision-maker making the same decision in a PDD (i.e. the average volunteer citizen), that does not automatically mean the former will generally be able to produce more prudent decisions.

The reason is only certain types of participants will actually participate in the complex parts of decision-making processes. In any decision-making process with a complex component, participants that lack a proper understanding of the subject matter will be naturally disinclined to participate in the complex part of the process because understanding the subject matter is a prerequisite to them being able to participate. If the participant does not understand the subject matter, they essentially cannot participate as they will not be able to understand what they are doing and what they are voting on. Realistically, very few people will choose to go through a decision just picking out options at random without ever really having any idea whether those options are making the position better or worse as a person's satisfaction from participating in the decision-making process will largely be derived from the belief that they are helping to make the decision better. The upshot is that the complex components of PDD decision-making processes will be effectively carried out in large part by the most informed and capable participants (i.e. the citizens with the most expertise) who possess above average intelligence and critical thinking faculties.

Collective intelligence and collective critical thinking in a PDD

In addition to having intelligence and critical thinking faculties at least on par with decision-makers in current systems, decision-makers in a PDD will also benefit from a number of features of the PDD system that will further enchance their ability to make prudent decisions. The first is access to superior collective intelligence. PDD decision-makers will have access to vast amounts of organised topical information not presently available to current decision-makers. The second is AI assistance. The platform's AI will assist PDD decision-makers in making the most prudent decisions by doing things like tagging potential logical inconsistencies in positions. The third is the ability to engage in collective critical thinking. Because everything in a PDD is recorded openly including the logical reasoning behind each and every step of a decision, PDD decision-makers will effectively be able to engage in collective critical thinking. For example, one subset of participants might carry out a critical analysis of the available topical information (knowledge assessment) while another subset might apply the results of that critical analysis to the manipulation of policy (knowledge application). Another example would be when one subset of participants identifies and tags flaws in a proposed government policy (problem identification) while another subset of participants identifies a solution that overcomes those flaws (solution identification). In both examples, individual participants would not possess a full understanding of the critical thought behind the decision they are making. However, collectively they would. In other words, participants in PDD decision-making will essentially be able to link their critical thinking together in a chain of individual actions.

"Most decision-makers in a PDD will lack the necessary expertise and understanding of the subject matter to make prudent government decisions"

Another argument against the feasibility of the PDD model is that most decision-makers in a PDD will possess neither the necessary expertise nor the necessary understanding of the subject matter to make prudent government decisions. This argument is supported by:

a) the fact that most of the populace currently has a very poor understanding of both government policies and the inner workings of government; and
b) the likely reality that a large majority of decision-makers in a lot of PDD DMPs will generally not be experts in the DMP's areas of policy and in a lot of cases will not fully understand the exact implications of the positions when voting on them.

The argument effectively implies that decision-makers in current political systems (i.e. the politicians and cabinet members) DO generally possess expertise in each area of policy in which they make decisions and DO generally understand the likely implications of each decision they make to the point that they are better able to make prudent government decisions than the general populace would be in a PDD.

Reasons for the generally low level of understanding of public policy and government inner workings among the current populace

The first supporting part of the argument is based on the observation that the general populace currently tends to have only a basic understanding of both existing and new government policies and the inner workings of the government. However, this presently low level of understanding among the general populace can actually be attributed to a number of factors. First, in practical terms it is virtually impossible for any one person to be knowledgeable in every single area of government policy and every facet of the government bureaucracy. Even if every person in society dedicated all their time to gaining a proper understanding of as many facets of government decision-making as they could, a majority of people in any one decision-making process would still lack a proper understanding of the subject matter if they were each forced to participate in every aspect of government decision-making the way current decision-makers are. Second, people in existing political systems are not exposed to any genuine political discourse in the media, nor are they afforded the opportunity to participate in any genuine discourse themselves. Third, people in existing political systems are only ever afforded an extremely limited role in the formulation of government decision-making. Obviously, a person would know more about a government decision and its implications if they actively participated in the decision-making process that led to that decision. Fourth, the information people in existing political systems do receive about government decisions and policies tends to be of relatively poor quality. In practice, the extent to which politicians endeavour to inform the public about a new or existing government policy is generally limited to the sales pitch they make when they first publicly introduce the policy and the occasional updates they provide to their constituents in which they only tout its positive effects. Governments also tend to only ever release details related to the final policy and not the decision-makers' reasoning that led to it, in effect making it rather difficult for members of the public and media to fully understand the government's logic behind its decisions. The information people increasingly receive on social media also tends to come from friends with similar political views rather than from people with alternative views, in effect helping to

trap people inside their own personal informational bubble. Fifth, people in existing political systems are subject to an increasingly significant amount of misinformation making it ever more difficult for them to differentiate fact from fiction. Politicians and special interests groups in particular like to publicly mischaracterise the policies and positions of their rivals in an effort to confuse people and make them less likely to support those policies and positions. People are also increasingly falling for so-called 'fake news', further blurring their understanding of the subject matter. Sixth, people in current political systems have no real incentive to take the time to better understand a public policy issue because they know they are never likely to have any real power to influence a government policy or decision related to that issue.

All the same, despite people's combined ability to influence government decision-making being effectively limited to deciding every two to four years which of two parties to endow with a greater degree of power over government decision-making, a large chunk of the citizenry, possibly even a majority, still takes the time to keep themselves reasonably well informed of the latest local, national and global societal and political issues. Again, that is despite the vast majority not having any practical use for the knowledge. Obviously, a lot of these people would make a lot more of an effort to stay informed about government policies that concerned them and learn about the inner workings of government organs that oversee the implementation of such policies if they were actually able to participate in and influence the outcome of government decisions related to those policies.

Level of expertise and understanding among decision-makers in current political systems

The flipside of the argument is that decision-makers in current political systems generally DO possess both expertise in the areas of policy in which they make decisions and a good understanding of the likely implications of those decisions at the time they are making them. In truth, however, they generally do not possess either.

In reality, despite having to make decisions related to a myriad of different government policies that each impact society in a different way, most politicians (or at least almost most of them) have backgrounds primarily in law. While a significant number often also have backgrounds in business, economics or finance, in none of those three areas does that number ever really come close to constituting a majority. Even fewer politicians have backgrounds in science, health, education and IT despite the fact that all four are major areas of government policy that they all effectively have to make decisions on. The reality is that while most politicians might generally be genuine experts in the art of crafting laws, they are generally relatively clueless when it comes to the actual areas of policy that the laws which they craft cover. The negative effect of this general lack of expertise on politicians' ability to effectively make decisions is made worse by politicians' general insistence on giving leadership roles only to people in their own party, in effect nearly halving the size of the pool of individuals from which they can draw talent from.

A classic example of just how woefully out of their depth politicians can get is the case of former US Senator Ted Stevens who while chairman of the US Senate committee tasked with crafting US federal communication policy once described the Internet as a "series of tubes". In the Westminster system, the inefficiencies caused by the general lack of expertise among politicians extends to the executive branch as ministerial positions in Westminster systems are generally limited to members of parliament from the governing party or coalition. The problem is made worse by the fact that rather than always giving each ministerial position to the party member best qualified for the position, prime ministers often give them to their allies in the party as a reward for supporting their leadership. At least in presidential systems, the president is effectively able to choose people from the general population to be cabinet

members meaning they usually possess expertise and experience in the area of government that they are tasked with overseeing. Still, the ability of presidents in presidential systems to unilaterally make executive decisions effectively allows them to disregard the expert opinion of other cabinet members when making decisions related the member's portfolio even though the cabinet member is generally far better positioned than the president to make such decisions.

The notion that decision-makers in current political systems also generally do understand the likely implications of the decisions they make at the time they are making them is also highly erroneous. For starters, the general lack of policy expertise among politicians alone effectively means that a majority of decision-makers in current political bodies are unlikely to be able to fully grasp the likely implications of the majority of decisions they are making. Second, the reality is politicians these days are also forced to make far too many decisions on a far too wide a range of issues for it to be possible for them to be knowledgeable of the implications of each and every decision that they make. In truth, for the large majority of decisions they make, most politicians in current systems are liable to have only a limited understanding of the subject matter related to a decision, its underpinning logic and its likely real world implications at the time that they make it. This is especially true for both cabinet members in Westminster systems as they need to make both executive and legislative decisions as well as politicians in the US who can spend over half their time fundraising. A classic example of just how ill-informed politicians can be when making important decisions with major ramifications would be the failure of the vast majority of members of the US Congress to actually read a key intelligence report on Iraqi WMDs before deciding to authorise a non-UN-sanctioned invasion of Iraq.

The reality is the formulation of the vast majority of government legislation, policies and programs in current governments is largely carried out internally either by government officials inside government departments or by staff under the employ of a particular politician or externally by people in non-government organisations with links to the ruling party (i.e. party think tanks). Even when politicians are involved in the formulation of a new policy, it is usually only a small subset of them whose participation is often limited to deciding the broader elements of the new policy while leaving the arduous task of filling in the finer details to subordinates. In reality, for the vast majority of policy formulation decision-making processes, the vast majority of politicians are not brought in until after the new policy has been formally put into a proposal. In the Westminster system, for example, politicians are typically brought into a process progressively in three or four stages. The first stage consists of politicians that are actually involved in the drafting of the policy. In probably most cases, this is limited to the relevant minister and deputy minister tasked with overseeing the area of policy under review. The second stage is the cabinet and consists of all the members of the cabinet. The third stage is the party room and consists of all the parliamentary members of the ruling party or coalition. The fourth, if the policy requires legislative approval, is the legislature and consists of all the members of parliament. In most cases, only the relevant minister and deputy minister brought in during the first stage and their shadow counterparts brought in during the fourth stage are liable to have intricate knowledge of the produced policy at the time they are assessing it. The other politicians are most likely to have only a rudimentary understanding of the policy because they simply do not have enough time to properly inform themselves of the intricacies of every policy that they are required to assess.

The reality is the vast majority of politicians the vast majority of the time do not carry out assessments of new policies themselves. Instead, they rely on staff, individuals from party-affiliated organisations and other politicians to do the assessment for them then give them the gist of it. In many cases, they do not even read the results of the assessment. They are simply told how to vote by their party whip.

While it is true that a majority of people in a lot of PDD decision-making processes will probably have neither any formal expertise in the subject matter being discussed or a definitive understanding of the likely implications of every position they support at every point in a process including the final decision, it is actually not necessary in order for the decisions they ultimately make to be prudent.

The reason essentially has to do with the way PDD decision-making processes are structured and the way in which the citizenry and the bureaucracy participate in them. Virtually every complex PDD decision-making process, other than the Open Review Process, is structured in a way that gives the bureaucracy a prominent role in determining the decision's outcome. Indeed, when formulating most policy, officials actually have the capacity to disregard the preferences of participating citizens if they believe that those preferences are not in the best interests of the citizenry as a whole provided, that is, they are able to properly justify their decision to disregard those preferences *(Note: The citizenry can subsequently overrule them if they do not agree with the decision but the likelihood of that happening is likely to be extremely slim).* Complex PDD decision-making processes are also compartmentalised and broken up into numerous smaller tasks that are each largely independent of one another effectively enabling participants to concentrate on completing one task at a time without having to worry about how that task relates to the larger picture. PDD decision-making processes are also all designed in a way that minimises participants' potential to make imprudent decisions while still endeavouring to give those participants genuine choices and genuine power. Advisory councils also form an intricate part of practically every complex PDD decision-making process. As a consequence, when formulating a decision, participants are liable to be heavily influenced by the opinions of advisory council members. Indeed, if a large majority of advisory council members all provide the same advice, participants will be highly likely to heed that advice and incorporate it into their final decision. In other words, PDD participants will basically do exactly what (smart) politicians for the most part do currently and that is listen to and heed the advice of experts.

Even in the sole complex process in which the citizenry is given a preeminent role, the Open Review Process, it is still not necessary for the majority of participants to have either formal expertise on the subject matter or a definitive understanding of the likely implications of every position that they support at every point in the process including the final decision. The reason is the actual level of influence each participant in such processes possesses over the ultimate outcome of the process is directly proportional to their level of participation in the process meaning participants who participate more in the process have a greater say over the contents of the final decision. Moreover, the inherent difficulty in manipulating and merging complex positions in such processes naturally discourages the less well-informed and the less mentally able from trying to participate in the manipulation of policy. In other words, having a good understanding of the subject matter is a natural prerequisite to being able to manipulate policy positions. Consequently, the people who carry out the heavy-lifting in such processes will actually be by and large the participants with the greatest expertise in the subject. Participants who participate in the manipulation of policy positions are also likely to have a reasonably good understanding of the implications of those positions because every proposed change to a policy position has to be accompanied with a justification for making the change and in order for that justification to be convincing it has to make sense and in order for it to make sense the person putting forth the proposal essentially has to know what they are talking about.

The bottom line is PDD decision-makers should still be able to make decisions at least as prudent as current decision-makers' decisions even though a lot of them will not always understand the full implications of their actions in no small part because current decision-makers rarely ever understand the full implications of their actions.

> ***"Because only a small number of volunteers are liable to make a lot of PDD decisions, a PDD government will inevitably lack legitimacy in the eyes of the people"***

Another argument against the feasibility of the PDD model is that some of the decisions made in it will be made by a relatively small subset of citizens and, as a result, will lack legitimacy in the eyes of the wider public leading to social and political instability. This argument is supported by:

a) the fact that some PDD decisions will ultimately be made a very small subset of citizens; and
b) the fact that historically a lack of government legitimacy has often led to government instability.

Legitimacy in the context of this argument means 'the belief that current political institutions are the most appropriate and proper ones for the society'.

Political instability means 'disruption to the political order in the form of widespread political disengagement or calls for regime change'.

Social instability means 'disruption to the social order in the form of protests or political violence'.

This argument effectively asserts that decisions made by a small minority of citizens in a PDD will not be seen as legitimate by the wider citizenry and that this lack of legitimacy will ultimately result in the entire PDD political system also losing its legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry.

Factors mitigating the likelihood of individuals seeing individual PDD decisions as illegitimate

There are a number of factors mitigating the likelihood of individuals viewing individual PDD decisions made by a small minority of citizens as illegitimate.

One factor is **the likely relative triviality of such decisions**. Basically, decisions with low participation rates are liable to be relatively trivial. In general, the more trivial a decision, the less likely people will be to care about its outcome and the less likely they will be to participate in that decision's decision-making process. And since people are only liable to question the legitimacy of decisions that they care about (and which they oppose), the likelihood of a non-negligible number of citizens questioning the legitimacy of such decisions is liable to be relatively low.

A second factor is **the fact that every citizen in a PDD will have the exact same capacity to influence every individual decision** making it all but impossible for anyone to assert that people from a certain identity group were not given a fair chance to participate in the decision-making process.

A third factor is **the fact that all PDD decisions are made by individuals individually**, thus making it practically impossible for individuals or external groups to assert that a particular decision was made by a particular identity group as the political, social or cultural identity of the individuals making a decision is never made public.

A fourth factor is **the fact that citizens in a PDD will each have an inherent responsibility to ensure substandard decisions are not made**. A fundamental consequence of having political power within the PDD model completely flat is that it effectively eliminates blame from the political system and makes everyone equally responsible for all government decisions including bad ones. This universal obligation imposed on every member of the public will be well known to every member of the public in a PDD. Consequently, instead of seeing decisions made by small minority of citizens that they oppose as illegitimate, they will likely see them as a failure of the collective public including themselves to adequently participate in the decision-making process.

A fifth factor is **the fact that citizens in a PDD will generally be able to reverse any decision** made by a small minority that the majority subsequently finds objectionable. Indeed, the threshold of participants needed to instigate proceedings to overturn a decision is liable to be proportional to the number of participants that originally made the decision. Hence, decisions made by a small minority of citizens will likely be much easier to overturn than other more heavily participated-in decisions. To boot, even when a larger minority's petition to overturn a smaller minority's decision fails to garner the support of the larger participating body (which would have overturned the decision), the very fact that the larger minority was able to have its grievances heard is liable to increase the legitimacy of the original decision in its members eyes because the decision will actually have been endorsed by a majority of the participating body.

Conflating individual decisions with the entire system

This argument also essentially conflates legitimacy of individual decisions with legitimacy of the entire political system. Simply because an individual sees a number of individual decisions as illegitimate does not automatically mean that they will see the entire political system as illegitimate. It is entirely possible for individuals in a PDD to see individual decisions as illegitimate while still recognising the legitimacy of the political system. Indeed, the two are quite distinct from one another.

Practical impossibility of political instability in a PDD stemming from decision illegitimacy

While a single decision made by a small minority and seen as illegitimate by a sizable chunk of the citizenry is theoretically capable of causing social instability, realistically one illegitimate decision would not be capable of causing political instability on its own. In order to cause political instability, a multitude of illegitimate decisions would have to be made by a small minority of citizens over a long time period. Such a scenario is incredibly unlikely due to the fact that in a PDD a majority (or rather a larger minority) of citizens will have the capacity to take over the system at all times meaning the chances of a small minority consistently making perceived illegitimate decisions without being challenged are likely to be slim to none. Indeed, in a PDD, whenever a decision-making process produces a bad decision and that bad decision is exposed in the media, it naturally attracts the attention of the wider participating body leading to a bunch of new participants getting involved in any subsequent processes in an effort to make sure the bad decision is not repeated. In other words, many participants in a PDD will be naturally inclined to spend their limited time and effort participating in decision-making processes that benefit from their participation.

The bottom line is a PDD government should be perfectly stable even when a majority of its decisions are made by only a small subset of the citizenry.

"Most decision-makers in a PDD will be inclined to base their decisions on how the decision benefits them personally at the expense of the greater good"

Another argument against the viability of the PDD model is that decision-makers in a PDD will by and large support and oppose decisions based primarily on whether they think the decision will benefit or harm their own interests and the interests of those close to them rather than on how it is liable to affect society as a whole, in effect leading to repeatedly suboptimal decisions. This argument essentially rests on:

a) the fact that people generally base their decisions on their own self-interest;
b) the fact that some PDD decision-making processes in some areas of policy are liable to be dominated by people with the same background; and
c) the assumption that attempts by decision-makers in a PDD to make decisions based on their own self-interest at the expense of the greater good will go unchallenged.

The flipside of the argument is that decision-makers in current political systems DO NOT ever base decisions on their own interests, which is so obviously not the case that it is not even worth elaborating on.

Factors mitigating the likelihood of PDD decision-makers trying to make decisions based purely on their own self-interests

While many, if not most, PDD decision-makers will certainly base their decisions on whether they personally benefit them or those close to them, there are a couple of factors that should make PDD decision-makers more inclined to factor in the interests of other people as well. The first factor is **the strong sense of community and shared interest** that a large chunk - possibly even a majority - of PDD decision-makers is liable to feel. The second factor is **community-oriented process design**. Essentially, PDD decision-making processes will be designed in a way that not only cultivates the first factor but also encourages participants to think in communal terms. For example, problems will be framed in terms of how they impact the community as too will the solution criteria to problems.

Factors diminishing PDD decision-makers' ability to make decisions based purely on their own self-interests

On top of the factors that should make PDD decision-makers more inclined to factor in the interests of other people, there are a number of other factors that should limit PDD decision-makers' ability to successfully make decisions based purely on their own self-interests *(Note: The following diminishing factors are actually applicable to all substandard policies formed by anyone in a PDD, not just self-serving substandard policies formed by self-interested decision-makers).*

One factor is **the role of the bureaucracy in PDD policy formulation**. The bureaucracy in a PDD essentially takes the leading role in most PDD policy formulation decision-making processes giving officials the capacity to disregard the aspirations of participants if they believe that those aspirations are not in the best interests of the citizenry as a whole provided, of course, that they are able to properly justify their decision to disregard those aspirations *(Note: The citizenry can subsequently overrule them if they do not agree with the decision).*

A second factor is **safe (or rather restricted) process design**. Some PDD decision-making processes in which there is a risk of participants making an ill-advised decision if they are a given an open choice are liable to be designed so that participants cannot make such an ill-advised decision in the first place even if that means reducing the robustness of the process.

A third factor is **the fact that anyone will be able to challenge a position they believe is either unfair or unbalanced** at any and every point of every decision-making process, in effect making it more difficult for self-interested decision-makers to put forth and maintain unfair or unbalanced positions.

A fourth factor is **media scrutiny of suspect policy**. Just as the media in current political systems will find controversial policy under consideration by the government newsworthy, so too will the media in a PDD. Media outlets will basically bring suspect policy under consideration by PDD decision-makers to the public's attention, in turn prompting a massive number of individuals to join the process in order to ensure the policy is not adopted.

A fifth factor is **participants' natural response to underperforming decision-making processes**. Participants in a PDD will naturally be inclined to join underperforming decision-making processes because participants naturally want to spend their time and effort where they make a difference, in effect ensuring decision-making processes in which self-interested participants successfully introduce substandard policy one time do not succeed a second time.

A sixth factor is **the longevity of PDD policy formulation**. Practically all PDD decision-making processes related to the formulation of government policies and plans are long, very long, and involve many steps, in effect giving participants ample time to scrutinise proceedings and identify flaws in proposed policy.

A seventh factor is **the final approval of new policy in a separate OCDB**. All new policies in a PDD are initially formulated in a VC before being sent to one or more separate OCDBs for final approval. The OCDB or OCDBs the pending policy are sent to depend on the nature of the policy. If the policy contained a legislative component, that legislative component would be sent to the Legislative Chamber. If the policy contained a non-legislative component, that part of the policy would be sent to either the VEC or relevant VEDH. The number of participants in both the Legislative Chamber and VEC is liable to be at least half a dozen times the number of participants that participated in the last stage of the VC from whence the policy originated, in effect necessitating that a participatory body at least six times the size of that of the original decision-makers give final approval to the policy. This inclusion of the wider participating community in the final step to approve new policies effectively acts as a bulwark against self-interested policy-making by making a large number of citizens not involved in the original decision-making process give the final approval.

An eighth factor is **the capacity of PDD decision-makers to reverse decisions**. Lastly, as a final bulwark against self-interested PDD policy-makers, PDD decision-makers will have the capacity to overturn and reverse any flawed decision that somehow managed to pass through its entire decision-making process without having its flaws picked up on.

"PDD decision-makers will not be able to make certain crucial decisions as effectively as the individuals currently making them"

One argument against the desirability of completely transitioning to a PDD model of government is that PDD decision-makers will not be able to make every single decision presently made by individuals such as the president/prime minister or member of cabinet as well as those individuals, in effect supporting a continuation of a role for those individuals in a PDD. This argument is supported by:

a) the fact that some government decisions, particularly those related to a country's foreign affairs and trade, need to be made in conjunction with individuals in other governments;

b) the fact that heads of governments as well as other members of cabinet often need to make complicated spur of the moment decisions in response to internal events such as natural disasters and domestic terrorist attacks; and

c) the fact that heads of governments sometimes need to make complicated spur of the moment decisions in response to external events such as unprovoked sneak attacks by foreign militaries.

The irrelevance of each fact used to support this argument has actually already been more or less explained in previous parts of this paper. The short answer to all three is basically to simply delegate responsibility for the task to a particular official and have it so that the citizenry is subsequently able to overrule the individual if they believe them to be overstepping their bounds.

"Giving all political power to the people will lead to a tyranny of the majority and a suppression of the rights of minorities"

One final argument against the suitability of the PDD model is that it would lead to a so-called tyranny of the majority. This argument basically asserts that if the people are given the power to enact laws and determine government policies, a majority will opt to introduce laws and policies that favour themselves to the detriment of minority groups. In other words, the argument essentially argues that if given the chance a majority of ordinary citizens would choose to enact laws and government policies that oppressed ethnic, religious, political or racial minorities. The argument essentially rests on:

a) the assumption that decision-makers in a PDD will generally not adhere to the ideal of political pluralism; and

b) the assumption that decision-makers in a PDD will generally not believe that the views of people who hold values that are in the minority should be taken into consideration when formulating government policies and laws.

The flipside of the argument is that politicians in current political systems DO presently adhere to political pluralism and DO NOT currently enact laws or policies that favour one social group to the detriment of another.

Political pluralism amongst decision-makers in existing political systems

The idea that politicians in existing political systems systematically adhere to political pluralism and do not enact laws or policies that favour one social group to the detriment of another is highly suspect. In practice, politicians in current political systems often enact laws and policies that favour their own interests, interests of their party or interests of special interest groups over the common good. Politicians in many US states, for example, have both historically and more recently enacted laws aimed at disenfranchising social groups that traditionally vote for the opposing party in an effort to consolidate their own party's political power. Many politicians in the US and beyond also have a suspicious tendency to advocate policy positions that align with the interests of the wealthy individuals and special interest groups who fund their political campaign seemingly at the expense of the interests of the general populace. Politicians in current political systems also have a tendency to only take into account the interests of their voter base when formulating policy and disregard the interests of the voter bases of opposing parties.

Political pluralism amongst decision-makers in a PDD

The idea that decision-makers in a PDD will be more inclined to ignore the views of people in the minority and enact laws and policies that oppressed them than decision-makers in current political systems is also highly suspect. For one, a sizable majority of people (at least in modern Western-style societies) are by and large supportive of equal rights and anti-discrimination laws strongly suggesting that they recognise the importance and value of treating everyone in society equally. Moreover, given the widespread popular support for such laws and the fact that decision-making in a PDD will be fully open and transparent, it seems highly unlikely that a majority of people in a PDD would ever at any point decide to roll back such laws so that they can enact new ones that did actually

discriminate against minorities. Indeed, there is no genuine reason to believe that politicians in existing political systems are any more inclined to protect and take into account the interests of people in the minority than the general populace will be in a PDD. In fact, the systematic inclusion of people with minority views in PDD decision-making that is largely absent in current political systems coupled with the open and transparent nature of the PDD system are two reasons to believe that decision-makers in a PDD will actually be less inclined than decision-makers in existing systems to try to steamroll the interests of minorities.

Tyranny of the minority in existing political systems

In addition to being at least as susceptible to a tyranny of the majority as a PDD, current representative models of government are also susceptible to something else just as bad: a tyranny of the minority. In current systems, a small group of elites is capable of imposing their will on an entire society, even if a majority of the populace opposes the action - something not possible in a PDD.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

All in all, the PDD model of government outlined in this paper appears to be not simply an incremental improvement over existing models of government but a revolutionary leap forward. Indeed, with the exception of the speed with which it takes to make a decision, the outlined PDD model not only appears to be superior to every existing model of government in every way, it also appears to overcome every single major shortcoming inherent in those models.

In theory, the PDD model completely eliminates the need for an elite political class, which other classes of society, especially the lower ones, are inherently antagonistic towards. The model also completely eliminates the need to hold expensive and generally unpleasant and divisive elections and plebiscites. It also completely eliminates political corruption as well as any and all ability of special interest groups to exert undue influence over government decisions. It also maximises transparency and accountability in every aspect of government decision-making and maximises both the legitimacy of as well as the level of consent given by the governed for each and every government decision. The model also stabilises the government so that it retains its legitimacy indefinitely and massively improves both people's faith and trust in government and the overall degree of harmony within society. The model's utilisation of technology and mass participation in every facet of government decision-making also greatly improves the overall quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the government's policies and plans. Most importantly, however, the model puts actual political power in the hands of the people themselves, in effect giving them the means to take control of their own society and fix its problems themselves.

Furthermore, there does not appear to be anything fundamentally unworkable with the model. Yes, there will obviously be significant challenges involved in fully designing and building the model's underlying software platform and, yes, the model will in all likelihood not work as well in practice as it does in theory (if for no other reason than the fact that it appears to work far too well in theory). However, there appears to be no reason to believe that the model either might not actually be feasible or might not work as well as existing models and every reason to believe that it will in fact ultimately work much, much better.

Moreover, arguments that decision-makers in a PDD will not be civilised, intelligent or knowledgeable enough to make prudent government decisions at least as well as current government decision-makers do not appear to hold water. Neither do arguments that self-interested decision-makers in a PDD will repeatedly undermine the effectiveness of PDD decisions or that low participation levels in some decisions will lead to a legitimacy crisis or that a PDD government will lead to a tyranny of the majority.

In short, the PDD model of government appears to be nothing short of the **ULTIMATE FORM OF GOVERNMENT**. Consequently, given the overwhelming number of major advantages it appears to have over existing models of government as well as the increasingly dismal state of representative governments around the world, it is highly recommended that the software platform needed to underpin the new model be designed, developed and ready to deploy as soon as possible. Such a platform, if properly built, would fundamentally change the way in which human societies are governed for the better and establish for the first time in human history a society in which the common folk would not be looked down upon by or subject to the whims of a haughty ruling elite class. Such a platform would not only likely go down as the crowning achievement of the ICT revolution, it would likely go down as one of the greatest achievements in the history of human civilisation and mark the dawn of a new age of humanity.

Appendix I: Expected Contents of the Full Version

The full version of this paper is expected to be approximately 280-320 pages, compared to this paper's 92, and contain the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Open Citizenry Decision-Making Bodies
- The Virtual Legislature
- The Virtual Executive
- The PDD Virtual Government
- Other Aspects of the PDD Model
- Primary Voting Methods
- Types of Participants
- Virtual Inquiry Initiation Process
- Problem Identification Process
- Strategic Plan Creation Process
- Strategic Plan Review Process
- Strategic Plan Major Review Process
- Agenda-Setting Process
- Standard Inquiry Process
- Standard Review Process
- Open Review Process
- Predefined Review Process
- Prescheduled Post-Implementation Review Process
- New Initiative Development Process
- Budget Formulation Process
- Key Advantages Over Current Representative Models of Government
- Key Challenges in Fully Designing, Building & Deploying the PDD Platform
- Counterarguments
- Conclusion

Appendix II: Future Plans

Once I have finished the full version of this paper (hopefully by early 2020), my plan is to use it to secure funding for the creation of a non-profit foundation to fully design, develop and eventually release the underpinning PDD software platform. I estimate it'll probably cost upwards of $US500 million and take at least four to five years to have the platform ready for deployment. That's with a max-sized development team because we're talking about a platform probably at least as complex as Facebook, if not more. Plus a lot of research has to carried out to make sure it is optimally designed. Moreover, as every country's national and subnational governments are different, it won't be possible to simply build a single platform then give it to each jurisdiction's government to implement. Each jurisdiction will essentially require its own customised version of the platform that will necessarily need to be designed by a team of nationals from that jurisdiction as few governments will be willing to simply have a new form of government that they had no say in creating essentially imposed on their jurisdiction. The development of a PDD platform for a particular jurisdiction will also need to be carried out in collaboration with that jurisdiction's government, not least because it'll likely be extremely difficult and time-consuming to ascertain information about the government's inner-workings without that government's cooperation but also because you can't just setup this kind of operation in a country without at least first securing the national government's verbal consent. Obviously, any national government would be livid if it found out that foreigners had unbenownst to it established an operation within its own borders aimed at ultimately subverting its country's existing political institutions.

In any case, my plan is to find roughly half a dozen national governments willing to permit their country to be amongst the first wave of countries to begin making the switch to the new model then setting up local design teams in each of those countries. The next step is to build customised locally-designed PDD platforms for each of those societies along with PDD transition plans. Once those initial platforms are ready to deploy and the plans ready to implement, the next step is simply to go public with that information then sit back and watch the revolution unfold. I don't believe that it'll be necessary to actively push each society's political class to begin transitioning to the new form of government because I believe the citizenry in each of those societies will vehemently do that on their own accord. In fact, I think they'll kick out literally any politician or political party that refuses to endorse their country's transition plan because they will like the idea of getting rid of the political class and replacing it with themselves so much that it'll be the sole issue on which they cast their vote. I also believe virtually all politicians and political parties in each of these societies will quickly realise that they'll be annihilated at the next election prompting practically all of them to assume a pro-reform position despite the fact that they'll effectively be advocating reforms that'll bring about their own demise. And I believe they'll do this because I believe practically all politicians covet power more than anything including their own integrity. I think they'll gladly implement reforms that'll bring about their class's own demise if it means they can hold onto sweet, sweet power a little longer.

In any case, if you want to join the impending revolution or contact me for any reason, you can email me at ewanmcinnes@gmail.com. I'm particularly interested in getting feedback on the theory and making contact with reputable academics and experts who can provide positive references (because I'll need such references to secure funding).

Peace

Ewan McInnes