

general agreement. The progress that has been made in the public health field in the direction of conventional standards of appraisal was discussed as illustrating the type of investigation proposed.

The problem raised by the round table attached to the Conference held in Chicago concerning the difficulty of making comparisons between the civil service commissions operating under different laws was met by the proposal that the commissions themselves be not appraised as such, but rather that the *whole employment situation* be appraised. If certain shortcomings exist, either because of a faulty law or because of the inactivity of the civil service commission, it will be established that the faulty conditions exist. This obviously is the initial and basic step in any appraisal. The analysis of causes may, in so far as the appraisal itself is concerned, be disregarded.

Some attention was given to a consideration of those features in an appraisal about whose significance there would be general agreement. On account of lack of time, not all important features were covered, and no conclusion was reached as to their relative importance.

The discussion of the features that might enter into the composition of a schedule centered about the list of topics proposed at the first conference held in Madison and contained in the report of this conference in Volume XVIII, No. 1, of the REVIEW.

W. E. MOSHER

ROUND TABLE ON POLITICAL PARTIES,
POLITICAL LABORATORIES; RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. *Scope of the Work Undertaken.* The round table was fortunate in having among its members a number of persons who have engaged actively in practical politics. These were: Herr Erkelenz, a member of the German Reichstag and president of the Democratic party; Herbert C. Pell, chairman of the New York state democratic committee; and Mrs. Livermore of the Republican national committee. The suggestions, as well as the points of view, of these practical political workers were most valuable.

The discussions of the round table centered upon the answers to three questions proposed at the opening session: (1) What is the material for research in party politics? (2) What are some important subjects for inquiry? (3) What are the methods best suited for the study of these projects? The round table on political parties was new this year. Hence, the answer to (3) was deferred until adequate

attention had been given to (1) and (2). Except for the fact that methods were considered in connection with each project as it was suggested, the round table deferred consideration of method until its next meeting.

2. *The Desirability of Political Laboratories.* In connection with the materials for political research, the suggestion was made by Professor Merriam, who was present at some of the sessions of the round table, that because of the fact that the study of politics is perhaps in the pre-scientific age, much attention must be given to the actual discovery and collection of materials which may be useful for subsequent scientific study. This, according to Professor Merriam, is part of the process through which all developing sciences have passed. Consequently, every effort should be made by those interested in the science of politics to gather the raw material concerning political parties and their activities.

It appeared to the round table that colleges should establish, wherever possible, "laboratories" for the study of politics. Such a laboratory should include: (1) a storehouse of material for use in special studies and investigations; (2) facilities for collecting material needed for studies under way; and (3) a place where students working in courses in government can find adequately assembled the materials they need to work with, and where they can work under favorable conditions.

The distinctive thing about such a device is that it is primarily a "politics" laboratory. It is not intended that it shall become the traditional governmental research library, of which there are now several in the United States. Political material such as election statistics, political platforms, campaign publications, and election laws are to be collected, rather than merely government reports and documents. "Politics" should come first and "administration" second.

3. *Materials for Political Research that Should be Collected.* A wide variety of things should be collected of which the following are suggestive:

- (1) campaign literature, handbooks, party platforms of leading parties and candidates in national, state and local politics;
- (2) ballots of all states and of many cities;
- (3) election statistics from secretaries of state throughout the states;
- (4) election laws from all states;
- (5) bulletins, etc., of various organizations representing special interests and points of view, business, farming, labor, and civic;
- (6) Congressional records and digests, committee hearings and reports;

- (7) certain magazines and newspapers, to be taken and clipped or filed;
- (8) films recording important political events, phonographic records of political speeches, even radio equipment for gathering current political discussion;
- (9) unpublished letters of political leaders (if correspondence of the great is not available, then of the near-great in politics—every scrap of material that will help students of politics and history to understand current politics);
- (10) the masses of correspondence that legislators receive from constituents, which now is in the main destroyed;
- (11) biographical material concerning party leaders collected and written by students. In this last connection it will appear evident that studies of leaders in politics such as Professor Merriam has so wisely encouraged is in reality the massing of the material upon which scientific progress is based.

4. *Suggested Projects for Research.* Possible projects for research were suggested by all of the members of the round table. The following are typical and, in the opinion of the chairman, the most valuable of those mentioned:

- (a) Political activities of the negro population in northern cities. It was suggested that a number of northern cities be selected and that two or three precincts predominantly negro be studied with a view to determining the variations in the election results in these precincts, and that some effort be made to examine the methods followed by political parties in seeking the votes of these citizens. The suggestion was made that it might be found that the negro in the North shows a tendency to follow the political inclinations of the city itself, rather than the traditional Republican affiliation.
- (b) Non-voting. Extensions and continuations of the study undertaken by Merriam and Gosnell in Chicago ought to be made in various cities.
- (c) The effect of absent-voting laws upon non-voting.
- (d) The charitable activities of party organizations. It was suggested that by means of coöperation with district professional charity workers and with party leaders, an attempt be made to evaluate the much discussed and probably much over-rated charitable activities of political parties. It was suggested that case studies might reveal rather questionable results from such activities conducted by party workers.
- (e) The party affiliations of naturalized citizens.

- (f) The influence of various election methods. Mr. Herbert Pell described a possible study of the real effects of political propaganda in a selected number of election districts. Such a study would involve the use in each of the districts of a different type of political activity, and by means of a comparison of results with other elections some idea of the value of these methods could be secured.
- (g) The influence of the foreign-born voter in national elections in the Northwest.
- (h) The work of the central offices of British parties.
- (i) Party leadership. A study of party leadership, not only by an examination of the characteristics of successful politicians but from investigation of persons who are defeated for aldermanic offices. Thus a study might be made of "non-leaders."
- (j) The results of proportional representation. There have now been a sufficient number of elections under this system in cities in the United States and in other election areas in other countries to make possible a very valuable determination of the various claims made in its behalf.
- (k) A study of the political technique of the national committee. It was suggested that the work of the Republican organization of 1920 was really so effective and so perfect an example of political technique that a study should be made of what was done.

It was the opinion of the members of the round table that it would be very valuable to bring together substantially the same group a year hence, to continue a consideration of these and other topics and to compare reports of specific pieces of research attempted during the year.

RAYMOND MOLEY

ROUND TABLE ON NOMINATING METHODS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TECHNIQUE FOR TESTING THE USEFULNESS OF A NOMINATING METHOD

1. *Nature of the Problem.* Beginning where it left off at the close of the Second Conference on the Science of Politics, the round table on nominating methods expected to complete its examination of the various "tests" suggested at the previous Conferences. It may be recalled that the so-called "tests" were the proposed methods of discovering for a given nominating system its effects along several different lines. It was