

FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
(202) 225-6521

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 17 --- "Two of the most important features under the Federal System Plan for Presidential elections are the encouragement of a strong two-party system and the requirement for broad geographical support for candidates," U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) said today. Dole testified before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. The Federal System Plan was introduced in the Senate March 5, by Dole and Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.)

"The Direct Election Plan would encourage minorities to establish splinter parties instead of working within the confines of the two-party structure," Dole said. "As a result, no candidate would have a clear victory and the entire electoral process would be deadlocked.

"The Federal System Plan would retain the importance of the smaller states within the election process by assuring the requirement of broad geographical support. The Direct Election Plan would eliminate the influence of states as political entities. Simple economics would make it impractical for a candidate to vigorously seek individual votes within the smaller states when the same effort could be more productively directed at the larger states.

"The Federal System starts with and in all but the exceptional case adheres to the outcome of the popular vote.

"Although we all seek constructive reform of our election machinery, I do not believe any of us seek to alter the basic mechanisms by which candidates seek support among the people and votes on election day."

The Federal System Plan has three major provisions:

1 -- A candidate who had won a plurality of the total popular vote would be declared President if he had also won either a plurality in states which contain more than 50 percent of all voters participating in the election or a plurality in more than 50 percent of the states.

2 -- If the popular vote winner failed to satisfy one or the other of the 50 percent rule requirements, then the President would be selected on the basis of electoral votes. The presidential candidate with the most popular votes in a particular state would be automatically awarded the state's electoral vote.

3 -- If no candidate received a majority of the electoral votes, the plan would eliminate all but the two candidates with the most electoral votes and redistribute the electoral votes of the other. The electoral votes won by third party candidates would be awarded on a state-by-state basis in proportion to the two top candidates' relative share of the popular vote in the respective states. The candidate receiving a majority of the electoral votes following this redistribution would be elected President.