No need to tinker with the U.S. Constitution

by Phyllis_Schlafly

Let's face it. Some people, especially liberals, just don't like the U.S. Constitution. Every few years, they come up with wild or devious plans to make major changes.

The would-be rewriters of the Constitution do not merely propose amendments to remedy a problem, as allowed for in Article V. They seek structural change after hurling put-downs such as archaic and out-of-date.

The latest to imagine that he can write a 21st century improvement on our great Constitution is University of Virginia professor Larry J. Sabato, whom the Washington Post once dubbed "the Mark McGwire of political analysts." His rhetoric might be on steroids but his ideas for a "more perfect" Constitution sound like warmed-over Rhodes-scholar dissatisfaction with impudent American revolutionaries who dared to reject the British system and write an original document.

Here are some of Sabato's 23 proposals to revitalize our constitution, which he set forth in his new book entitled "A More Perfect Constitution" (Walker and Co., $25.95).

Sabato wants to make all former presidents and vice presidents "National senators." I guess the prospect of Bill Clinton as first gentleman in the White House isn't a sure thing, so we should meanwhile guarantee him a speaking platform in the Senate.

Sabato would erase the great compromise of our Constitution that produced a federal union: the bicameral Congress with the House of Representatives based on population and the Senate based on state representation. He wants to give the 10 most populous states two additional senators, the 15 next most populous states one additional senator, and the District of Columbia one senator.

Of course, Sabato doesn't like the Electoral College. Liberals have been carping about the Electoral College system for years, and when Hillary Clinton celebrated her victory as U.S. senator from New York, her first pronouncement was that we have "outlived the need for an Electoral College" and it should be abolished.

Sabato wants to manipulate the Electoral College in a way he claims will reduce the chances that a president will win without a majority of the popular vote. Because of third parties, we've had many elections (including three of the last four), when no presidential candidate received a popular-vote majority.

Sabato can't prevent this unless he bans third parties. We are fortunate that we now have a proven system that allows the president to achieve an Electoral College majority that validates his election.

Sabato would abolish the constitutional provision that the president and vice president shall be "a natural-born citizen." That will bring cheers from the open-borders crowd eager to build a majority of diverse people unfamiliar with American rule of law.

Sabato wants to elect the president and all Senate and House members at the same time. He would accomplish this by changing House terms from two to three years, and setting Senate terms to coincide with presidential elections.

But our Constitution was not designed for efficiency of process in either elections or legislation. It was designed to limit the power of government in order to preserve liberty.

Sabato calls for giving federal judges guaranteed cost-of-living pay increases. That's one more way to reinforce special privilege for elitist judges.

Sabato wants to write a new procedure for a four-month presidential primary system into the Constitution. Whatever problems we have with primaries cannot be remedied by imposing the rigidity of a constitutionally mandated calendar.

Sabato wants to allow the House of Representatives to be appointed (rather than elected) in the event of extensive deaths or incapacitation. It's a very undemocratic idea ever to abandon the requirement that all House Members must be elected by the people.

Sabato's proposals are a potpourri of so many bad ideas. His proposed constitution would require two years of mandatory national (military) service for all young men and women, and taxpayer financing for congressional campaigns.

Who knows what mischief is lurking under the Sabato's proposal that his new constitution would require an automatic registration system for U.S. citizens in order to guarantee that their right to vote is not "abridged by bureaucratic requirements"? Is this an underhanded way to help liberals invalidate state requirements that voters show a valid ID?

The worst of all Sabato's proposals is to call for a new constitutional convention that would scrap our present

Constitution and start over from a clean slate. We don't see any James Madisons, George Washingtons or Ben Franklins around today, and we're mighty worried about the men who think they are capable of rewriting our Constitution.

When Sabato recently gathered a few people to discuss his proposals, Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito summed up the reaction not only of those at the meeting, but of the rest of us, too. "I'm pretty fond of the Constitution we have now," he said. Thank you, Justice Alito. So are we.

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Phyllis Schlafly is a lawyer, conservative political analyst and the author of the newly revised and expanded "Supremacists." She can be contacted by e-mail at phyllis@eagleforum.org.

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