

but this is far from true. The American Constitution will only permit an election to be held once every two years, while in Great Britain an election has to be held whenever the people call for one. Thus in the one year 1910 the English people called for two elections. In other words, the life of the English government depends on the people themselves, while the life of the American government depends on the calendar.

Let us now make a comparison between the House of Commons and the House of Representatives both as to their mode of election and business procedure.

In the Southern States there are laws which prevent practically all of the negroes from voting. One of these laws states that any man whose forefathers were not allowed a vote prior to the civil war cannot vote now. Thus all of the descendants of the freed slaves are prevented from voting. It is estimated that, by these laws, over 1,400,000 fully qualified citizens are deprived of the franchise. Certainly laws which prevent a man from voting simply because of his color cannot be called democratic.

Another difference in the franchise laws is that certain States have granted woman suffrage. This means that more people will be allowed to vote but unless those votes can influence the government, they do not contribute towards democracy. It would make no difference if in the United States every man and woman, black and white, were granted the franchise yet the government of Great Britain would still be far more democratic than that of the United States, for the English representatives are responsible to the people, while since the American representatives are elected for a fixed term, they are not responsible to the people. The essential test for a democratic government is responsibility not suffrage.

Congress is divided into 62 committees, arbitrarily appointed by one man. These committees consist of men of both parties and by them practically all of the legislation is accomplished. Each bill introduced is referred to the committees on railroads or post offices, etc., without any discussion, and the report of that committee is received without any discussion. In other words, all of the discussion is done by little groups of from five to ten men behind closed doors.

This system reduces responsibility and bewilders the people. Since there are no public debates the people are unable to know the attitude of the different parties towards any piece of legislation.