

March 6, 1984

655 Sharp Lane, Apt 380  
Baton Rouge, La. 70815.

H. Ross Perot  
EDS Corporation  
7171 Forest Lane  
Dallas, Texas 75230

Dear Mr. Perot,

I am an EDS employee working on the L'AMI Project in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. We are building an integrated computer system for administration of the state's welfare programs. But what I am writing you about is a different matter.

I think often about changes that could be made that would improve the U.S. economic and political system. I have some ideas of my own and I read about others that seem to have merit. Although some of these changes would very likely be supported by a majority of voters, they may not even be considered by Congress. Some are in regard to institutions and some are in regard to government policies - things it should do and things it should not do. My favorite example falls into the latter category. Milk support prices cannot have very much support among the general populace, yet Congress cannot seem to get rid of them. The reason, of course, is that the American Milk Producers Association is one of the richest and most powerful lobbying groups in the nation. But the point is that in this case, the majority does not rule. Democracy has failed.

People have talked about ways to limit the influence of special interest groups, but that may not be possible when the members of Congress, who must enact such measures, are the beneficiaries of the lobbyists' generosity. The nature of Congress, a legislative oligopoly, makes it subject to the influence of special interest groups, and those groups will always find ways around any regulations that Congress manages to pass.

We call our political system a democracy and although it may be as close to a true democracy as any nation on earth, the people have very little power. The people do not make legislative decisions. We do not even have a structured way of making our desires known. We leave it all up to our elected representatives. Our votes are counted only once every two years or so, when we get to vote for our representatives and senators.

The U.S Constitution established the most democratic political system possible at the time. But that was over two hundred years

ago, back in the horse and buggy days. We've had an industrial revolution since then and more recently, a communications revolution. The technology now exists to make people direct participants in the legislative process. We can come much closer to real democracy than we could 200 years ago.

This is where EDS comes in. EDS is just the company that could build and operate a computer system of the magnitude and sophistication necessary to make the U.S. a true democracy. I envision a nationwide, online system modeled after the current legislative process, but in which citizens vote directly on legislation, or at least register their preferences. First, a thorough study of the current congressional system must be made. Then analysts can devise a system in which the processes carried out by the senators and representatives in the halls of Congress can be taken over by a much larger body, the voting public. Citizens could tie into the system with their home computers or use one in a community voting center.

In this age of advanced communications technology, a country that takes such pride in being a democracy should be ashamed to allow so little direct participation. EDS has the opportunity to show the U.S. and the world that direct democracy is technically attainable.

Sincerely,

Steven R. Harry