

policy decision-making—description of the system, generation and description of alternative systems, and evaluation of the policy alternatives”(p.56). Specifically applied, “components and relationships will be the general elements in describing the system, and effects and goals will be the central elements in evaluating the system” (p.56).

Consistent with this view is the idea presented by Brock, et. al., of debate as a process. The negative team does not defend the status quo, but rather makes “counter-assertions” to the affirmative’s “assertion” of which system more effectively achieves the same goal.

Given the assumption that change is ever-present, the negative counterassertion must include a system for dealing with change as well as ensuring that the negative set of changes preclude the significance and responsiveness of the affirmative system for change (the debate resolution) (p.88).

The ultimate decision in the debate rests with the system which better achieves the goal and deals with change.

Brock, et. al., present their affirmative case outline in a comparative advantages format, probably the best suited for determining outcomes:

1. The affirmative should accept the stated goals and assumptions of the present system. Acceptance of the overall structure of the present system is often assumed rather

than stated by the affirmative.

2. The affirmative should present its plan and clearly identify the relationships created and eliminated in the system.
3. The affirmative should prove that advantages will probably result from the adoption of the plan.
4. The affirmative should be prepared to demonstrate that its plan is superior to any alternative action. This issue is usually initiated by the negative. (p.104-105).

The same authors (Klumpp, Brock, Chesebro, and Cragan, (1974) wrote on the implications of a systems model in debate, listing the basic assumptions of the model and a brief explanation of how it functions. According to them, the purpose of the theorist is to focus on the behavior of the systems, the patterns formed, and the interrelationship between the components. A system is defined as “a description of interdependent actions organized as an ordered sequence of events operating to a definite end” (p.2).

Viewing policy making in this perspective assumes three characteristics. The first is multiple causation, which means that a number of factors interrelate to create certain conditions within the system. The second characteristic is equifinality, or the assumption that the same inputs can lead to differing outputs, or that differing outputs can be gained from the same inputs. The final characteristic is

multiple effects, or as is commonly stated in systems literature, "a change in a part changes the whole."

In applying this model to debate, the affirmative analyzes the present system and the probabilities of the output/change of the policy:

Debating the adoption of a proposed policy becomes a confrontation between opposing sets of descriptions, predictions, goals, and values of the systems offered by the proponents and opponents of the policy (p.3).

Five decision rules are offered from this perspective:

1. The alternate courses of action open or available within one's influence.
2. The likely effects of pursuing each of the alternatives.
3. The probability of the various effects.
4. Value of the effect.
5. Attitude toward risk and probability(p.3).

The complexity of this model has its greatest impact on the traditional roles of inherency and causality. The implications of this model on casual argument are the predominance of multiple causation, the allowance of multiple policy alternatives, the possibility of multiple effects, and the increased importance of probability argumentation.

Ziegelmueller and Dause (1975) take a view similar to Tucker. Their model involves five steps:

1. System selection.
2. Component selection.
3. Relationship assessment.

4. Goal determination.

5. Effect assessment and input experimentation (p.39).

System selection involves selecting the system to be analyzed. "It is important to realize, however, that every entity which can be designed as a system is also a component part of the total system" (p.39). Component selection identifies the major components to be researched. Relationship assessments determine behavioral relationships of the components.

The last two steps, goal determination and effect assessment/input experimentation, are perhaps most important. The basic assumption is that systems are purpose-oriented and work toward certain goals:

The purpose of determining system goals has two aspects:

1. The discovery of the stated or implied goals of the existing system and
2. The determination of optimum system goals (p.41).

Effect assessments and input experimentation refer to the optimization of the system goals.

Rieke and Sillars (1975) suggest system analysis as one type of case. The focus of the systems case is not problems or solutions, but relationships of components and impacts of new components on the system. Their model also resembles Tucker's:

1. The present system has these constituents (model).
2. The goals of the present system are these.
3. To modify the system to max-

imize these goals, these alternatives are available.

4. This alternative should be chosen (p.180).

The basis of this case is also the view of debate as a process.

Sayer (1980) listed six major characteristics of the systems model:

1. Input stage: factors supplying information to the system.
2. Differentiation: factors initially separated.
3. Throughput stage: blending of factors.
4. Integration: factors acting interdependently.
5. Output stage: the resulting effects.
6. Feedback: new information fed into the system (p.74-75).

The two relevant implications within this model are causality and impacts. Only "few results are caused by one factor. Most situations have multiple causes" (p.80). Impact refers to the effects of the policy on the system, including advantages and disadvantages. "Any final decision would have to consider both types of potential impact" (p.80-81).

After reviewing present treatments of systems theory in debate, several conclusions were reached. First, most treatments, save Brock, et. al., are lacking in pragmatic applications of the systems model, particularly to negative approaches. Second, with the lack of use of the systems model, usually in favor of more "trendy" paradigms, one wonders if the previous treatments had any impact

of the practice of debate. Finally, much of the problem with the systems model has to do with the scope of analysis. Some theorists argue that the activity of debate should be viewed from a systems approach, while others utilize it simply as a model of the policy making process.

These theoretical approaches, along with the two pragmatic applications provided by the N.D.T. booklet, can be synthesized to more clearly visualize the role of traditional debate elements in a systems perspective.

Topicality. Strickland (in Matheny, ed., 1982,) sees the resolution as providing boundaries for cases, in other words, defining the limits of the system. Although some theorists accuse the systems model of widening affirmative ground because of its goals orientation (see Ricchio, 1976), the resolution is best seen as a device to limit system input. The parameter should serve as the best definition of the system and input, although whether or not it is binding should be decided in the round.

Other theorists have argued that a systems model would allow the "effects" case. Essentially, the effects case enacts a proposal which creates the effect of the resolution. The above applies here also, that the resolution should limit system input to a specified component.

Inherency. Inherency is of little importance in a debate from a systems perspective, unless the resolution, as defined by the affirmative, has already been adopted in

some form. This implies that the present system is already working toward the desired goal. The reason for the diminished importance of inherency is the focus of the debate—the significance of the effects of the resolution. As Strickland suggests, “The capability of the present system to adopt the resolution is irrelevant; the debate should center around the desirability of the resolution (in Matheny, ed., np).

Two other severe limitations of inherency are found in the systems model. First, traditional inherency implies linear casuality. Illustrated, linear casuality looks like a “stimulus-response” model:



This is irrelevant for two reasons. First, the goal of the model is not the elimination of a cause, but the production of desired effects. Second, multiple causes are possible, something second negatives have known for years.

The second limitation of the inherency construct has to do with methods of observation. Although attitudes are casual, they could never be measured in a policy making decision. What can be measured and observed are the effects, the behaviors of the system.

Decision Rules. The decision is based on which team provides the best rationale for its system, or course of action within the suprasystem. The standard of significance for the affirmative are the positive effects of adopting the resolution: the advantages, add-on advantages, and turnarounds. For

the negative there are two possible courses of action. The first is to demonstrate the progress of the present system toward the most desired goal. Presumption, or as Brock, et. al., label it, “assumption,” lies against the effort of change. The second negative strategy, and by far the most effective, is demonstration of the negative effects of the affirmative policy. In both cases, probability standards should be argued and applied.

Much of the decision comes down to the sub-issue, underlying the debate, of goal-justification. The debate itself centers around whether or not the resolution achieves a goal of the present system. Goal-justification refers to the accurate description and explanation of the goal. For example, on the policy topic selected for debate last year, it could be effectively argued by the affirmative that the goal of the system is observance of human rights standards. The negative, however, argued that the system is obsessed with stopping the spread of communism.

Counterplans. A final word about a favorite negative strategy: Systems theorists are vague about the role of counterplans. If one agrees to the idea that debate is goal-oriented, and that the resolution specifies a certain goal, then a counterplan would warrant an affirmative ballot, since it gains the solvency of the affirmative goals. A more reasonable interpretation parallels the issue of topicality. A counterplan should be thought of as a non-resolutional,

"more logical" input into the system for the desired goal.

The role of systems theory and analysis in debate is one that should be preserved if debate is to continue as an activity which invites new thought. If we start including some models for certain reasons while excluding others, we become limited in our thinking. Systems theory is an excellent demonstration of the problems we currently face in academic debate. It is a "real-life" model of the legislative process that has gone virtually ignored. While scholars battle paradigms on paper, students using them have little or no knowledge of their purpose or existence.

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TOPICALITY IN VALUE DEBATE: A COMMENT

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The rapid growth of CEDA had both intended and unintended effects. The organization has certainly succeeded at its intended effect of providing an alternative to policy debate through use of value propositions. Its unintended effect has been the creation of a theory void in value debate that is only slowly and painfully being resolved. Theorists must decide about decision-rules in value debate and search for the means to interface existing policy decision rules with the requirements of value proposition debates. One very important and frequently controversial decision-role is topicality. Topicality is often considered to be a fifth stock issue in policy debates and has received considerable theoretical attention. Its role in value debate is less well-defined. This paper will argue that topicality is a decision-rule without proper application in value debate and its usage obscures justification arguments as a means of exposing the kinds of definitional and justificatory issues which need to be examined in CEDA rounds.

Decision-rules have both content and relationship functions in debate. They serve both to define the substance of debate, such as that substance clarified through analysis of the stock issues, and to define relationships between arguers. The relationship function is critical if not always understood. Like any game, debate needs

ground rules so that the participants can fairly take part. Debate has very few extrinsic rules. Most of the time, decision-rules must be interpreted and argued about in the debate round. Topicality, as a decision-rule, has both content and relationship aspects.

Topicality, in policy debate serves as a jurisdictional issue.¹ The overriding question in policy debate is whether action should be taken. The stock issues function to determine whether the affirmative has met their responsibility to justify change. Topicality answers the question of whether the affirmative has identified the appropriate agent of change. Not all issues fall under the jurisdiction of the particular topic being debated and the coexisting agent of action. For example, an affirmative case justifying the United States ceasing military involvement in Northern Ireland (on the current national policy topic) would presumably be dismissed by a rational policy maker as falling outside their jurisdiction of making United States policy in the Western Hemisphere. The affirmative's responsibility becomes meeting the terms of the resolution with definitions which specify acceptance of the actors implied in the resolution as having the proper jurisdiction for action. The debate judge's responsibility in adjudicating the issue is clear. If the affirmative case falls

outside the resolution (is non-topical) it is immediately rejected.

Topicality in policy debate is action-oriented. Now then should topicality be dealt with in value debate which is not necessarily action-oriented?² Recent writers attempt to clarify this question. David Zarefsky and J. W. Patterson write, "If the affirmative does not advocate a specific plan, then the topicality question is whether the affirmative arguments in fact support the statement embodied in the resolution."³ Beverly Kelley points out that "[i]n a non-policy debate, a value must be supported without exception. Thus, a topicality argument in CEDA rests with the affirmative's ability to entirely justify the resolution."⁴ In the same edition of the CEDA Yearbook, Don Brownlee urges debaters to use the historical context of the resolution as the basis of topicality.⁵ These definitions are all similar in their identification of the necessity of definitions which "support" the resolution. Definitions, in other words, may be used to warrant or justify the resolution. Thus we may identify two uses of topicality: to specify the meaning of terms, and to justify the meaning of the resolution as a whole. The latter function ought to be the use of definitions in value debate while the former is the usage associated with policy debate. If we adopt this perspective it would make more sense to abandon the "God term" of topicality as a means of clarifying the ambiguity present when differentiat-

ing its multiple uses.⁶ There are several reasons why the concept of topicality in its present form is unworkable.

An important problem in using topicality in value debate is the impossibility of using it as a jurisdictional issue. Contemporary value debate suffers from the lack of an identifiable paradigm to provide context for decision-rules. While in policy debate the judge may function as a policy-maker or a hypothesis-tester (among other things), no clear model exists to guide judges listening to value debate rounds.⁷ While a policy-maker should be expected to dismiss arguments and cases which fall outside her jurisdictional boundaries, why should such a constraint apply in debating propositions of value? While there may be educational value in limiting debate there is not necessarily a real-world parallel. Audiences frequently consider a wide range of issues and arguments when discussing value questions and the very nature of value precludes a neat and tidy definition of the resolution, no matter how narrowly the resolution is worded. The number of definitional issues related to the current CEDA resolution illustrates this problem. Defining privacy, and other constitutional rights, more important, but not simple. Further, the debater can easily find a definition of these concepts without justifying the resolution as a whole. Where the process of defining terms in policy debate serves simply to define the boun-

daries of the debate, defining terms in value debate becomes the very substance of the dispute.

Definitions are the heart and soul of public policy debate.⁸ Arguers manipulate definitions in order to control the size of the interested audience. Narrowly defining an issue lessens the number of people affected by the issue, with the opposite also being true. Arguers may find it in their best interests to "broaden" an issue so as to make more people become involved in its resolution. We often hear arguers refer to the tactic of "taking an issue to the people." So the question is not simply one of finding a definition (or even a "reasonable" definition or the "best" definition)⁹ but determining how the definition that is used will affect the number of people concerned with the dispute. The process of definition is also logically a part of value debate.

Determination of questions of fact ("What is . . .") necessarily precludes a determination of a question of value ("Whether what is, is valuable. . .").¹⁰ This coexisting of questions has been well known since classical times. Legal theory, for example, has always recognized that determination of guilt involves several questions: whether a person is guilty of an act and whether the act itself might be justified. Definition is important, but relatively meaningless without discussion of the value and its implications. Topicality, therefore, would not seem to be useful as a jurisdictional issue. It

is bound up with other value questions when these questions are being debated.

There is also no particular utility to invoking topicality in value debates. Presumably, a non-topical affirmative would be one where the team failed to meet their burden of meeting the terms of the resolution. Not only does this ignore the more significant value question of whether such definitions in fact justify acceptance of the value statement contained in the resolution, but invests far too much discretion to the debate judge to determine topicality. Given that there is no single "right" definition of a value term, the judge would have to invoke her own interpretation of the issue. In such situations, most judges prefer to let the debaters "argue out" the point, in which case the arguments probably take on the character of justification arguments.

A more realistic affirmative burden in a value debate would be to require the affirmative not only to meet all the terms of the resolution, but to provide a coherent defense for the resolution as a whole. Definitions are only useful insofar as the "context" of the language is clearly established. Until a claim is warranted, no link between the claim and the audience is established.¹¹ Brownlee's discussion of topicality makes this point effectively when introducing tests of reasoning an arguer might use in analyzing topicality questions.¹²

The role of warrants in argumentation is frequently examined in debate texts. Their fundamental relationship to values should not be missed: warrants serve to link grounds with claims, where there is no such link, it is highly unlikely that an audience will support the claim being advanced. If I define abortion as murder, it is a logical obligation for me to justify that definition even if technically it is true. The control this places on unreasonable definitions and unfair analyses of the resolution should be apparent. It is one thing to find a definition that places Northern Ireland in the Western Hemisphere (as some definitions do exist which do precisely that!) and something completely different to justify inclusion of Northern Ireland under a resolution discussing military policy in the Western Hemisphere.

An important step in moving forward value debate theory is to differentiate those concepts that should and those that should not be borrowed from policy theory. Topicality is one such issue that should not be borrowed. Topicality simply functions to supply fairness for arguers, to give both sides an adequate idea about the kinds of issues that might be debated. Using topicality to control the breadth of the controversy is artificial because value propositions by their nature must be broadly construed. Far more logical would be reliance on the other logical obligation of the arguer, the obligation to justify the resolution. In

this way, the substance of the topic may be addressed without carrying the baggage of an unnecessary concept.

END NOTES

- 1J. W. Patterson, and David Zarefsky, *Contemporary Debate* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1983), p. 111.
- 2Of course, some value resolutions are "pseudo-policy" propositions, which would be action oriented.
- 3Patterson and Zarefsky, p. 111.
- 4Beverly M. Kelley, "An Alternative to NDT Debate," Don Brownlee, editor, *Contributions on the Philosophy and Practice of CEDA* (CEDA; 1981), p. 10.
- 5Don Brownlee, "In Search of Topicality: Definitions and Contexts," *Contributions . . .*, pp. 32-35.
- 6We should not forget that it was a resolution to the breadth of NDT topics which caused creation of CEDA in the first place. Kelley, p. 10, illustrates this perspective and the importance to which yeac hersnmatrihe portance to which many teachers of CEDA place on the notion of narrow and specific topics.
- 7This theme is developed in more detail by David Frank and me in another paper.
- 8This point is very persuasively made by E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People* (New York: P. F. Collier, 1960).
- 9"Reasonable" and "Best" definitions are concepts frequently advanced in policy debate rounds. Affirmatives frequently argue "all we need to be is reasonable . . ." while the National Debate Tournament has adopted a standard calling for judges to vote for the "best" definition.
- 10The relationship of facts, interpretations, and values is discussed by J. Michael Sproule, *Argument: Language and Its Influence* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980).
- 11Stephen Toulmin, Richard Reike, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning*. (New York: Macmillan, 1979), Craig Dudczak, "Direct Refutation of Propositions of Policy: A Viable Alternative," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* XVII (Spring, 1980), 232.
- 12Brownlee, pp. 33-34.

POLICY PROPOSITIONS: A CALL FOR REVISION

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During the past decade intercollegiate debate has been characterized by conflicting phenomena. While critical discourse about the activity, particularly in professional journals, has resulted in a prolific outpouring of theory (both new and rethought), participation has steadily declined. College handbooks, rare only fifteen years ago, have become established as they have found a ready market. While one would normally expect such a market to signal heightened interest in the activity, I contend the market exists for the same reasons which discourage participation. Those reasons in turn result from the type of resolution which has been debated since the 1967-68 topic required affirmative universality. Since that time it has become standard practice for affirmative cases to exemplify, rather than encompass, the resolution. Indeed, for about a decade now it has been well nigh impossible for an affirmative case to address the topic as a whole. This paper will examine the ramifications of such topics and consider four alternatives in calling for a return to more restrictive resolutions in intercollegiate debate.

Before examining the consequences of selecting broadly phrased, relatively open ended resolutions it might be helpful to examine prevailing images of those who have discontinued (in some cases lifelong) association with

policy debate. There is a tendency to view them as dinosaurs who want to return to a simpler era, as intellectual weaklings who can no longer cut the theoretical mustard, as lazy/shoddy reasoners and researchers who cannot keep up with the changes of the past decade. In my experience, colleagues who have dissociated themselves from N.D.T. debate have done so as a result of frequently painful pedagogical and philosophical differences. Among their most often mentioned areas of concern are the current tactical advantages of breadth over depth in both research and argument, and an argumentative focus on paradigms. These are not objections raised by the intellectually enfeebled; they are legitimate concerns of teachers of argumentation and speech communication who opt for a divergent philosophical predilection. This paper contends each of their concerns may be attributed to or is exacerbated by broadly worded resolutions.

That current policy debate propositions demand a tremendous breadth of research can hardly be earth shattering news. Non-binding parameter statements—which may themselves become the focus of debate—are of little help in easing this burden. While research skills are among the more desirable derivatives of the debate experience, and while the knowledge gained by thorough research is in-

deed valuable, contemporary topics demand a breadth which many feel is either unwarranted or counterproductive. Both claims may be justified pedagogically. Initially, many reject the breadth of research in pursuit of knowledge which enables them to coach, judge, or debate because it carries far too high an opportunity cost. For students, that cost may be expressed in terms of classes dropped or not taken; or reduced employment, social activity, or campus involvement; or reduced grade point averages. For faculty the cost may be extensive absence from home and family, reduced social activity or campus involvement, less attention to preparation for other classes, or belated evaluation and return of student work. Some of those who reject the research continue to value the activity however. For them participation is made possible by the ready availability of debate handbooks and prepared evidence, briefs, cases, and extensions. It is difficult to defend the educational value of prepackaged knowledge gained by reading a great many separate statements devoid of their original context. While such material may provide a helpful example of organization or of potential case areas, its use as a primary source of information seriously truncates the argumentative process and reduces debate to rapid fire oral interpretation. Nevertheless the experience of high school debaters indicates in a substantial number—possibly the majority—of cases, hand books are

considered indispensable. Debate teams could not or would not debate contemporary resolutions without them. The result of broad topics then, combines with the traditional American predisposition toward extensive evidence use to create an unrealistic and, in many cases, educationally indefensible demand for a broad research base. Because the topics encourage “creative” affirmative approaches, and because negatives fare better if they can evidence their arguments, competitive teams and informed coaches and judges must engage in broad research.

The second major problem resulting from use of broadly worded policy propositions is a virtual explosion of debate theory. This is not undesirable *per se*. In fact, to the extent that some of the theory has found its way into major journals or texts, anyone confused by hypothesis testing, conditional counterplans, counterwarrants, or alternative justifications has merely to consult readily identifiable authors in search of clarification. To the extent that broadly worded resolutions have been responsible for this explosion of theory exploring the underpinnings of academic debate and argumentative decision making during the past decade, those propositions have been valuable indeed. However, much new theory appears to have substantive value only insofar as it justifies tactics which help win debates over broadly worded propositions of policy. Viewed in that light, their

value is measured largely in enhanced win-loss records rather than their contribution to the educational value of the activity. Two examples are the alternative justifications affirmative and the conditional counterplan. Such tactics preclude depth of comparison between competing policy systems. There is no way a team can cover three cases in as much depth as it can cover one in the same limited time frame. Similarly, a team cannot advance apparently contradictory refutation as insightfully as it can a cohesive position. Since both these theories defend the legitimacy of conceding major areas of analysis as late as the last rebuttal, they legitimize sand-bagging, sophistry, and similar strategies. The point is that these are skills which work to conceal, to deceive, to avoid direct confrontation on critical issues. The result is an emphasis on quantity of argument rather than quality, and a poor model for decision making at any level. Part of the problem, then, is the theories which are primarily applicable to broadly worded policy propositions. One rarely reads attempts to explain their value propositions of fact or value (and in 1982-83 over 150 colleges and universities debated value propositions through the Cross Examination Debate Association.) Another problem resulting from the theory explosion also relates to application and winning. Much debate now focuses on the judging paradigm to be used in the round. While argumentation over para-

digms or tactical legitimacy is indeed argumentation, and debaters are still demonstrating reasoning and communication skills, time spent in this area is time taken away from discussion of the resolution. The result is avoidance of the topic addition—debate theory—to add to the research burden. Debate over debate paradigms should take place at meetings or forensic associations, at conventions and workshops, perhaps even at tournament seminars. Professional journals exist for such exchanges of theory. As part of a competitive debate round, however, such argument steals time from discussion of the policy proposition which is the purpose of argumentation.

Broadly worded policy propositions have contributed to two major problems in intercollegiate debate. They have exacerbated the burden of research beyond the desire or ability of many who could be expected to debate if the burden were more reasonable. As a result of that burden, many who do debate rely heavily on secondary or tertiary sources and never really develop a thorough understanding of either research or the resolution. A second major problem arises from the use of debate theory to support questionable tactics. Arguing debate theory during the round reduces the time debaters can spend on the resolution.

So what? The major impact I perceive is a substantial reduction in support of policy debate at the

intercollegiate level. What has happened in the past decade has resulted in the development of a "superconference" of N.D.T. level (or near) programs which have managed to either keep pace or exploit these developments. These debaters, coaches, and judges have developed highly specialized skills and jargon. Debate on this level bears only limited resemblance to what it was only a decade before. This evolution is not necessarily bad, of course; it is only different. While I do not presume all change is good, neither have I attempted to justify the conclusion that N.-D.T. level debate is bad. What is unfortunate is that a great many schools have not kept pace with the developments of the past decade. They have been unable or unwilling to adapt to the behavioral requirements for debating broadly phrased propositions of policy. The result—again as I perceive it—has been the blossoming of C.E.D.A. at both two- and four-year schools (C.E.D.A. debate has been added to both Phi Kappa Delta and Phi Rho Pi tournaments as a national event.) The gap between N.D.T. and other policy debate programs appears to have grown during the past decade. It is no longer unusual to find a local policy debate tournament cancelled for lack of support. More often junior and senior divisions will be combined to fill out a six or eight round schematic. The college novice who goes on to become a senior division debater is a rarity—high school experience is virtually

mandatory. The picture I see is a healthy N.D.T. circuit with an ever diminishing base of support in junior college and junior division debate. Individual events and value debate appear to have become the activities of choice for most college forensics students. Ultimately, that means fewer students benefit from the policy debate experience.

There are at least four actions to consider as remedies to these problems. The first is to do nothing, to wait it out. There is, after all, some belief that the theory explosion is over and when the dust settles and people become more familiar with debate the activity will blossom anew. Small schools, it is claimed will realize it is to their advantage to be able to debate a narrow back-water of the resolution on the affirmative. This alternative is unattractive to me (a small school forensics director) because it fails to deal with the objections of those who have dissociated themselves from debate, or to account for the entry of novices into the activity. A second alternative is to mandate that the affirmative team embrace the resolution fully. With current resolutions, such an action would be responsive to theory objections because it would increase predictability and reduce the need for deceit. Because it would reduce uncertainty such a mandate might also be expected to reduce both the drive and the need for research on everything remotely akin to the resolution. A major

problem arises, however, when one recognizes the remoteness of the likelihood that an affirmative could ever demonstrate significance on any level other than philosophical for many broad resolutions (e.g. land use, consumer product safety) approached on this gross level. Such a mandate would also be likely to throw debate back a quarter century by necessitating use of two constructives to fully divulge the affirmative case on topics of such magnitude. This suggestion holds promise only if resolutions are more narrowly worded.

Both the third and fourth alternatives involve debating topics which are more narrowly focused. Thus both respond to the objections raised earlier. One suggestion is to maintain the N.D.T. circuit as it is, debating broad policy propositions and the theories necessary to deal with them, while selecting narrower topics (perhaps offshoots of the N.D.T. resolution) for use in junior and novice divisions. Such a proposal would ostensibly allow novices to get their feet wet without total immersion and would provide a transition period during which somewhat experienced students could determine the extent of their commitment to policy debate. Problems emerge if the narrowed topic is entirely different from the N.D.T. topic, as research and analysis requirements are expanded — especially for the program director without support staff. Of course the same is true for junior division teams wishing to enter senior division at selected

tournaments. Finally, using entirely different topics makes it impossible to collapse divisions at a small tournament. The other choice (a narrowed version of the N.D.T. resolution) also entails some difficulty. Using such a topic grants a tremendous advantage to programs with N.D.T. level teams. Of course, that advantage is one they already hold, and narrowing the topic would probably reduce it somewhat by focusing on a more predictable area.

The final alternative is simply to write and debate narrower resolutions. These resolutions should provide the affirmative with alternative strategies for meeting the same requirement. They should not dictate an arbitrary number of allowable case areas. The guaranteed annual cash income topic in 1967-68 was such a resolution. While the standard case focused on reduction of poverty, others dealt with business cycles, inflation, unemployment, and a host of related social and economic issues. Plans had to provide a guaranteed annual cash income through the federal government for all citizens, but affirmatives discovered a broad variety of methods of implementation. While the topic provided more predictable case areas and issues, their development was hardly certain. It was, after all, on this topic that Northwestern University introduced a hybrid of two nebulous case structures as a goals-criteria case. These topics should provide a more narrowed focus of study, eliminating much