TABLE OF CONTENTS

Workshop on Covenant and Politics to Hold Meeting in Philadelphia ........................................ 1

Conference for Federal Studies Symposium on State Constitution-Making ............................... 3

Bibliographic Sources for the Study of Political Culture ......................................................... 4

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WORKSHOP ON COVENANT AND POLITICS TO HOLD MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA

The Workshop on Covenant and Politics of the Center for the Study of Federalism will hold its next seminar on Wednesday and Thursday, December 17 and 18, 1980 in Philadelphia. The topic of the seminar will be "The Language of Covenant." The setting for the sessions on both days will be the First National Bank of the United States on South Third Street between Walnut and Chestnut Streets in the Independence Hall National Park complex.

The following papers will be presented at the seminar:

"Language and Covenant"
Vernon L. Greene, University of Arizona and
Vincent Ostrom, Indiana University

"Covenant as Root Metaphor in the Language of Human Community"
Charles S. McCoy, Pacific School of Religion

"A Functional-Relational Understanding of Covenant as a Distinctive Root Metaphor"
Stuart D. McLean, Phillips University
"Covenant Terminology as Polemic"
Gordon M. Freeman, University of California, Berkeley

"Covenant Language in the United States and Israel"
Daniel J. Elazar, Temple University

"Covenant Language in Canada: Continuity and Changes"
Filippo A. Sabetti, McGill University

Anyone interested in attending the seminar should contact Ms. Laurie Van Dusen at the Center for the Study of Federalism [(215) 787-1840].

In other Workshop-related news, the topics for the next two seminars has been set and a call for papers has been issued for both. The Spring 1981 seminar will be on "Individual and Family Roles on Covenant Systems," and the Fall 1981 meeting will be devoted to "Political Theories of Covenant and Contract: Mutual Roots and Significant Departures." Anyone interested in preparing a paper for either one of these meetings, should contact Dr. John Kincaid, Department of Political Science, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.

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CONFERENCE FOR FEDERAL STUDIES SYMPOSIUM ON
STATE CONSTITUTION-MAKING

On Friday, August 29, 1980, the Conference for Federal Studies sponsored a roundtable discussion on the subject of "Constituent State Constitution-Making in Federal Systems." The session was held at the Washington Hilton Hotel in conjunction with the 1980 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. The purpose of the roundtable was twofold: first, to examine patterns, issues, and cases of the constitution-making processes of constituent members (states, cantons, provinces, laender, etc.) in federal systems throughout the world; and second, to explore the prospects and pitfalls of this unchartered field of comparative federalism. Participants were asked to address the following questions:

1. What are the principles and traditions underlying constituent state constitutions in particular federal systems?

2. What are the political and historical purposes which those constituent state constitutions are designed to serve?

3. How do those constitutions and the constitution-making process serve those purposes?

4. What are the policy and operational implications of those constitutional processes and structures?

5. What are the contemporary and future implications of those findings for the theory and practice of federalism?

The roundtable moderator was Stephen L. Schechter, Assistant Professor of Government at Russell Sage College and Coordinator of International Programs for the Center for the Study of Federalism. Formal presentations were made by: Professor Adele Jinadu, University of Lagos, on the role of the states in the recent constitutional process of return to civilian rule; Hanspeter Tschaeni, Research Associate of the Center, on contemporary patterns of constitutional change in Swiss cantons; and Professor Stephen Burg, Brandeis University, on republic and provincial constitution-making in Yugoslavia. Professor Daniel J. Elazar served as roundtable commentator. Twenty-one persons participated in the roundtable, drawing widely from fields of comparative politics, constitutional law, state constitutions, and area studies.
The roundtable accomplished several important things. First, it enabled representatives of various fields and disciplines, who had not previously met one another, to come together to discuss a subject of common interest and concern. The roundtable included, and to a certain extent began to bridge the gaps between, political scientists and lawyers, Americanists and comparativists, and students of federalism, constitutional law, and state politics. Second, this occasion inaugurated the comparative inquiry into a hitherto unchartered field. Most participants seemed sincerely interested in and challenged by the formal presentations and ensuing discussion of the general subject area and of specific developments in the cases of Nigeria, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia. Most participants agreed that the subject was one that needed to be addressed and should receive more systematic attention in the future.

As a result of the roundtable, we have decided to invite the three presentators to submit articles for publication in a special issue of PUBLIUS: The Journal of Federalism. We also have invited Professor Donald Kommers, Director of the Center for Civil and Human Rights at Notre Dame, to prepare an article on Land Constitution-Making in the German Federal Republic. All four authors have accepted the invitation, and we hope their articles will join those prepared earlier on American state constitutions in a truly comparative issue of PUBLIUS.

Stephen L. Schechter

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Compiled by
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North Texas State University

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