

# JONASSON *for Governor*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELIEF**

## **JONASSON CHALLENGES OPPONENTS TO DEBATE**

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA (CRAP: Canadian Regional Associated Press) – California gubernatorial candidate Stefan Jonasson challenged his opponents to debate the issues facing the state, demanding equal time for each of the 136 candidates in the race. The candidate unveiled an innovative plan for scheduling the debates, which blends the distilled experience of professional sports and prime time television.

Jonasson's debate proposal is simple and straightforward: the candidates would face off in pairs during an introductory round of 68 televised weeknight debates. Viewers would be invited to call a 1-900 number to vote for the winner of each debate, who would then advance to the second round. Proceeds from each 1-900 call, along with advertising revenue, would be used to reduce the state deficit.

While the first round of debates would take nearly 14 weeks to complete, subsequent rounds would be progressively shorter, as candidates were "voted off the ballot." The entire series, which would take eight rounds, would be completed in just 27 weeks. After the third round, one candidate would receive a bye and advance directly to the final round. This candidate would be selected by a secret vote of members of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, who will present the winner with an Emmy for the Best Individual Performance in a Circus of Lies at the 2004 Emmy Awards, irrespective of who actually wins the gubernatorial contest. (A spokesperson for the Jonasson campaign has denied the suggestion that Arnold Schwarzenegger would receive an unfair advantage in such a competition, given his connections in the entertainment industry and his natural gift for obfuscation.)

The two candidates who advance to the final round would be the only candidates to have their name appear on the ballot to succeed Governor Gray Davis, should Californians vote to recall him. This would simplify the vote and also save a considerable amount of paper. Critics of the proposal point out that it would necessitate deferring the recall vote until sometime in December, which could disenfranchise some California voters who become depressed at that time of year while dreaming of a white Christmas.

A political strategist claiming to represent the Davis campaign is reported to have said that the incumbent governor supports the overall framework for the debates but insists that the debates be offered as a weekly program rather than a daily one. Political insiders suggest that the Davis campaign's counterproposal is unlikely to win much support, since it would have the effect of delaying the recall vote until April 2006, when Governor Davis would only have eight months left in his term anyway!

An unnamed representative of the Republican State Committee rejected the Jonasson proposal out of hand, saying that it would unnecessarily delay the recall vote. When asked whether Republicans would support the debate plan if the timeframe could be condensed, she replied, "Definitely not. We could only support this plan if the winners of the individual debates were decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, rather than by the people. If this is good enough for selecting a president, then it should be good enough for filling a relatively unimportant office like state governor."