The early choice of Juan Manuel Santos as president of Colombia for the so-called opinion polls allow for passing on some protruding real dimension of our recent failures political history. The polling firms deteriorate democracy. The mainstream mass media should establish barriers against. The surveys and their designers are the biggest obstacle to a presidential campaign quite superficial.

These surveys do not withstand any rigorous testing. And contrary to expand the formation of public opinion, impaired. To overcome this defect should propose means fewer surveys and more discussions. Presidential campaigns should seek democratic enlargement, and a less massive media exposure to foot the surveys.

Simplify the political polls. Because instead of serious proposals on specific dilemmas in Colombia poll campaigns weaken the natural exercise of democracy: arguments show solutions to problems, test the strength of the best ideas, magnifying the deliberation among government programs. In short, the question is not who to pick but a survey in which ideas are "elect a president? This is the first point.
The second aspect is that in Colombia a true reform of the State should aim to restore the demands of social equity and justice, not just for a privileged sector, but for a majority of Colombians who live without social cohesion and no future. Instead of listening to songs of sirens, the candidates would have to make public pronouncements about the solutions to specific problems. The presidents in Colombia to govern because they forgot their election campaigns rely on a statistical assembly (poorly designed).

**Fundamental questions**

In times of election campaigns is the tradition in Colombia the multiplication of many conflicts, irregular warfare is accelerating and municipalities are under siege by the territorial ownership interest that can make armed groups. The discomfort resulting from the corruption grows. Poorer, more unemployed, more hunger. A democracy that is experiencing this condition is a stable democracy. This presidential campaign suffered the same defects: improvisation, cronyism, unnecessary repetition of surveys. The candidates are overwhelmed by new surveys. The essays in this sense the formation of 91 would have improved with the reforms. But the electoral system remains still defective.

We can see it differently. While the campaigns are on a path, the Colombians were different. The company has matured in public culture, now people are not fooled easily. Just to illustrate with Juan Manuel Santos. Some journalists believe their sweep in the polls due to a polarization in public opinion caused by the favor of false positives. Is it that simple? Actually it is perceived fatigue of economic security for the few. In summary, the expectations of the candidates are the retreat into specific issues that affect their daily basket, their survival. But the media upset because they give to putting the emphasis in the wrong places. In exchange for a development study on the distribution of income, such as, it suggests the candidate chosen by the surveys, which “speak as president” (Darío Arismendi Ay!)

Be serious. Candidates respond: How do you keep the budget during his administration to the Armed Forces? How do you guide the legislation in Congress? How to structure again a Health Ministry? How to return its emphasis on research in higher education? How to make sure the independence of public authorities? What to do with the profits of Ecopetrol? That is more sensible. Any decision taken in any of these items changes the
distribution of income in other social sectors. These are the issues that have to answer a campaign, a candidate. And although it seems trite, the lack of evolution of public debate on these issues has degenerated with governments, both the quality of life and perceptions about the effectiveness of government policies.

If instead of polls, the mainstream media contribute towards addressing high level analytical debates among candidates, we could move forward as a country. A public debate that engages, for example, the problem of the Colombian taxes dedicated to public services: education, health, housing, security, culture, war, etc. The fate of these resources is not seen in most municipalities. Instead, his paramilitary machinery of corruption, scandals and officials indicted for embezzlement of public finances. The taxpayer shall be allocated in accordance with a system of values governing political parties, not the balance of power that depends on specific conditions.

**Values in politics**

The values in politics have become blurred. Presidential candidates in their campaigns do not defend great causes. It's retail politics. The dynamics of their agendas reflect suffers irregular cycles and rhythms, depends on partial demands. And many mainstream media and pollsters share this environment without even questioning it. Naomi can not forgive their old alliances with the system today, the Colombian economic strangulation. She then tries to topics such as "eliminating corruption", "employment." Juan Manuel Santos has an indelible stamp of cunning fox, and for these sectors, issues such as claims of "security", "international intervention", "protection of private property.

This is not inevitable. This policy is made here or in Patagonia. In the absence of an overview of options for future reference can only be proximity. This explains why the speeches of the candidates are so similar. What difference ideologically Sergio Fajardo, Antanas Mockus? Or Noemi Sanín, Rafael Pardo? His campaign themes are marching haphazardly to a temporary situation. And in truth, none has had time to prepare any government program. There is no clear vision of scenarios that touch government to fund our country's problems. This has led to squander opportunities to mature politically as a nation. We inglorious span a period of populism, of bipartisanship with mandarin, in an era of democratic security. In any instance of public life tests the enormous
complexity of balancing the legitimate demands, and claims that serve as commands in the personality of the agent corrupt or violent.

**More “Think Thanks”?**

We must regret the absence of strong political parties, but again, the market revival patronage. A change of government programs, the campaign teams (supported by polling firms) have become magicians in the art of invoking the public interest to legitimize itself. Again, the speeches, going back and forth between the ambiguities: peace, unemployment, security. And of course that nothing obliges us to believe them. But it impairs trust in politics. This fragmentation private-public seems to have no return: economics, education, health, and housing. We have to change, political individualism, scattering from conflict. In synthesis, no clear opportunities for the voter and citizen.

Those who learn to combine between politics and war is a reflection of two dynamics crisis supervening with recent governments, each of which proposes a short-term withdrawal. The conversion to privatization without planning or the promises of an open market, but are not waves of social resentment. How to encourage the effort of the worker or student, when there are unlimited profits without effort?

In this media and pollsters have been champions. Inflated to mortals like Juanes or Shakira, the little gods return to the mentality of adolescents and youth. Invited to imitate, describe their lifestyle, abundant. In Queens the hosts and presenters become politicians. Triviality is back spectacle. You do not need many merits to be so rich, think about the girl or the boy who sees them. Why not me? And that question has become widespread. The paradox is that the spectacle of the market, fashion and sport, discourages work. Here is the explanation for many ills.

Historian Malcolm Deas I quote: "The country needs to improve its capacity for self-reflection. You have to apply to all areas of government the same level of talent that has been able to devote its economic management. No doubt the talent is there, and a high degree, but lack channeled toward public purposes. We must consider more varied purposes Think tanks: do not cost much, especially when taking into account the
urgency of many of their potential contributions, and sometimes lack the political decision to use them”.

Mr. Deas has been an advisor to this government. What happened to the best heads in the service of democratic security? Did they lose their nature of Think tanks? The country needs to improve further extending employment opportunities and education for a majority of Colombians who miraculously survives. Instead of self-examination, Mr. Deas, ask yourself, how can you honestly Colombia recover professions requiring lengthy and difficult studies, doctors, researchers, judges, etc.? When not going to feel unjustly treated by the professional taxi company?

Need more debates
Perhaps one of the highlights of the presidential campaign consists in how candidates and parties, can design and show Colombians immediately what kind of future awaits us, will continue to evolve how the privatization of public health services or education? And in this case, what will happen in specific policies for employment generation? How to avoid narcotics confiscated property to stay divided between trustees and public officials? On what principles is to define the wage of workers? How to control the government granted tax exemptions to the wealthy?

The lack of statements on these points studied and the suddenness of the media, the surveys carried impoverish political culture. It is a condition imposed on the applicant's response to these specific issues. This leads to all be identified. The campaign is undermined by the lack of ideas and candidates that are dedicated to improving makeup, to pose, to appear. No major advantages. As the reform of the state what is at stake, nobody wants to risk the vote that offers a particular coalition.

It is not just, as has reviewed Marco Palacios, renewing hope the technical means to increase the efficiency of public services and other agencies of municipal or departmental order. They are primarily to prepare the future, of putting politics in the service of a collective project as a nation, have an ambition that is not just management. They projected by the opinion polls or those who spread and magnified, should help
create these discussions seriously. What we want the Colombian educational system? What kind of justice? What kind of security? What kind of peace? How much can we pay for the needed changes in the country?

Sizing specifics on pressing social needs is in part a responsibility of the media and pollsters. Invite those who have the best ideas to develop open discussions on politics, conflict, art, culture, is an urgent task. Require those elected to public office: Senators and Congressmen, to show how their proposals serve to unite the country more to make it more efficient. The opposite is to encourage policy reflects the laziness to think big. Applications do not define a style of government but provided, what kind of government do we need?

The surveys can mean more than what they mean a measure of preferences, temporary and targeted. There are few weeks of the campaign in a country whose realities are too volatile, such as the favorable opinion. The election surveys, in any case, eventually further reduce the chances of renewing the policy. Surveys should give way to more open discussions qualified. Voters should demand means more opportunity for deliberation. In mature democracies, first the strength of the best arguments, second, the negotiation of political power.