

EXCHANGE, POWER AND POLITICS (Part 2)

XI

At the end of the previous part I tried to show how the idea of "social behaviour as exchange" can help in explaining voting behaviour. I do not want to overstate the significance of this kind of theory for the study of politics: it cannot explain all politically relevant phenomena, or even most. But this should be qualified by the consideration that one should not expect the study of politics to explain all politically relevant phenomena, and that "social behaviour as exchange" is capable of explaining those phenomena which it is profitable to try to explain. If you read a book on the politics of, say, France or Ghana you find that many of the sentences in the book comprise assertions about the sources and sizes of income of political actors, or their religious beliefs, or their expectations about the responsiveness of the regime to demands of various kinds. These things are not of course beyond explaining--for example, someone could say why Ghana can grow cocoa and someone else could say why the world price of it has fallen--but it is not part of the job of politics to explain them. ^(1a) For politics they are data (or "givens" if you prefer English) but not explicanda; the point of mentioning them in a book about politics is that they feature in explanations of actual political behaviour, and these explanations, ~~but the explanation itself~~ can, I think, be always put in the form of showing why it was profitable (i.e. yielded a greater gain or smaller loss than any immediately visible alternative) in terms of reward minus cost for a political actor to do one thing rather

1a

1

Such things have to be regarded as "historical accidents". As Nadel says: "When we speak of accident we do not necessarily mean events which are unintelligible in the terms of any known regular connection between facts; we may only mean that the events in question cannot be defined in the terms of such regular connections as we are concerned

16/ with... Within his self-imposed orbit,
then, the student of society treats historical
facts as 'unique' and admits 'accidents',
though within a wider or different orbit
both uniqueness and accident way well
disappear." S. F. Nadel, The Foundations of
Social Anthropology (London, 1951), pages
15 and 17.

than another.

To say that an explanation "can usually be put" in a certain form is not, of course, to say all that much. It could just mean putting exactly the same material in a different terminology. But even if "social exchange" were no more than a vocabulary, I still believe that reformulating propositions in its terms would entail more than mere verbal juggling. The original "interactionism" that I mentioned in Section VII arose out of dissatisfaction with "common-sense" descriptive sociology. Its authors tried to find the minimum number of categories that would cover the actual observations that sociologists made, so as to get rid of words which sounded familiar but had no definite referent. "Interactionism" was thus only a set of categories--a "conceptual framework"--but one embodying revolutionary aspirations.¹

¹The main objective of Homans' The Human Group was to show the adequacy of a modified "interactionist" terminology.

"Social exchange", as a successor to that movement, has something of the same force; and "common-sense" descriptive politics is, I suggest, as ripe for the challenge today as was the corresponding kind of sociology a quarter of a century ago. "Common-sense" is a great thought-saver; the trouble is that it enables us to make statements which are far more complex than we realize. An example from a rightly respected study is this sentence: "Men and groups with no aim but office, or with unrealistic aims that practice never clearly showed to be impossible, could survive far longer when they were not

50/ 3
exposed to the glare of responsibility."¹

¹Philip M. Williams, Crisis and Compromise: Politics in the Fourth Republic (London, 1964), p. 434.

On a casual reading this sounds straightforward enough, but what a complex set of claims it really comprises! And how difficult it would be to find out if these claims were well founded! What, in observable terms, is the equivalent of "being exposed to the glare of responsibility"? We might say: x is held responsible by y when there are authoritative decisions (laws, decrees, policies, appointments, etc.) D_1, D_2, \dots, D_n such that y's esteem for or support of x are contingent upon the degree to which y is rewarded or punished by D_1, D_2, \dots, D_n .¹

¹"is rewarded or punished" here collapses into "believes that he is rewarded or punished". If y is unemployed and attributes it to x's budget he is punished by the budget. Clearly the actual effect of x's budget cannot have any direct effect on y's attitude towards him.

The assertion about lack of responsibility is then presumably that where the x's are persons and groups in the Assembly of the Fourth Republic and the y's are voters there were fewer decisions D_1, D_2, \dots, D_n than in some other regimes (perhaps Britain?). The sentence as a whole then apparently states that a situation with few D's is compatible with the "survival" (i.e. continuance in the Assembly) of "men and groups with no aim but office, or with unrealistic aims that practice never clearly showed to be impossible", whereas a situation with many D's is not compatible with their "survival".

51

Although one feels intuitively that this makes some sense as a proposition, an attempt to explain it in ~~social exchange~~^{reward-cost} terms immediately shows the need to restate it in more limited terms if it is to be plausible. Take the second kind of men and groups which Williams claims to be incompatible with many D's. The logic of this is obvious enough: if groups with "unrealistic aims" attempt to realize them in office, this will produce D's that their erstwhile supporters find punishing. (This is presumably what is meant by calling the aims "unrealistic".) Since (ex hypothesi) the punished voters withdraw their support the group in question fails to "survive" the next election. But of course this only applies to groups that attain office: a system could produce many D's but these could all be in respect of the same X's. One would then have the phenomenon of the "responsible" party in power and "irresponsible" groups out of power which some people have found in the American polity when one party is out of office for a generation (as were the Republicans after 1932).¹

¹See Norton Long, "Patriotism for Partisans: A Responsible Opposition", The Polity

Thus the scope of the statement has to be limited to groups which get office.¹

¹We might hazard a guess that Williams had in the back of his mind the "alternating two-party" model, where each major party gets office by definition.

And why are "men and groups with no aim but office" incompatible with

52
 many D's? In Downs' model¹

¹An Economic Theory of Democracy

the electors voted according to the records of the parties, which had "no aim but office"; and these two axioms seemed perfectly consistent. Either Williams is reading more into "no aim but office" than meets the eye, or he is making some special assumptions from which the incompatibility follows. What has to be identified is a pattern of behaviour among Deputies which electors would find punishing if there were many D's; this is not as far as I can see done in the sentence quoted.

TO
 53
 I have been trying to show that the attempt to express oneself in "social exchange" terms is in itself a useful check. (Of course, if it became customary to spell everything out in detail books on politics would be less readable; but are political scientists entitled to expect otherwise?) So even if "social exchange" were no more than a vocabulary it would still have some point. However, this minimum claim is excessively modest. We have in addition propositions about social exchange, such as those put forward by Homans in Social Behaviour, which are supported by evidence from experimental and "real-life" studies. If (as I shall suggest in XIV) political behaviour falls entirely within the range of "social behaviour as exchange", then propositions about social behaviour in general must surely have some application to politics in particular.

Up till now I have been fencing with words such as "approach" and "theory" in connection with "social behaviour as exchange". I

can now specify somewhat more closely what I am wanting to claim. Many advocates of "approaches to the study of politics" have been content to claim that some set of categories or other will help to arrange the "facts" in a more handy way; and I certainly want to suggest that adopting a vocabulary of rewards and costs (not just off and on but consistently) would be salutary. But I do also want to maintain that a theory of social behaviour, in a far stronger sense of "theory", has been and can be further built on a foundation of reward and cost. Statements such as those in Social Behaviour connecting esteem and authority or equality and liking allow one to deduce what may be expected to happen^b in particular circumstances; this is the kind of deduction that gives us scientific understanding.

To say that such statements are "built on a foundation" of reward and cost is not to say that they are actually deduced from it. No contemplation of the ideas of reward, cost and profit or of the elementary relationships between them that Homans posits near the beginning of Social Behaviour, will tell us about esteem, authority etc.¹

¹Chapter Four is entitled "Human Exchange: Propositions" There are five propositions, as follows: "(1) If in the past the occurrence of a particular stimulus-situation has been the occasion on which a man's activity has been rewarded, then the more similar the present stimulus-situation is to the past one, the more likely he is to emit the activity, or some similar activity, now." (p. 53) "(2) The more often within a given period of time a man's activity rewards the activity of another, the more often the other will emit the activity." (p. 54) "(3) The more valuable to a man a unit of the activity another gives him, the more often he will emit activity rewarded by the activity of the other." (p. 55) "(4) The more often a man has in the recent past received a rewarding activity from another, the less valuable any further unit of that activity becomes to him." (p. 55)

"(5) The more to a man's disadvantage the rule of distributive justice fails of realization, the more likely he is to display the emotional behavior we call anger." (p. 75)

To get these statements we need additional ones such as "esteem is a reward", "associating with social superiors in leisure activities may be costly" etc. Because of this, one reviewer of Social Behaviour has said that its basic concepts are "purely formal concepts with no immediate empirical interpretation", that one "cannot make predictions about empirical events from the theory alone" and that it is "a conceptual framework which can be extremely helpful in looking for problems and analyzing empirical situations."¹

¹"Two Critiques of Homans' Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms: A Sociologist's View", by James A. Davis (American Journal of Sociology), pp. 455-8, quotations from page 458.

This is a good example of the crude Baconianism that has hampered the social sciences so much: anything with "no immediate empirical interpretation" is "purely formal". Rewards and costs are indeed inferential, as are electrons; that does not make them "purely formal" or a mere "conceptual framework". Although propositions about rewards and costs cannot be verified directly (any more than can propositions about electrons) they form part of a whole theoretical structure. By imposing a way of looking at the subject they play an important part in determining what lower-level propositions are formulated, and if the lower levels are successful this helps to confirm that the higher-level propositions are well chosen. As a sophisticated philosopher of science has said "In general, if A, B and C, can be ex-

plained only by assuming some other phenomenon to have properties α , β , and γ , then this is a good reason for taking this other phenomenon to possess α , β , and γ . In macrophysics any such hypothesis is tested by looking at the other phenomenon to see if it has α , β and γ . With elementary particles, however, we cannot simply look... Hence one must suppose that the particles actually have the 'explanatory' properties in question, α , β and γ"¹

¹N.R. Hanson, Patterns of Discovery, Cambridge, 1961.

Similarly, if propositions connecting rewards, costs and profits help in making sense of findings that were previously disconnected, odd "facts", this is a reason (the best possible reason) for accepting the propositions.

XII

So far I have argued that although "social behaviour as exchange" cannot explain all politically relevant phenomena, this is less serious than might at first sight appear since it is not the job of the study of politics to explain all politically relevant behaviour. This still leaves open the question just how widely applicable "social behaviour as exchange" is, and I shall take up the question in the next few sections. Section XIII is devoted to the attempt to arrive at a satisfactory definition of "social behaviour" and section XIV asks whether all political behaviour falls under the concept of social behaviour as it has been defined. Then I shall take up "exchange" itself. Before that, the present section will take up and find

"not proven" sweeping limitations on the general applicability of "social behaviour as exchange". I shall ask first if it is limited to certain cultures, and, second, if it is limited to "informal", small-scale relationships.

The idea that "social exchange" is a "culture-bound" approach might arise from reflection on the way that it conceptualises social life as a matter of (explicit or, more often, implicit) deals.¹

¹"I submit that it is impossible, after reading [Homans'] book, to review what one did in the last 24 hours and not see it as a large collection of small deals." Davis, p. 456.

This sort of calculative behaviour may be common in Britain and America, it may be thought, but might not an approach built on it come to grief in less "developed" areas of the world? If the Anglo-American political culture is "saturated with the atmosphere of the market" a "rational-calculating bargaining and experimental political culture" as Gabriel Almond describes it,¹

¹G.A. Almond, "Comparative Political Systems", Journal of Politics XVIII (1956), p. 398.

what about the rest? The question poses itself in an especially acute form in connection with "primitive" societies. The modern equivalent of the idea that members of such societies are "slaves to custom" is the idea that they are "socialized" into every detail of the roles they will play. This would be very restricting to an analysis in terms of social exchange, for if internalized constraints leave people only one course of action open in any situation, the explanation of their behaviour can stop there.

This is, in the end, an empirical question and can only be resolved by the experts on such societies. But it may well be that, even in the comparatively slowly changing societies which most anthropologists have studied, the lack of change was maintained by social pressures and inducements rather than by making change "unthinkable".²

¹"There have always been choices which involved the disregard of obligations and, as a penalty for this, some loss of esteem. People who flout the laws of their society make that kind of choice, and there have been such people in all societies."¹ Lucy Mair, "How Small-Scale Societies Change" in Penguin Survey of the Social Sciences 1965, ed. Julius Gould.

This is not a particularly recent conception: a lot of Malinowski's so-called "functionalism" boiled down to showing what people got out of behaving in the way they did rather than in some other way (i.e. why it was "functional" for them). And in any case social change of a far-reaching kind is by now spreading to most parts of the world, making the idea of socialization into a complete repertoire of responses less relevant than ever.

Of course, we must expect to find that in different societies people tend to give different priorities to different sources of gratification.¹

¹Both Homans and Blau, for example, give the impression that esteem in the eyes of one's fellows is of almost overwhelming significance. This may reflect Riesman's "other-directed" society--or it may just reflect the fact that nearly all the experiments mentioned used undergraduates and that in most of the experiments esteem was about the only value going.

And, even more obviously, what kind of behaviour attracts esteem, disapproval, retaliation, etc. will vary from one society to another.

But this is quite consistent with our looking at social behaviour in any society as a matter of exchange. "Whatever kind of society we are looking at we see people facing alternative courses of action and choosing between equally legitimate alternatives; they may decide to break a rule or neglect an obligation and take the consequences, or hope to evade them. They make the choice in accordance with their calculation of relative advantages--one advantage being always that approval of one's neighbours which is gained by conforming with the rules that are generally accepted." (loc. cit.)

While one view would deny the applicability of social exchange to simple societies, another doubts its relevance to complex systems. Thus Talcott Parsons has said that

Homans...deals only with what he calls the 'elementary' forms of social behavior, and applies his analysis only to small-scale, relatively simple social systems. The problems with which my paper ["On the Concept of Influence"] is concerned, however, are problems of highly differentiated large-scale social systems.... He does not ... carry [his analysis] to the point where the limitations of the economic model, seen in substantive terms, become of crucial importance.*

¹"Rejoinder to Bauer and Coleman", Public Opinion Quarterly, (1963), p. 92.

This is again, in the last analysis, a "proof of the pudding" question, but I can see no a priori reason for accepting Parsons' view (which he does not substantiate) and a good deal of reason for not doing so. If, as Parsons concedes, it is useful to conceive social behaviour in simple systems as an exchange of rewards and costs why should this suddenly cease to be useful as the level of complexity reaches a certain point? Statements about behaviour in "informal"

groups will not necessarily hold unchanged for behaviour in wider contexts, but this does not mean that we ought to turn to an entirely different mode of explanation. As Homans puts it:

If the informal group, like elementary social behaviour in general, is not a true microcosm of society at large, the reason is not that the fundamental processes of behavior--the way the emission of an activity is governed by its pay-offs and its stimuli--are different in the two cases: far from being different, they are identical. The reason lies rather in the fact that, in the institutions of society at large, the relations between the fundamental processes are more complex.¹

¹Social Behaviour, p. 380.

Change the initial conditions and you change the results; and adding institutionalization is making certain changes in the initial conditions.

In an "informal" group, for example, someone who wants to lead the group must either provide specific rewards for the members of the group, or by his activities enable them collectively to get something they want. In businesses, however, officers of the organization can secure compliance to some demands by their control over the employment and promotion of subordinates.¹

¹For an analysis of the kinds of reward and cost available for manipulation by officers in different sorts of organization, see A. Etzioni, Complex Organizations (New York, 1961).

This clearly adds a new factor to the relationships within the group--and an enormously significant one--but it equally clearly does not demand any new conceptual apparatus. The officer simply has a different source of reward from those found in "informal" groups, and one which interacts with the other sources of reward.

Thus, Blau argues that a manager who refrains from using all the formal powers his position gives him (e.g. to prohibit smoking) can build up a credit balance of diffuse social obligations to him and thus secure compliance in matters where he could not get it by invoking his formal powers if he tried. Provided that this pattern of management benefits all the employees they will develop a norm (in effect a system of mutual threats) that the management's directives should be obeyed.¹

¹Exchange and Power, pp. 206-7

As this example illustrates, the "institutional" and "elementary" aspects of social behaviour are so closely intertwined that any idea of using a different analytic approach for each is simply a non-starter.

XIII

Social behaviour means, according to Homans, "that when a person acts in a certain way he is at least rewarded or punished by the behavior of another person, though he may also be rewarded or punished by the non-human environment."¹

¹Social Behaviour, p. 2.

Since the reward or punishment comes after the action it cannot strictly speaking be this actual outcome which determines the action chosen. The most natural modification to make is to say that the person must expect to be rewarded or punished by the behaviour of another

person.¹

¹Thus, Blau defines "social exchange" as "voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and do in fact typically bring from others." (Exchange and Power, p. 91)

For most purposes this is a useful enough way of putting it, but we ought to recognize that it will often overstate the element of conscious calculation. We certainly want to include as "social behaviour" the case where someone does a kind of action which has been rewarded by the behaviour of another person in the past, even if he could truthfully say that he had no conscious expectations about its results this time.¹

¹Blau may intend to cover this point by talking about "the returns they...do in fact typically bring from others" but this formulation fails to capture it. What typically happens is irrelevant; it is what has actually happened in the man's own past experience that counts here.

Over time, behaviour can be adapted in the light of experience, without any deliberate plan: this certainly must count as the determination of behaviour by its rewards and costs. Homans, in fact, chooses to express his basic Propositions (which were quoted in XI) in terms of the effect that rewards and punishments have on subsequent behaviour. This choice may be explained by the fact that Homans wishes the Propositions to parallel Skinner's findings on pigeon behaviour, and it is somewhat artificial to speak of pigeons expecting grain when they peck the target.¹

¹Cf. Wittgenstein: "One can imagine an animal angry, frightened, unhappy, happy, startled. But hopeful? And why not?... Can only those hope who can talk? Only those who have mastered the use of a

language. That is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated way of life." Philosophical Investigations (2nd Ed., Oxford, 1958), p. 174. "Expecting" is similarly propositional. Of course, many propositions about pigeons do apply to human beings because they are not disturbed by human language-using. The proposition that the more you have of something the less you want even more of it, which Homans takes over from Skinner, is an example; though it must be observed that this was already familiar as "diminishing marginal utility" long before the first pigeon pecked the first target.

But human beings can and do calculate probable consequences and act on expectations. Homans would presumably treat the statement that someone did something because he expected it to be rewarding as a complex statement about past experience, but this seems very awkward. I think it will be more economical to work out theories of human behaviour in terms of expected rewards and then deal with the cases where there is no conscious expectation as if the person expected this time the same reward as he has got in the past.¹

¹Homans does bring in the idea of disappointed expectations in men (and their sub-linguistic analogue in pigeons) in speaking of the angry reaction of man or pigeon when his behaviour fails to produce the reward that has usually been earned in the past by behaviour of the same kind. (Social Behaviour, pp. 27-8). But if an expectation can be disappointed by the outcome of an action there must surely have been such an expectation.

Even if we leave out conscious expectations of reward, favourable past experience with an item of behaviour only reinforces the likelihood of its being repeated insofar as the agent has no reason to suppose the same behaviour will fail to produce the same result this time (a complication with little application to pigeons). Thus one might argue, I think, that the truth of Homans' Propositions depends on people expecting the future to resemble the past or, at least, not

expecting it to be different.¹ [16a]

If we make the proposed modification to Homans' definition of "social behaviour" we get the following: social behaviour means "that when a person acts in a certain way he expects to be at least rewarded or punished by the behaviour of another person, though he may also expect to be rewarded or punished by the non-human environment."¹

The contrast between "the behaviour of another person" and "the non-human environment" seems to me of dubious utility: for example, if I can shut off your drinking water or divert the river you need for irrigation I am punishing you by my behaviour, but I do it by acting on the non-human environment. Moreover, it is not true (as Homans here implies) that all rewards or punishments which do not come from another person must come from "the non-human environment". Homans himself recognizes this in discussing specific examples. Thus, at one point he analyses an experiment in which it was found (among other things) that members of groups composed of (supposedly) uncongenial volunteers who found themselves in the minority tended to stick to their opinion even when a "fairly congenial" stooge offered them an alternative direction to move in. To explain this he points to the reward, alternative to any social reward offered by either his fellow-volunteers or the stooge, that a participant could get by "sticking to his own independent and publicly expressed opinion", Homans calls this reward "the maintenance of his personal integrity" and says that "we cannot make sense of the results without it, or something much like it."¹

¹Social Behaviour, p. 97.

162

² In his subsequent Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association, Homans put forward two different basic propositions:

" 1. Men are more likely to perform an activity, the more valuable they perceive the reward of that activity to be. 2. Men are more likely to perform an activity, the more successful they perceive the activity is likely to be in getting

16b

that reward." George C. Homans, "Bringing
Men Back In", American Sociological
Review, Vol. 289, No 5 (Dec. 1964)
pages 809 - 818. If we take
"perceive" here as ~~seems to~~
be an awkward ^{synonym} ~~way of saying~~ for
"expect" (since
one can't literally perceive something that hasn't
yet happened) these two new propositions seem
in line with what I have been suggesting.

The reward of personal integrity is not "social" (it is contrasted with the social rewards of approval and agreement) but neither does it arise from the "non-human environment". If we have to categorise it we might call it "internal". Yet we certainly want to say that we are dealing here with social behaviour, because some of the rewards available are controlled by the other volunteers and the stooge though not all of them. I think the point Homans wanted to make in the definition could be expressed more precisely (if less concretely) by saying that the rewards or punishments from acting in a certain way must be thought to depend to some degree (though not necessarily entirely) on the way that someone else behaves.

Two final observations on the definition correspond, I believe, with Homans' intentions, though they are not spelt out by him. The first is that the phenomenon of "social behaviour" does not have to be reciprocal: I may believe--perhaps correctly, perhaps not--that your actions alter my pay-offs while you don't believe that my actions alter yours--either because they don't or because you lack credible information that they do. While this state of affairs exists I am behaving socially with respect to you but you are not behaving socially with respect to me.¹

¹I have to treat you as, in effect, a force of nature: I have to guess what you will do but I can't influence your decision. For a discussion of games against "nature" and possible criteria for playing them rationally see Shubik, Strategy and Market Structure, pp. 172-9.

The reason why such a state of affairs is unstable is that at least one of us, and often both of us, can hope to gain from entering into

negotiations: I can hope to offer you something not to choose a punishing action and you can hope to be offered something in return for not choosing it.

The second point is that there must be at least two strategies (possible actions) of mine and two strategies of yours such that the expected outcome of my first strategy differs from the expected outcome of my second strategy according to which of your strategies you choose. What this means is that it is not enough for me to think that your choice will affect me; I must think that how you choose affects how I ought to choose. If I believe that whatever I grow my crops will fail if you divert the river, then it doesn't matter what I grow--it will either come up or not depending on what you do. On the other hand, if I believe that certain crops would still grow even if you diverted the river, though not such desirable things as I normally grow, the desirability of each of my possible strategies depends on what I expect you to do. If I grow, say, fruit, and you don't divert the river, I will do very well, but if you do divert it I will do very badly; if I grow, say, cereal, I get an intermediate pay-off whatever you do.¹

¹This discussion can be represented far more economically in matrix form. The first case, where I can alter nothing, is as follows: (the pay-offs are mine):

	YOU DIVERT	YOU DON'T
WHATEVER I GROW	VERY BAD	VERY GOOD

The second case is:

	YOU DIVERT	YOU DON'T
I GROW FRUIT	VERY BAD	VERY GOOD
<hr/>		
I GROW CEREAL	INTERMEDIATE	

XIV

If one defines political behaviour as (a) all behaviour aimed to some degree at altering (or preventing the alteration of) the authoritative rules and decisions in a society plus (b) all social behaviour relevant to (a),¹

1 Cf. Max Weber: "'politics' for us means striving to share power of striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state." "Politics as a Vocation" in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, eds. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London, 1948), p. 78. The intention of the actor and not the effect of his act makes it "political": if while driving you accidentally run over a cabinet minister this does not make you driving behaviour "political" however profound its political results.

For what it is worth, this definition of "political behaviour" does seem roughly in line with the ordinary use of the term. For example, the charge that a firm's handling of an industrial dispute or of redundancy is "political" seems to mean not that it has political effects (alters voted in a general election or alters the popularity of the government and thereby its policies or survival) but that the actions taken were intended to have effects of this kind.

then I think that all political behaviour must necessarily fall under the concept of social behaviour which I have developed. (The question is of course whether (a) must be social behaviour.) I cannot prove that the definition of "political behaviour" I have just put forward ought to be accepted, but I can try to show what the consequences of doing so would be. There are three general kinds of behaviour which are excluded from "social behaviour" and I want to suggest that it is not unreasonable to regard them as peripheral to the

19a

Stut. cont d.

"Politics, in the broadest sense, is that aspect of life in which people act to maintain or to shift the pattern of action of government officials." Robert E. Agger, Daniel Goldrich and Bert E. Swanson, The Rulers and the Ruled (New York, 1964).

main explanatory business of the study of politics.

The first kind of behaviour that is excluded can only even be described as "behaviour" by courtesy. It covers things that happen to people as against things that they do, for example blinking in response to a puff of air or catching an infectious disease. Now it is true that an epidemic of cholera might indeed be cited as the explanation of certain public health legislation but this is surely an elliptical way of speaking. To produce political results the epidemic must alter the attitudes of political actors so that they find the prospect of legislation more rewarding than hitherto. I mention this rather simple case because it provides a useful analogy for the second kind of situation. This is the case of genuine voluntary behaviour but behaviour not motivated by the expectation of rewards or costs: you may in certain circumstances kick your car even if you damage it by so doing, just so as to relieve you feelings-- and the same goes for kicking your wife. This is what Blau calls "behavior resulting from the irrational push of emotional forces without being goal oriented,"¹ and excludes from his analysis.

¹Exchange and Power, p. 5.

Some behaviour relevant to politics is of this kind: mobs whose members are "carried away" and do things that they would not normally do are an obvious example. Perhaps American race riots such as those in Rochester, N.Y. and Los Angeles would also fit in here.¹

¹This is at any rate a common view. For example "The riots are irrational. The people who perform them have no clear idea what they want." (Patrick O'Donovan in The Observer, 15 August 1965, p. 15)

Although such behaviour can be analysed, just as the spread of epidemics can be analysed,¹

¹Indeed, the same conceptual apparatus can be used for both. See Chapter III, on "psychological Epidemics" of Anatol Rapoport's Fights, Games and Debates (Michigan, 1960).

neither can be treated in terms of expected rewards and costs.¹

¹The province of such behaviour should not, however, be exaggerated. Panics--as when a few soldiers running from the enemy lead to a rout or a few people pushing out of turn to get out of a burning cinema lead to a stampede--can be explained without supposing that people lose their heads. If you expect a rout or stampede it is individually rational (in reward/cost terms) to join in even if the overall result is more unfortunate for all than some possible alternative. "It is chiefly the reward structure of the situations which is responsible for nonadaptive behaviour of groups at theater fires and similar situations." Alexander Mintz, "Nonadaptive group behavior," reprinted in Readings in Social Psychology, edited by E.E. Maccoby, T.M. Newcomb and E.L. Hartley (3rd Ed., New York, 1958) pp. 575-582. Game theorists will recognize the "Prisoners' Dilemma" here.

But it is also true that tracing the mechanisms through which a riot operates is no more the task of politics than tracing the mechanisms through which an epidemic of cholera spreads. A riot, like an epidemic, may change the political scene, but it does so through its effect in altering the hopes and fears of political actors, in other words people acting with political objectives.¹

¹These may, of course, include the people who earlier took part in the riot.

For the purpose of political science I would suggest that a hurricane, fire or flood, an epidemic, and a riot can all be treated as "givens". The fact that the last is more apparently "social" should not induce one to draw the line any differently.

The third kind of behaviour excluded by the concept of social behaviour is the obvious one: behaviour which is determined by expectations of rewards or punishments but where these are not thought of as depending upon the behaviour of any other person. There will, I imagine, be few qualms in writing off as outside the realm of "political behaviour" actions where the reward is expected solely from the "non-human environment"; but what about cases where the reward is internal, as in the example of "integrity" quoted in the previous section? In that example, of course, integrity was not the only reward in question--there were other social rewards in the offing as well--but can't we conceive of there being no reward (or punishment) in prospect other than the internal one? Possible examples in the area of politics are resignations "on principle" and votes cast by people who don't expect their vote to make any difference to the result. But it must be a rare case for someone to be completely unmoved by the possibility that his principled resignation or his sentimental vote, might have some effect which he would find gratifying, either by altering the course of political events or by altering the attitudes of other people to himself. If we did come across what appeared to be such a case I believe it would be illuminating rather than obscuring to say that it was not a piece of political behaviour but a piece of private behaviour carried out in a social void which happened to have political repercussions.¹

This position may seem full of paradox but what is the alternative? If we reject the actor's intentions as the criterion and look at the consequences of his actions instead, then almost any behaviour may turn out (perhaps many years later) to have been "political behaviour"--Hitler's mother becomes by hindsight one of the most impor-

tant political actors of the century, and another (on Harrod's view of the consequences) was the man who beat Keynes in the Civil Service examination and thus kept him out of a career in the Treasury. Conversely, attempts to alter public policy which were totally unsuccessful would have to be excluded from "political behaviour", which also seems unsatisfactory. The only way I can see of asserting that voting is always by its nature "political behaviour" without opening the floodgates is to say that anyone who knows enough to be voting must know that his vote may have certain consequences and a man must be taken to intend those consequences of his actions that he foresees. But notice that the conclusion to be drawn is then that the man has the (constructive) intention of producing political consequences, so we are back at the definition of "political behaviour" in terms of intentions. (I am personally very doubtful of the premise that a man intends what he foresees, but fortunately its truth or falsity is not in question here.)

XV

Not all social behaviour is exchange:¹

¹Nor, incidentally, is all exchange social behaviour: Retaliation, pure and simple, without any thought of altering the behaviour of the victim, might be called "exchange" but it obviously does not fall under the definition of social behaviour, because the pay-off does not depend on what the victim does. Blau is quite right in saying that "the endeavors of individuals to retaliate by harming those who have harmed them and their willingness to sacrifice their material welfare to achieve this end are no more irrational than the pursuit of any other objective that is intrinsically valued." (Exchange and Power, p. 229). But showing it is rational does not show it is social. Earlier Blau has said that someone who gives money away "because his conscience demands that he help support the underprivileged" is not engaged in social exchange: "it seems preferable to exclude conformity with internalized norms." (Exchange and Power, p. 91). Social exchange, he insists, occurs only when someone acts in the expectation of some change in behaviour on the part of another—e.g. gratitude on the part of a beggar or esteem for his generosity from his friends. Retaliation, as something "intrinsically valued", is in this respect just like giving money for the intrinsic satisfaction of helping. An even closer analogy is returning some good deed where this done purely "in conformity with internalized norms." It completes an exchange, but it is no more social behaviour than the gift to the beggar.

Homans' statement that "social behaviour is an exchange of goods,

material goods but also non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige" (which I quoted in section V) is an oversimplification, albeit a useful one in a preliminary exposition. For, as I mentioned in XIII, social behaviour does not entail either the expectation or the reality of reciprocity. A is behaving socially with respect to B if A believes that his pay-offs depend on B's behaviour. But A need not believe (nor need it be the case) that B's pay-offs depend on A's behaviour, and if he can't offer B anything then there can't be any exchange. I don't want to make much out of this: merely to say that the phrase "social behaviour as exchange" is a slogan rather than a precise description. It serves as a handy way of identifying a particular way of looking at social life, far more handy than, say, "social behaviour conceived as a function of expected rewards and punishments where these are believed to be to some degree dependent on the behaviour of another person or persons." Purists may substitute this expression wherever I have spoken of "social behaviour as exchange."

Blau, in Exchange and Power, imposes a further limitation on "exchange", and this in my view mistaken move is connected with what I regard as one of the major weaknesses in the book, namely the definition of "power" which Blau uses. "People do things for fear of other men..." he says, "and nothing is gained by trying to force such action into a framework of exchange". (p. 89) Again, "an individual may give another money because the other stands in front of him with a gun in a holdup. While this could be conceptualized as an exchange of his money for his life, it seems preferable to exclude

the result of physical coercion from the range of social conduct encompassed by the term 'exchange'." Why? Blau doesn't say, but anyway I think the case against him here is overwhelming. Everything that can be said about exchanges of benefit for benefit can also be said of exchanges of benefit for non-coercion or indeed for exchanges of non-coercion for non-coercion. As Homans puts it " a man who can beat up the other members [of a gang] commands a rare ability to reward them". "For the ability to fight is the ability to hurt, and to stop beating a man up is in fact to reward him."¹

¹Social Behaviour, pp. 152, 291.

To work out one theory of social behaviour in terms of "positive" sanctions and then to work out another in terms of "negative" sanctions would be to do the same job twice and (even worse) to confuse the basic relationships by making them look less general than they are. This is neatly shown by the fact that in the theory of games all the payoffs in a game can be reduced by the same amount--if you like until some or all are negative--without altering any of the conclusions to be drawn about the way to play it.¹

¹What alters as the pay-offs are reduced is the value of the game, and this might well affect one's decision whether to play the game at all, if one were given the choice; but this is a different question. In other words, being offered a choice of being shot or giving up your watch is analytically the same as being offered a choice of getting a million pounds or keeping your watch, except that you would prefer to avoid the first choice but not the second.
