

To the extent that it is possible to isolate analytically individual "policies" from the total mass of governmental decision making there are obviously many questions that can be asked about the genesis of policies, the objects of those who backed them, their actual effects, and what if anything was done to discover or change these effects. Questions can also be asked about the success of policies measured against certain criteria (which need not be those of the politically powerful) and about policies which might be more successful. These are all legitimate questions but as political theorists it is our task to press questions at a higher level of abstraction: we seek to generalize about the political conditions under which policies having impacts of certain kinds are liable to be put into effect; the organizational and other pre-requisites for putting into effect policies of certain kinds; and so on. That these are important questions to which a lot of people have addressed themselves in the past couple of millennia does not of course guarantee that there are satisfactory answers, nor can I claim here to do more than nibble at a few edges.

Indulging a taste for slightly outdated fashions let me propose that for a moment we agree to regard government as a cybernetic system. The simplest kind of cybernetic system needs to have information about the state of its environment, criteria for determining when it has to act on the environment and a means of acting. (Monitoring the results of action can be thought of as the initiation of a further cycle.) In political systems there are of course rival versions of each of these and whether something is a means of action to achieve a certain result is itself disputable; moreover the effective operative criteria can change and be inconsistent

with one another. This is the inherent weakness of any organic or mechanical analogy, but the interaction between information and criteria for a satisfactory state of affairs remains central.

As befits societies in the final stages of Sorokin's "sensate Culture" the emphasis nowadays is all on improving the collection, processing and analysis of information. Yet it is the criteria ("goals" if you prefer) which determine what information is relevant. This is so even though it is perfectly fair to say that the direct antecedent of a policy is some new information (new, that is, to some politically relevant actor.) There is no dearth of examples - in British history we could instance anything from the Popish Plot to Richard Crossman's decision to publish the report on Ely hospital, not forgetting the Victorian Blue Books and the works of Dickens on the way.

Indeed it is the significance of the phenomenon that has led to there being postulated a cycle in concern with social policy: the existence of some evil comes to be acknowledged; something is done about it; concern dies down and it is believed the "problem" has been "solved" (in that order); finally the continued existence of the evil, perhaps in a slightly different form, is once more established to the satisfaction of politically relevant actors; and so the cycle begins again. With a suitably cavalier attitude to the data I suspect that cycles of this kind with respect to poverty could be pushed back for at least a couple of centuries in England. Certainly, the best illustration of the process is the belief (so extraordinarily pervasive in the 'Fifties' that writers like Riesman, Gallraith and Crosland founded entire political philosophies on it) that Keynesian economics plus the 'welfare state' equalled the abolition of poverty, the "rediscovery" of poverty, and the attempts (by all means short of actually giving the poor some money and now tentatively including even that) to

"fight " it.

Nevertheless, the point still remains that information can give rise to action only if it bears on some criterion of evaluation - unless significant political actors are prepared to regard evidence of poverty or bad conditions in mental hospitals as grounds for thinking something is wrong no amount of information on these matters can make any difference. This is, of course, to oversimplify in that criteria of evaluation do not determine a unique response (either in direction or intensity) to a given fact, so there is a good deal of room for the same fact to produce a different response according to the forensic skill, the vividness and the tenacity with which it is presented. Even so, from any except the most short term perspective the criteria of evaluation of the politically effective actors must be regarded as primary. If we want to think of politics in terms of steering it seems to me quite perverse to concentrate on the mechanism without considering that, unlike physiological mechanisms, political mechanisms are constructed and adapted in the light of the requirements of the particular direction of steering which is to be done.

This is, I fear, rather obscure. Let me try to make it clearer by setting out some examples of what I conceive to be the connection between the goals of politically efficacious actors and the kinds of information that can be expected to be at a premium. Consider first two kinds of regime in which office-holders are preoccupied with political survival: the repressive and the liberal-democratic. What I shall provide are of course caricatures, or ideal types if you like, but there are, I think, actual instances that fit fairly well. By a repressive regime I mean one which makes no bones about depending on whatever force is necessary to maintain itself and exists in a purely exploitative relationship

to the subjects, whether the purpose be the maintenance of conditions in which the extraction of economic surplus can be pursued, the use of a military base or provision station or some other purpose whose advantage to the inhabitants is negative, nil or if positive incidental, Military occupations (Israel) or Colonial regimes with only a small number of expatriate officers and businessmen (West Africa, much of South East Asia) obviously fit this more or less closely, while settler regimes (South Africa, Kenya, Brazil, Ireland) those making use of imported slaves or indentured labour (Southern U.S.A.) and those which are a mixture of both (West Indies) involve a situation of a lot more complexity but one in which the relation of the dominant group as a whole to the subject group as a whole is somewhat similar. The beliefs of the subordinate group are not, in such a regime, of any great intrinsic significance to the government and even intelligence about their attitude to the government need be only of the gross "natives are restless" kind; their actions are not likely to be of much interest either except to the extent that they involve taking part in an illegal organization or threaten communal violence on a scale liable to upset the extraction of surplus, safety of the base or whatever is the object. Individual deviant behaviour, provided it is directed against a member of the subject group, is not likely to be a matter in which much interest is taken. Nor will statistics on the health and welfare of the subject population be kept very assiduously - it is illuminating that even in the relatively sophisticated economy of South Africa the government turns out to have only the haziest notion of the unemployment rate among the non-white population. Compare with this briefly a regime under which the government, while still primarily concerned with survival, governs notionally with the consent of the governed and in practice can be voted out of office

by a mass electorate. The information required by politically efficacious actors in such a system (and these include, to some degree, the members of the mass electorate) will include information on the state of "public opinion" and information on those objective matters to which the electorate attaches importance such as the rates of unemployment and inflation.

Now consider regimes in which a politically efficacious minority has a positive goal for the direction in which the society is to go and is prepared to use political control in an attempt to get it there. One important and interesting example is provided by the case where the goal is the salvation of souls according to some religious faith or, in the Calvinist version, the reign of righteousness on earth, the question of salvation being predestined. The most meticulously totalitarian control ever actually experienced (though the blueprint can be found in Plato's Laws) was perhaps in Calvin's Geneva and those parts of Scotland that fell heavily under Calvinist influence. As the tedious arguments recounted by McIlwain suggest, the Roman Catholic Church did not succeed in imposing its own view of the priorities to the same extent as Calvin's and Knox's Elders. (This view was succinctly stated by Aquinas: "It is a much more serious matter to corrupt faith through which comes the soul's life, than to forge money, through which temporal life is supported;" hence killing heretics is at least as justifiable as killing forgers.) Nevertheless, when co-operation with the "secular arm" was going smoothly one could say that religious orthodoxy had been incorporated into the primary goals of the politically efficacious actors.

The information required will be somewhat different depending on whether the emphasis is on orthodoxy or conforming behaviour. In the latter case what is needed is information on individual lapses, and since public resources are limited this means encouraging

everyone to spy on his family and neighbours. In the former case the requirements are less stringent in that ignorant acquiescence in the official doctrines is as acceptable as fully-instructed conviction, so only conscious heresy has to be pursued; on the other hand beliefs are difficult to prove. Hence the liberal use of torture to extract confessions and the heavy reliance on incrimination of one's fellow which were characteristic of the methods of the Inquisition.¹ It is, of course, possible for politically efficacious actors to have substantive goals other than religious. It was believed by many political sociologists in the recent past, for example, that African political elites were committed to something called "political mobilization", which was supposed to be connected in some way with industrialization, but this product of self-delusion and public relations now seems to be evaporating. Japan would be a more plausible example. Military conquest, as it need hardly be said, another goal which political elites have set themselves. Although one would expect the flow of information to follow these goals I have to admit that the idea of a correspondence between goals and information does not appear to have as much bite here as in the

1. Bernard Gui's fourteenth century two-volume *Manuel de L'Inquisiteur*, which I confess to knowing only from the extracts printed in the *Columbia Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West* (Vol. 1. pages 160-8) is interesting on this point. For example Gui notes that a death sentence may be changed to life imprisonment by a last-minute repentance if that the person "promptly and spontaneously reveals and denounces all his accomplices to the inquisitors." He admits that "this clemency and admission to penance after pronouncement of sentence is not in truth in common law: but the office of the Inquisition, holding very broad powers, has introduced this procedure in many cases of this kind. And since what it has in view and seeks above all is salvation of souls and purity of the faith, it admits to penance for the first time, heretics who wish to be converted and return to the unity of the Church. Moreover, the confessions of these converts frequently lead to the discovery of accomplices and errors; the truth is brought to light, falsehood is uncloused, and the office benefits thereby".

other examples mentioned. A final point is that most regimes will combine elements from the different ideal types. Perhaps there are no completely pure cases, but some are more obviously mixtures than others. The Soviet Union is a case in point and there is here the well known dispute about what in some ultimate sense the goals of the political elite are. Survival, orthodoxy and industrialization all play a part, but do the second and third only feature as goals because of the belief that they are necessary conditions of the first? Although this is no doubt for some purposes a significant question I would say that for the purposes of the present kind of analysis goals which are pursued at high cost over a long period have to be taken at their face value. Certainly the objects and processes of information collection seem to be drawn from the repressive and the orthodox models and there is also obviously a lot of economic information gathered and analysed even if what is published is not always very useful to outsiders.

To return to my original point: if politics is to be thought of in terms of steering, the fundamental question to ask about a polity is the direction in which it is being steered and the most fundamental question at the next level up, the level of political theory, is what kind of polity produces the best results. This, of course, subsumes the question what are good results, to which I need to address some remarks before going on to what I hope will be a useful start in the systematic treatment of the fundamental question itself. Professor Ranney, in his invitation, asked me to talk about the ethics of "social engineering", and so I shall relate my remarks to that. There are two possible positions from which it would follow that reforms deliberately introduced with specific objects of social amelioration are pointless or worse, but I

am bound to say either of them seems to me worth serious discussion. One would be the view that on balance intentional change is bound to be as likely to have had effects as good ones so one should do nothing; the other would be the view that nothing except the smashing of all social institutions will do any good. The first is a quite rational self-interested view for someone doing so well out of the status quo that almost any change would make him worse off, but is hardly rational for anyone else to accept. The second has no basis, either a priorior from experience, though it is possible to see how in Russia or Spain people could arrive at it.

If we dismiss the Bourbon and Anarchist position we are still left with a vast area of disagreement at the level of constitutional arrangements, that is to say the level of political theory. On the one hand, while accepting that reforms can sometimes improve matters one might be so aware of the danger of abuse of state power as to emphasize almost exclusively the need to provide checks on its exercise. On the other hand, one might be so conscious of the desirability of large-scale reforms as to emphasize the need for a machine capable of carrying them out, even if, in the wrong hands it could do a lot of damage. These differences, which are broadly speaking between the right and left wings of liberalism, result in practice in a division between on one side insistence on the absolute priority of civil liberties and generally what Mosca called 'juridical defence' and on the other side concern with substantive conditions weighed against some conception of 'social justice' or 'social welfare'.

It should be noted in passing that the logical requirements of left liberalism are more exigent than those of right liberalism. One can be a right liberal on the basis of either of two beliefs. First, one might think that the best imaginable reforms would not

make more than a relatively small difference to most people's happiness so it is not worth taking risks with the structure of "juridical defence" in the hope of achieving them - and one might even consider this hope to be reasonable. Alternatively, one might consider the chance of getting well-intentioned rather than ill-intentioned governments to be poor enough to make it a bad bet to give them much scope for activity - and this might be so even if one thought that the potential improvement in the human lot from politically inspired change was great. (This produces two clearly distinguishable varieties of right liberalism, which we might call quietist and disillusioned respectively.) Left liberalism, on the other hand, require simultaneous assent to two propositions: that politically inspired change is potentially highly beneficial and that the probability of the benefits being realised under a suitable institutional arrangement are sufficiently high to make it worthwhile to try.

Left and right liberalism, as I have depicted them, will probably seem to anyone who has ready my Political Argument^{to be} closely related to what I there called the power-concentration and power-diffusion views, and, although this paper in no way depends on the last two chapters of Political Argument I think it will be useful to refer to them here before moving on. Briefly, then, I see no reason to modify the attack which I there launched on the version of the power-diffusion view embodied in The Calculus of Consent, but I now see more similarities between the power-diffusion and power-concentration views than I did then, more connections between them, and more complexities in their possible formulation. There should it seems to me, be a broader framework into which both can be incorporated, and my intention here is to offer a sketch of it.

The connection between left and right liberalism and the

and the institutions which one should rationally prefer is not a simple one: left and right liberalism cannot simply be equated with power concentration and power diffusion respectively. If we recall the earlier discussion in this paper we can say that the left liberal will favour any arrangement in which the balance of political efficacy lies with those who wish to further the ends of left liberalism, and the right liberal any in which it inclines to those who wish to further the ends of right liberalism, or where the goals and relationship of politically efficacious actors are in fact such as to bring about the ends of left and right liberals respectively. (This, is, as far as it goes, a mere tautology.) Applying this analysis to office-holders specifically, we can say that they will tend to bring about the realization of some value X either because X is in itself a goal for them and they consciously strive to achieve it or because the net effect of office holders with goals other than X is, ^{in virtue} because of their relationships with one another or with other politically efficacious actors, to bring about X . I have mentioned one possible goal of office-holders as being political survival i.e. continuance in office, but there are many other goals such as an increase in the power of the office, physical safety of the office-holder and/or his dependents, wealth or sexual gratification. In a given context the pursuit of any of these goals by an office-holder might (depending on the control of the resource in question by other office-holders or by non-office holders) have a tendency to bring about ends such as a left or right liberal might approve. We are, however, interested in arrangements that can be expected fairly reliably (not accidentally) to tend towards the production of certain kinds of policy outputs. In what follows I shall discuss first the case of autonomous office-holders committed to left or right liberalism, and then various cases in which

office-holders, without themselves necessarily holding such goals themselves, are led by the pursuit of their own goals to further left or right liberal ends.

Before this, however, let me explain what I mean by the term "office-holders" that I have recently introduced. I do not intend by this to refer to purely titular positions which are not taken seriously by anyone but equally I do not want to cover all actors whose level of political efficacy is above some minimum level. Terms like "the powerful", "the political elite" or "the power elite" blur too many important distinctions. By "office-holders", then I intend to comprehend all those actually exercising state authority either directly by more or less successfully claiming the obedience of the general population or indirectly by more or less successfully claiming the obedience of other office-holders. Unfortunately it would take far too long to discuss the implications of this definition thoroughly. It should perhaps be noticed though that most office-holders above the bottom rank (the policemen, prison warders or the clerks in the civil service who collect and pay out money etc.,) will commonly operate at more than one level or affect more than one hierarchy. Thus, if we consider a Ruritanian state with a legislature which passes criminal laws, some policemen with a police chief, some prison warders and a prison chief, and a judge, we want to avoid in our analysis making them look like a single bureaucracy with, for example, criminal laws regarded as orders to other office-holders but equally we want to avoid making the relationships purely predictive, for this would destroy the distinction between office-holders and those who are not office-holders but are able to get office-holders to do what they want. We should not, out of an excessive desire for simplicity, finish

up by being forced either to deny the existence of relationships that occur or to redescribe them in fictitious ways. The criminal laws passed (or not repealed) by the legislature make claims for actions of different kinds on citizen policemen and the judge, for example; while the decisions of the judge make claims for appropriate action by the prison authorities without the judge being above the prison chief in the same way as the prison chief is above the warders.

This insistence on the normative structure which relates and identifies office-holders does not presuppose that office-holders are autonomous in the decisions; on the contrary it enables the question how far they are to be clearly posed. Office-holders may be clients of some other government, be subject to the veto of foreign or domestically based business, depend on re-election by a mass electorate or, of course, be influenced by some particular individual - Messalina, Rasputin and Lord Cherwell give some idea of the range this can cover. But the distinction between a case where the person who gives orders which are accepted is influenced by somebody else and the case where the person who gives accepted orders is not the one who should, in constitutional theory, be doing so is too useful to be lost in indiscriminate use of words like "powerful" or "elite".

Nor does the analysis of office-holders presuppose that the normative structure is one hundred per cent effective in determining the actions of subjects or of those office-holders who are required by the norms to take account of the decisions of other office-holders. If someone whose decisions are supposed to form a relevant consideration in the actions of subjects or other office-holders is completely ignored, his position is purely titular and he is not on my definition an office-holder; but we certainly

have to allow that someone may be an office-holder without being able to constrain normatively subjects or other office-holders to the degree that the norms specify.

Most of the time in what follows, I shall in fact adopt the simplifying assumption that most office-holders are in fact constrained normatively by other office-holders (the rules and directives are followed, in other words) and that one can therefore concentrate on a relatively small groups of office-holders who, within the normative structure, have a good deal of discretion in decision-making. (Let me once again repeat, however, that all this means is that they are not constrained normatively by other office-holders. It does not entail that they are autonomous, i.e. that they have the actual power to decide.) I shall however explicitly mention the implications of a different system from time to time.

Although I have posed the two possibilities of autonomous office-holders having goal X and heteronomous office-holders being pushed or pulled into X as alternative routes to X they are not really mutually exclusive. There might be some areas of policy in which office-holders are autonomous and others in which they are influenced by others; but also, and perhaps more importantly, within a given policy area office-holders may have a degree of autonomy but be subject to some constraints. Analytically, however, it is useful to look at the two separately, while admitting that they can be combined intimately. I shall take first, then, the idea that in order to get X the thing to do is to get people committed to X into office.

For some possible X 's the simplest and most straightforward way of achieving this is for some group of people committed to X to oust the existing office-holders and then seek to hang on to

office as autonomous office-holders as long as possible. This is not, however, plausible where X is liberalism in either its right or its left forms, since this requires the presence of institutions which provide for orderly succession of office-holders, for limits on the things office-holders can do in order to stay in office, and so on. What is compatible in principle with liberalism (though the precedents are hardly encouraging) is to capture office with a view to setting up liberal institutions, but this then gets us back to the general question what institutions have a tendency to produce liberal outcomes; and of this general question we are at the moment discussing that element which is concerned with getting right-minded people (whatever the criterion of right-mindedness may be) into office.

We can consider this under two headings; first, choice on the basis of the known predilections of the candidates and second general rules intended to produce people with the desired attitudes. The first is too obvious to be worth saying much about: naturally, when picking holders of autonomous policy-making positions those doing the picking will have an eye to the policies they expect different candidates to favour. Examples are the choice of Supreme Court Judges by American Presidents and the choice of Popes by the College of Cardinals; and, as these examples illustrate well enough, the process is fallible. The second is even more fallible but more interesting because it can be institutionalized. This is the specification of some objective characteristic as a condition of appointment. Almost any characteristic - age, sex, occupation, education, social or geographical origins, ethnic or religious group, etc., - may in some context or other be plausibly regarded as a predictor of attitude to some area of policy-making and thus made a condition of appointment to some autonomous decision-making

office. Thus, to give just a couple of examples, left liberals are often interested in the "social origins" of office-holders on the assumption that those with relatively humble backgrounds will have sympathies more favourable than are to be found among those of more privileged backgrounds, while right liberals often seem to place a great deal of confidence in judges to pursue congenial policies whatever their backgrounds presumably on the basis of their training and occupational socialization ("running ^{incurably} continually upon their own narrow biases" was how Harrington unflatteringly put it). Neither of these assumptions is absurd and in fact both probably have something in them. In some instances there may be a strong symbolic element - the "worth" of religious, ethnic or tribal groups being recognized publicly by the appointment of their members to top jobs in the civil service, judiciary or armed forces - but even so it would be hard to deny that this has some effect on policy outcomes. We can, after all, recognize well enough that the reservation of offices to some group (aristocrats, whites, Aryans, Protestants, Punjabis, etc.,) is an instrument of domination by that group.

It is when we move on to the other branch of the subject, the arrangement of institutions which bring about the required policy outcomes by a "hidden hand", that we run into real complications. Keeping the discussion down to institutions intended to realize the goals of liberalism (left or right) will, I hope, prevent it from getting completely out of hand. There is, I think, some very general sense in which we can say that all the liberal devices rest on checks and balances; but everything depends on who is checking whom and why. For right liberalism the basic notion has been that the political machine should have enough friction in it to prevent it from going very far in any direction. Aristotle, Polybius, Kant, de Toqueville, Montesquieu, Madison

and Mosca are well known exponents of this line of thought, though perhaps the simplest version was put forward by Rousseau in The Social Contract with his doctrine that the more people take part in the supreme direction of affairs of state, the less vigour the government will have and the less territory it can govern. As we shall be able to note below, there are quite a few alternative ideas about where this friction can and should come from. Left liberalism, as can be deduced from our earlier discussion, has to be willing to trade a certain amount of friction for a certain amount of scope for initiative, but at the same time try to provide that this initiative will be used to bring about desirable outcomes. If it is believed that desirable outcomes (from a left liberal viewpoint) will be wanted by the majority of a mass electorate this resolves itself into the question how to arrange things so that this majority will have adequate control over office-holders. By this route we arrive at the very common idea of a conflict between liberty and democracy; but we should note that it is only one possible manifestation of the difference between right and left liberalism, and depends on a particular view of the concerns of mass electorates.

At this point there is nothing for it but to plunge in, with an advance apology of the crudity of the analysis, which limitations of time and space plus my own shortcomings make unavoidable. But one has to begin somewhere. Let me then postulate that the bases of conflict ^{between} politically significant actors can be divided into three kinds: those among different office-holders, those between office-holders and aspiring office-holders, and those between office-holders and other politically-significant actors. I will take these in reverse order and discuss the ways in which it may be thought such conflicts may be made to serve liberal

purposes. The phrase "may be thought" is intended as a tip-off of the fact that my object is a systematic canvassing of the alternatives rather than a treatise.

1. Office-Holders versus other politically-significant actors (excluding aspirant office-holders).

This category is defined for the present purpose simply in terms of constraints imposed directly on office-holders by other politically significant actors ^{by means} other than ~~by~~ seeking to supplant them. Two notes on this: first, the point of specifying that the constraints should be imposed "directly" is to exclude intervention by differential support for certain office-holders or potential supplanters of them, which we shall treat in the category of office-holders versus aspirants; and, second, saying that the actors involved are "politically significant" is simply a tautology, which may in some contexts be a useful reminder.

The idea that office-holders should have their spheres of activity limited by the powers of resistance of other people clearly belongs in the liberal family. As a prescription, and also as a description, it corresponds to one of the meanings that have in recent years been given to the term "pluralism". The example that naturally occurs is Dahl's assertion in Who Governs? that the political, social and economic elites in New Haven do not now, as they once did, overlap to a very marked degree. Or, more precisely, this would be an example if Dahl were prepared to recognize more readily that membership of an economic or social elite entails the possession of a source of rewards and sanctions for office-holders and hence of political power ¹

1. The other (and quite separate) use of "pluralism" in relation

to New Haven is the claim that decisions in different "issue areas" are made by a different set of people. Leaving on one side the arguments about Dahl's choice of "issue areas" and the question (much less often raised) whether Dahl's evidence actually supports this contention, given the role he assigns to the Mayor, it may be helpful to ask how this kind of "pluralism" relates to our analysis. In itself the discovery that different decisions are taken by numerically different sets of people (or at any rate sets having some non-overlapping members) is of very limited significance. It may or may not indicate some likelihood of friction between office-holders, depending how interdependent the issue areas are. It certainly does not in itself entail (as Dahl and, more explicitly, Polsby, suggest) that social and economic (or religious and ethnic) divisions in the population will be reflected among office-holders and that the "stratification" view of American local politics is refuted. It may, of course, be that the different office-holders do reflect different interests but in itself this kind of pluralism is just as consistent with all the office-holders having identical interests, whether these be the interests of businessmen or any other identifiable group.

If we ask precisely how the existence of centres of potential resistance to state power serves liberal ends, we get a variety of answers. This is partly because there can perfectly well be more than one respect in which a given fact can conduce to the realization of a given value but it also reflects the fact that some liberals have in mind as desirable outcomes states of affairs that others would repudiate.

One connection, which might be accepted by liberals of all colours, is contained in the notion that a necessary condition of people being willing to give up the "glittering prizes" of politics is that there should be alternative routes to fame and/or fortune. This prevents office-holding from being the only aim for the ambitious and thus reduces the intensity of competition in political life as well as providing alternatives to defeated office-holders or would-be office-holders who despair of their chances. Where, because of the poverty of the country (as in many new sub-Saharan African states) or its organization (as in the Soviet bloc) the only way to power, wealth or status is office, political competition is unlikely to be free.

A variant on this, which had great weight with John Stuart Mill, is that freedom is endangered if the state monopolizes men of ability. For this reason, Mill was concerned lest the civil service should prove too successful in its recruiting. His fears were, of course, in this instance not justified by events, but the general point clearly has some merit. The difference between this and the previously mentioned view is that one focuses on ambition and the other on ability, and (connected with this) the second one covers the whole state apparatus and not just the top jobs.

The central argument connecting social power and liberal values, however, is simply the idea that the best defence against

the encroachments of state power is the existence of other centres of power. In Montesquieu's phrase, the force of the sea is broken by the pebbles on the beach. The difficulties come in deciding what exactly ought to be stopped, by what means, and why. Perhaps the most limited claim along these lines is that it is desirable for people other than office-holders to have the disposal of printing presses, meeting halls, etc., and that these at least should not be publicly owned. It can be pointed out in support of this that in the Soviet Union the guarantees in the 1936 constitution of the free use of these resources has simply been a joke; but it can also be observed that regimes determined to act oppressively are not deterred by the private ownership of presses or meeting rooms. Even so it seems reasonable to say that it is dangerous for the disposal of the means of communication to be solely in the hands of office-holders. The disagreement starts here, since right liberals seem to be concerned purely with the non-involvement of the state whereas left liberals are liable to ask whether the resources of publicity are distributed in such a way as to give an equal chance for all views to be expressed.

The same distinction between a concern with erecting bulwarks against the state and a concern with the actual outcomes of a given "pluralistic" set-up occurs even more markedly when the issue is generalized. For right liberals the primary thing is to diminish the scope of office-holders as much as possible. Left liberals on the other hand argue (1) that some constellations of interests (Business, landowners and the church, to take a classic example) are inimical to the interests of the bulk of the population and to the extent that these are able to check office-holders based on an electoral majority the outcome is on balance undesirable; and (2) that the question is not one of power versus something else but of power based on office versus power

based on something else, and that a liberal should be concerned with preventing the abuse of power in all its forms and not just the abuse of political power. Hence, on this view, the state may serve liberal ends by intervening against, for example, employers and landlords; and the object is not to reduce the power of office-holders to a minimum but to achieve a balance between power based on office and power based on, among other things, property. The right liberal riposte is (1) that the holders of independent power - the "broad oaks that shade a realm" - are serving everyone's interest by standing up to the state and (2) that the position of the state is quite distinctive from that of other organizations since the state has uniquely ~~a~~ coercive power. All other relationships are voluntary - people only enter into them because they expect to benefit - and, given a free market (which right liberals commonly believe is impeded only by trade unions), these voluntary relationships are fair. (See for example de Jouvenal, Hay^eck and von Mises.) Underlying this disagreement, as I have suggested already, is the differing priority given to "juridical defence": in this respect, I think Mosca was rather more honest than most of his followers when he said that social life is of course unjust measured against any abstract standard, but any attempt to make it just could lead to the disappearance of order and freedom i.e. "juridical defence".

Before closing this section, I suppose that I should recall the curious episode during the nineteen fifties when a number of American writers managed to combine left liberal premises with right liberal conclusions by suggesting that, although it was legitimate to enquire into the distribution of power in a "pluralistic" system, in the case of the U.S.A. a particular providence had arranged things so that each person had a small number of "interests" each interest was represented by a group, and each group has a

veto on government action that it disliked. Underlying this, however, were assumption which, ~~to~~ the extent that they can be treated rationally at all, must be regarded as right liberal ones, namely that all legitimate aspirations are shared only with relatively small numbers of other people and that stopping state action is much more important than getting it initiated. (See McConnell's Private Power and American Democracy on the first point especially.)

II. Office-holders versus aspirant office-holders.

In most societies - certainly societies of any complexity - there are likely to be people who are not currently office-holders but who would like to be, with varying degrees of intensity. Since office-holders are not normally found to relinquish office merely upon request this creates a conflict situation, since the goals of the office-holders and those who wish to supplant them are (at least in this one respect) incompatible. Now in itself it must be observed that this kind of conflict is not particularly conducive to liberal ends of any variety. On the contrary, it seems evident that, other things being equal, a regime which suffers from a constant threat of coups against it is more likely to be repressive than one which is more confident of survival. Before we can make any estimate of the effect of a competition for office we have to know what are the rules of the game. The crucial question about any game is: what do you do to win? To be told merely that there are two sides trying to beat one another is not very informative. If there are no holds barred- if one set of office-holders can replace another by assassination, by subverting the armed forces or raising their own force, and so on, there is, as I have just suggested, nothing in this conducive to liberal ends. As I pointed out earlier, a regime with liberal intentions might attain office

under these conditions, but it would have to transform them to realize liberal ends.

The relevant kind of competition is competition which makes winning depend on getting support among a group broader than either the office-holders or those who are in the running to replace them, and the only orderly way of registering this support is by voting. But what precisely is the relevance of such electoral competition to liberal ends? The answer to this is not particularly obvious. The most generally-applicable one is that if office-holders are prepared to be voted out then they have much less incentive to muzzle the press and suppress freedom of speech, to harass, lock up or kill political opponents, and so on, than if they were committed to stay in office subject to anything short of physical ejection. It must be admitted that this is scarcely a matter of cause and effect. It is rather that having swallowed the camel of potential electoral defeat a government may as well swallow the gnat of other political freedoms. But from a liberal point of view (especially a right liberal point of view) the gnat is more important than the camel; and if it is a fact (as I believe it is) that no regime in which the government could not be electorally defeated has provided freedom of political expression and organization, this is in itself enough to invest electoral competition with great significance. I admit, incidentally, that this forces upon one the question under what conditions governments are willing to be ousted by electoral processes, but apart from the obvious point that it helps if members of a government can plausibly believe that relinquishing office will not result in physical harm to themselves and their families, exile or punitive economic measure, and if there are alternatives to politics for ambitious men, I do not think I have much at the moment to contribute to this subject - nor, as far as I can see has anyone else.

If we leave aside the results that electoral competition makes possible and concentrate on those that it is liable to lead to, it is clear that these can be expressed summarily by saying that office-holders will have an incentive to do whatever they think is necessary to defeat would-be office-holders at elections. What in concrete terms this will lead to depends obviously on what, with a given electorate, is thought necessary. Right liberal aims will be realized to the extent that electors are strongly responsive to infringements of civil liberties, etc. It has often been thought that the best chance of getting such an electorate is to restrict the suffrage to the middle class, who have more to gain from predictability and less to hope for from alternative and potentially conflicting uses of state power. This belief, of course, underlay the consternation with which many Victorians (including Mill) viewed the extension of the suffrage in 1867 to include a large number (in relation to the existing electorate) of working class voters. But although it can perhaps be argued that there are not very many votes in mass electorates for the finer points of civil liberties, there were surely not many votes in the nineteenth century middle class electorates for the interests, even in the sphere of civil liberties, of the poor and the working class. Admittedly the question turns somewhat on the scope to be given to the right liberal guarantees, but in such things as the content of the laws (vagrancy, poaching, unionism) landlord and tenant, importance of money in litigation, and the treatment of destitution it is hard to see the minimal concern for the individual which I take right liberalism to uphold.

A right liberal concern in some of its manifestations which seems to have a rather variable significance with electorates (whether mass or restricted) is "corruption", by which I mean

cases where the criticism made is not of the policy or administrative decision as such (though that may be criticised by the same person too) but of the improper transactions surrounding it or cases where criticism is made of the conduct of some officeholder which are not connected to any particular official act. In some instances (like the famous financial scandals which have periodically rocked French politics) these seem to have electoral salience; but votes in the U.S. were apparently not troubled by well-attested accounts of the finances of politicians such as Huey Long. Perhaps one can at least say that there is more chance of these things coming to light under conditions of electoral competition.

To the extent that a left liberal believes that reforms are likely to be favoured by a majority of the adult population, he will, obviously, favour universal suffrage, though on the evidence it looks as if he would never do worse with male suffrage and in most countries would do better to varying degrees. It is interesting to note that conservatives have had a clear run on "fancy Franchises" and unequal constituencies (extra votes for graduates or property-owners, constituencies weighted by area as well as population etc.)¹

One could, in fact, make out an argument on good democratic principles that, since the connection between the interests and preferences of less educated people and the way in which they cast their votes contains a larger random element than is to be found

1. The only example to the contrary I can think of is the over-representation of the urban areas in the Soviet Union; are there others?

among more educated people, the votes of those with educational qualifications should be weighted not positively but negatively. Perhaps, however, the idea that political ineptitude should ground a claim for extra voting power is too seemingly paradoxical ever to find much favour.

It cannot, of course, be taken for granted that what pleases the majority of a mass electorate will be the implementation of policies that would be congenial to a left liberal. It may be something other than the implementation of policies altogether or the policies which find support may be repugnant to left liberals - selfishly and belligerently nationalistic perhaps or concerned with perpetuating the advantages of a distinctive majority group (defined by language, religion, race, etc.,) against the rest. It may even be the pursuit of policies which discriminate against some group of people who have in common only that they are already in some position that puts them at or commonly goes with being at a disadvantage relatively to the majority "... local councils [in England] are likely to reflect the interests of long-established residents who form the majority of the electorate [in fixing criteria for the selection of council house tenants]. Thus a basic distinction is drawn between local people and immigrants, and between those with normal family situations and isolates and deviants." (Rex and Moore, Race, Community and Conflict, page 276).

I think it is possible to say something about the conditions under which political competition will lead to one kind of outcome rather than another, and that part of this can be expressed more formally than anything in this paper easily lends itself to; but it would require a paper at least as long as this one to make much headway so I shall not pursue it any further here. What is,

perhaps, worth pointing out is that the tenuousness of the link between representative democracy and left liberal ends does not mean either that it is non-existent or that there are any better alternative means.

III. Office-holders versus office-holders.

I shall begin this section by discussing the pure effects of rivalry, cussedness, and amour-propre personality clash and other so to speak self-contained frictions among office-holders. I shall then broaden out the discussion to take in the fact that these frictions among office-holders may well reflect social division, different office-holders having (in a more or less formal sense) different constituencies. This is, indeed, normally the case but I think it is analytically useful to separate out the purely intra-office-holder conflicts from those where the office-holders are fighting battles generated in economic, racial, religious or other divisions in the society. One professional reason, if I may so call it, for doing this is that it does not usually seem to be seen clearly that there is a distinction to be made. Montesquieu's various shots at saying why England was a liberal regime rather than a despotism seem to me to lack coherence partly because of his failure to make this distinction.

Let us suppose the existence of some office which is of sufficient importance to be worth the while of a man who wishes to exercise power to acquire. It then seems a reasonable posulate that, although there will of course be some exceptions, many incumbents of the office will seek to explore the limits of its scope.

These limits will be imposed by the activities of, among other ^{things, other} office-holders. Conflict among office-holders can serve several possible liberal purposes: first, if there is some office-holder

(A) whose own scope depends on checking the extension of the scope of another (B) this should limit the use of A's power beyond its proper boundary; and, second, to the extent that two or more office-holders have overlapping areas of decision-making they may deadlock one another and thus reduce the activity of government. The first of these purposes is a general liberal one, the second peculiar to right liberalism.¹ It is worth noticing though that although the purposes may be distinguishable it is not so easy to separate the effects - this is to say, I find it difficult to think of any arrangement designed to bring about the first which would not in some measure (if it worked at all) also realize the second. Parallel to the first and second, which are concerned with infighting among a closed circle of office-holders, are a third and fourth object, which depend on the appeal to outsiders. To avoid premature introduction of the case where different office-holders have different constituencies, let us just take the case where all the office-holders appeal to the same court - a mass electorate. The third object, then, is that where one office-holder (or body of office-holders) exceeds its powers another will have an interest in exposing it publicly, while the fourth is that each competing office-holder or body of office-holders will have an interest~~ing~~ in trying to show the electors that he is fulfilling its wishes for policy-outcomes better than the others. The third aim is a general liberal one,

1. A further extension of the second is to welcome a lack of effective hierarchy among office-holders. Thus Montesquieu favoured the ~~scale~~ of judicial and administrative offices in France on the ground that this decreased the power of the King and his advisers; in fact it resulted in the setting up of a parallel bureaucracy.

the fourth a left liberal one (on the assumption the voters want left liberal policies) but as before there does not seem to be any way of getting the one without the other - in fact, unless the voters care about abuse of power as such the third will not be implemented by an appeal to them.

The division of authority among office-holders can take two basic forms: division at the same geographical level and division between geographical levels. The two can of course be combined. In order to avoid anticipating the discussion later in this section I shall not make anything of the possibilities opened up for making different office-holders dependent on different social interests, but consider purely the effects of having a plurality of office-holders none of whom can be appointed, removed or (in the ideal case) punished or rewarded by any other. Thus at a given geographical level one might have two legislatures based on the same electorate. These may somehow be arranged so as to have compositions which will bring about a likelihood of policy conflicts, but even if their composition is very similar, as in Norway, there is presumably at least some chance of friction based on the mere existence of two bodies. There may also be divisions in the executive branch, such as the separate election of state officers in the U.S.A., or, of course, the traditional "separation of powers" between legislative, executive and judicial branches. (Judicial officers are usually appointed by another branch but if in law or convention they are non-removable this provides a measure of independence.)

I mention these various possibilities not, be it said, because I imagine there to be any novelty about them but simply in order to separate them out as purely political devices from the more subtle social divisions which may attach themselves to them.

When we turn to the multiplication of mutually independent office-holders on an areal basis, this distinction is more difficult to draw. For even if the electorate of the large area is the same as the sum total of the electorates of the smaller areas it is inevitable that the smaller areas will have divergent interests, if only in paying as little as possible and getting as much as possible. Nevertheless, one can still suggest that the sheer fact of a multiplicity of office-holders with different jurisdictions is liable to produce some built-in friction.

~~Whether one describes the~~ conflicts of interest ~~(which may of~~
~~course be augmented~~ ^{(possibly exacerbated} by differences of religion, language, ethnicity, wealth, etc.) which are liable to cut along the same lines as areal division has ~~as~~ much in common with conflicts between office-holders in the same area with different constituencies. I think ^{they are} ~~it is~~ best treated ^{along} with them.

Contrasted with factitious or internally-generated disputes among office-holders are those which rest upon some kind of substantive disagreement. Such disputes can arise either because of the diverse sentiments and allegiances of autonomous office-holders or out of the divergent constituencies (in some more or less precise sense) of office-holders dependent upon support from non-office-holders. In the second case, the office holders may or may not independently hold the positions which they in any case need to advance in order to survive politically; and they may be partly autonomous and partly constrained. One possibility is that they may be more autonomous in some areas than others - U.S. Congressmen were thought to follow their own inclinations more in foreign than domestic affairs because of the lower salience of foreign than domestic affairs with voters. We can also have disagreements between autonomous office-holders and

non-autonomous office-holders, based on divergent sentiments or allegiances.

Here we have arrived at the core of the sophisticated right-liberal conception of checks and balances which rests not just on the vague hope that office-holders will fall out but on the belief that in a properly-constructed polity they will have every reason to fall out. As an illustration of this spirit we might instance Mosca's criticism of the U.S. polity on the grounds that all the nationally-elected officers were dependent upon the same electorate.

The commonest example of constitutionally built-in social conflict to be found is, I suppose, that of having a two-chamber legislature, the two chambers being constituted on different bases. Thus if one is elected by universal suffrage the other could be confined by heredity to the members of a group not a microcosm of the population at large, or it could be elected by an electorate which is a proper subset of that for the popular chamber, distinguished by age, property etc., Alternatively, although the qualified voters might be the same people, the second chamber might weigh votes differently, either explicitly (extra votes for the possession of certain characteristics) or implicitly by drawing up the constituencies differently (e.g. weighting rural areas more heavily), guaranteeing quotas to communal groups and so on. There are other possibilities, such as a chamber composed of nominees of functional groups. All of these are likely to produce friction based on divergent outlooks and interests. The only methods of composing a second chamber which are liable to produce only factitious disagreement are election by the same electorate and from the same constituencies, election by the legislature and appointment by a government

responsible to the elected legislature - though even then if the terms of office are different or appointment is for life possibilities of friction based on substantive political divergence are obviously opened up. It should be noted in passing that conflict among office-holders is not only compatible with conflict between office-holders and aspirant office-holders but in some situations actually presupposes it. Thus if two legislative bodies have differently composed electorates the only reason for expecting this difference to be reflected in the legislatures themselves is that, due to electoral competition, the successful candidates will have taken up different positions, will belong to different groups etc. 2

Other constitutionally-structured clashes could involve the legislature and the executive. An obvious, and historically quite common example in Europe, is a hereditary executive (monarch) and a body whose assent is required for levying taxes and which may also have a more or less extensive legislative role. (However a Monarch might take up the interests of some other social group to strengthen his own position). But, again, there are in principle any number of ways in which the social base of the executive could be differentiated from that of the legislature.

Judiciaries, of course, play a vital part in liberal thinking, but such conflict as they may be expected to have with the legislature or the executive is not built in explicitly. Partly, as I have already suggested, the sheer desire not to be a cypher may be a factor; also the training and socialization of judges may be supposed to make them attach more significance to legal niceties than laymen. Neither of these factors is however one reflecting social divisions. Conflict based on social divisions between judges and other office-holders will come about to the extent that judges are drawn from a group whose outlook and interests

differ from those which other office-holders (either autonomously or in order to stay in office) espouse. This is, of course, often the case; but we should then notice that there is nothing special about judges in this respect. Perhaps even more commonly the armed forces are drawn from a narrow stratum - or different sections of the armed forces maintain over time different patterns of recruitment. (In a number of Latin American countries for example, the Navy and the Air Force are usually more liberal than the Army, and in Bolivia different parts of the army have different affiliations.¹ This, however, takes us back to the point that conflict as such does not conduce to liberal ends. Conflict between a popularly elected President, say and a reactionary army is unlikely to appeal even to right liberals; if we substitute a reactionary judiciary there may be applause from right liberals, but it should be observed that the checking and balancing is here so to speak accidental, and that if an equally reactionary government came to power the judiciary would co-operate with it. This, however, is true to some extent of all the devices for attaching social divisions to those between office-holders.

So far I have dealt in this discussion with divisions at a given areal level. But, as I have already pointed out, divisions into sub-units geographically are almost bound to produce some conflicts over and above those that would arise anyway if each sub-unit were an identical microcosm of the larger unit. One of the important possibilities that this opens up is that a group which is a minority in one sub-unit but a majority in the larger unit may be protected by intervention from the office-holders of the larger unit (perhaps by law, perhaps by using ad hoc sanctions arising from e.g. financial relationships). Conversely, of course,

1. Hugh J. Shaughnessy. Financial Times August 24, 1971. page.5.
"The Bolivian Coup: Scant Hope of Stability."

a group which is a minority in the larger group but forms a majority in one or more subunits may produce office-holders who are able to use that position as a way of putting pressure on office-holders elsewhere in the interests of members of the group.