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INTENT, IDEOLOGY AND BEHAVIOUR:
A Critical Analysis of the Influence of Ideas
On
Political Behaviour

by
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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
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In the Department of Political Science
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1983

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ABSTRACT

In this study we have set ourselves two major tasks. First we present the argument that political behaviour (action) cannot properly be understood unless we take into account the role of ideology and intent. Secondly, once having established our theoretical claims in support of this contention, we apply our insights to a consideration of certain aspects regarding Canadian politics.

We argue that the influence of the ideational has become a matter of minor concern, in the social sciences, not because of its demonstrated irrelevance but because of the attempt to make the study of man scientific. The importation of scientific methodology is shown to have been due to its success in other fields and not because of its appropriateness for social analysis. Thus, we reject methodological monism and argue that one needs to recognize the important ontological distinctions among different subject matters and that the methods employed by an investigator will necessarily be determined by the nature of his subject matter and theoretical interest. Both discipline reduction and methodological individualism are deemed inappropriate for an understanding of purposive behaviour.

Once having examined the limitations of the behavioural argument, as well as those of some of the standard explanations of our belief patterns, we then address the problem

of applying an unduly reductionist analysis to the study of Canadian political parties. From here we move to a detailed consideration of what is entailed by taking into account the role of intent in explanations of human action, and again bring under scrutiny a variety of long held and cherished preconceptions. Thus, we question the traditional notion that intentions are categorically distinguishable from deeds and that they involve desirous foreknowledge.

Finally, in applying our theoretical insights to certain aspects of Canadian politics we are able to question the relevance of the Red Tory influence in Canadian political culture. Here we are mainly concerned with the misinterpretation of the nature of Canadian conservatism that has prevailed over the years. Having done this we then examine certain aspects of the debate over Canadian federalism and show the extent to which ideology is an important distinguishing characteristic among some of the principle proponents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Having a talent is not enough:
one also requires your permission
for it--right, my friends?

F.N.

In the preparation of any work what is one's own is invariably also that of others'. The present work therefore reflects, in part, conversations over the years with friends, colleagues and teachers. Such are too numerous to mention but a special note of thanks should go to the members of my committee: Prof. Michael Whittington, for his patient supervision and encouragement; Prof. Tom Darby, for the onerous task of having come on board at a late date and for providing many useful and welcome suggestions; and Prof. Reginald Whitaker, for his thoughtful comments.

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Preface

The question of how best to approach the study of the human condition is one which has long made for contentious debate within our discipline. In the social sciences explanations of phenomena are often hampered or coloured by ideological considerations, disciplinary idiosyncracies, methodological disagreements and by a host of other complications. During what has come to be known as the "behavioural era" it was argued by many that if enough empirical research were done most questions, even those upon which there was little agreement, would eventually be answered. Theoretical breakthroughs would follow as a consequence of primary research and no longer needed to be understood as necessarily standing prior to it. The emphasis was to be on data collection rather than on interpretive or abstract analysis. With the steady accumulation of data, and by increasingly modeling the study of the social sciences after that of the natural sciences, it was also hoped that the predictive and control capabilities of the former would be enhanced; indeed it was this hope which led to the rather naive overestimation of the virtues of social engineering so characteristic of that period. Needless to say, the anticipated advances were

not quick in coming to fruition. While increasing amounts of "empirical" data were gathered it soon became apparent that the sophistication of our knowledge was not progressing as envisioned. The rigid requirements of a good scientific explanation could not easily be applied in the social sciences and it was realized, by those willing to pause and give thought, that because of the different natures of the two subject matters they were not amenable to the same treatment. As a result, widespread methodological monism slowly gave way to the belief that the different subject matters require different methods, though this is hardly to suggest that the issue has been settled.

One would have little difficulty in getting agreement on the contention that the most important function of any scientific enterprise is to explain the phenomenon under consideration. Yet, in our haste to engage in experimentation and to gather data we often forget to ask ourselves exactly what it is that a good explanation consists of. Such reflection necessarily takes us from the practical and concrete environs of the laboratory or field research into that of theory. Of course, experimentation is an important part of the scientific enterprise and it is through theorizing and subsequent experimentation and verification that we come to arrive at general explanatory laws. However, even today there is no final agreement over the best approach to experimentation. For some, the

theoretical component is the more important while others feel that the facts should be permitted to speak for themselves. That is, very often the failure of experimental results to support anterior or initial theoretical reflections has been, for some, an initial indication of something wrong in the experimental design itself, rather than with the theory. This view holds that excellence and progress in experimentation "lies at the terminus of successful theorizing--as a final corroboration of what reason suggests to be the case." Here experiment is "theory-laden, theory-directed, and theory-oriented. It is simply the probe which ideas, concept clusters and arguments extend into actual 3-D subject matter." Opposed to this tradition of gedankenexperiments we have that of the "dust-bowl" empiricists who would argue that theory is the product of experimentation. This view construes experimentation and controlled observation as the "very source, the development and fulfillment of everything worthwhile in science."¹ We do not here wish to engage in any lengthy epistemological debate concerning the merits of either approach. Nor do we want to suggest that we must ultimately choose one over the other. Indeed, actual practice suggests a mixture of, or mid-way point, between the two approaches. Either way, creative

¹Norwood Russell Hanson, Observation and Explanation: A Guide to Philosophy of Science (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 23-38.

imagination must always subject itself to facts; and interesting discoveries are often made because of an imaginative approach taken by the investigator to his subject matter.

In the present work we make the argument that if human behaviour (i.e. action) is to be understood properly then our explanations thereof need to take into account the role of ideas and intentions. Indeed, we argue that ideology and philosophy can have a significant bearing on the actions of politicians and men in general. This requires that we treat the role of ideology in a more substantive manner than the currently popular one of simply viewing, and often dismissing, it as the mere rationalization of what has been wrought by other means. Today it is far more popular to view socio-political behaviour and policies as the result of a variety of "objective" determining factors. The conscious decisions and policies of men and governments are explained, and all too often explained away, on the basis of class antagonisms, socio-psychological strain, psychological egoism, genetic determination and a host of other factors. Very seldom is it maintained that actions and policies may be the result of, or at least be significantly influenced by, political-philosophic ideas and that these ideas can have an important influence on the course of human events. Here ideas necessarily become more than reflections or rationalizations of class-bias and self-interest.

This is not to suggest that factors such as class, psychological strain, self-interest, etc. are not important. It is rather an argument on behalf of an element of human experience which has been unduly neglected by much of contemporary political analysis; part of the neglect having been due not to its established irrelevance as a factor of human behaviour but rather because of the methodological difficulty of treating the problem. Thus, we do not necessarily wish to suggest that in the final analysis the so-called "objective" factors may not be "overdetermining", to purloin a popular "intellectual" cliché, but we do insist on the importance of accounting for the role of ideas and intentions in an understanding of socio-political behaviour.

THE INFLUENCE OF IDEAS ON POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

The proposition that individuals behave in accord with a particular "political philosophy", or "political theory", is not cherished by many contemporary social scientists; nor is the view that political philosophy may still play a significant role in shaping party policies and governmental programmes. Today it is more popular to view men as products of their class, of their age or of their society, while political parties are seen as acting almost solely on the basis of electoral opportunism. The behaviour of individual and party alike come to be reduced to a set of categories centering on perceived self-interest and instrumental rationality. Political philosophy is seen to have little bearing on political practice in the modern world of pragmatism, expediency and politico-cultural homogeneity; and it seems it is not our intellectual conviction which arouses us to pursue a particular course of action or hold a certain belief but rather our private or public interest, or our psychological inability to cope with social pressures and dislocations.

The "end of ideology" thinking has generally dominated the discipline for some time now and one can even find those who are willing to raise the merely sociological

description of party behaviour to a normative prescription. Werner Kaltefleiter has gone so far as to argue that:

Electoral success is the primary interest of political parties; the achievement of electoral success is their *raison d'être*. Insofar as they successfully pursue their self-interest, they fulfill their prime function as instruments of democratic government. This implies that political parties which have lost elections have damaged their own interests to a greater or lesser degree and have also thereby failed to fulfill their democratic duty.¹

Professor Kaltefleiter calls this "the identity of party self-interest and the fulfilment of democratic duty."

Winning becomes the overriding--if not the only--consideration of electoral politics; and this leads Kaltefleiter to conclude that "One seeks justice from the courts; from the voters one seeks ballots." To be sure, few Canadian political scientists would go this far. Nonetheless it is only an extreme version of the pervasive trend of the discipline.

The major aim of our undertaking will be to show that political philosophy and ideology indeed have a significant

¹Werner Kaltefleiter, Die Politische Meinung, Parteien-Demokratie Sonderheft, April 1974, 'Instrumente demokratischer Regierungsweise?', p. 10. Dr. Kaltefleiter wrote this when he was head of the CDU Research Institute. He is now Vice-President of the University of Kiel. In all fairness to Kaltefleiter we should hasten to add that the "winning of elections" may indeed be considered a normative prescription of representative democracy. What we object to is the implicit assumption that vote maximization or "bare goal achievement" are adequate criteria of rationality in politics.

bearing on political practice. The active politician may indeed act on the basis of intellectual conviction rather than mere interest and party policy will, in turn, be influenced by certain ideological requisites. Neither the behaviour of the politician nor that of the party can be reduced to notions of "self-interest", "opportunism", and representation alone; the implication being that even in a fairly homogeneous political culture one can expect to find certain fairly significant ideological and philosophical differences among politicians and among parties. The conscious policies of both men and governments cannot be reduced to mere rationalizations of what has been brought about by so-called "independent forces"; that is, they are not solely the product of "objective" class antagonisms, socio-psychological strain, or psychological egoism. And perhaps more importantly, these policies are also deductions from our most basic ideas concerning the "ends" of man and can have a considerable, though not totally independent, power to determine the course of human events.

I Definitional Considerations

However, before examining these assertions one should decide exactly what it is that one means by the notions of political philosophy, theory, ideology, and ideas. When referring to political philosophy we are here equating it with the classical notion of theoria. In antiquity this notion of theory comprised a thinker's "entire teaching on

a subject (his lehre), including his description of the facts, his explanations...his conception of history, his value judgements, and his proposals of goals, of policy, and of principles."² This usage of the term is to be distinguished from its more narrow usage in contemporary discourse where theory has come to denote "explanatory thought," As Brecht has argued:

A "theory", then, is a proposition or set of propositions designed to explain something with reference to data or inter-relations not directly observed or not otherwise manifest. Mere "description" is no theory. Nor are "proposals" of goals, of policy, or of evaluations. Only the explanation, if any, offered for descriptions or proposals may be theoretical; the description or the proposal as such is not. On the other hand theory does include "prediction," provided that it follows from an explanation.)

When speaking of political theory or political philosophy we shall be doing so in the former inclusive sense and when speaking of theory alone we shall do so in the latter sense. This notion of political philosophy is then very similar to the notion of ideology as defined in the following manner:

An ideology is a belief system by virtue of being designed to serve on a relatively permanent basis a group of people to justify in reliance on moral norms and a modicum of factual evidence and self-consciously rational coherence the legitimacy of the implements and technical prescriptions which

²Arnold Brecht, International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, p. 307.

³Ibid.

are to ensure concerted action for the preservation, reform, destruction or reconstruction of a given order.⁴

However, although political philosophy and ideology emerge as being quite similar there are aspects of political philosophy which may be used to distinguish it from ideology. That is, political philosophy may be viewed as a primarily private pursuit relating more to the task of the individual than to that of the group. Political philosophy is identified with and expressed in the treatise as opposed to political platforms and policies which become the domain of ideology. Whereas the tendency of ideology is to become justificatory and action oriented that of political philosophy, if properly pursued, is to remain "critical." It becomes, as Strauss argues, the attempt to replace "opinion about the nature of political things with knowledge about the nature of political things."⁵ Political philosophy and ideology will have many aspects and concerns in common but one may nevertheless distinguish them on the basis of their ultimate function or purpose. As Seliger has cogently argued:

Ideology shares with political philosophy the structure of formal content and in most cases it depends for its fundamental principles on the specific content of political philosophies. As joined together in an ideology, fundamental principles

⁴Martin Seliger, Ideology and Politics (New York: The Free Press, 1976), p. 120.

⁵Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" in J.A. Gould and V.V. Thursby, Contemporary Political Thought (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), p. 48.

assume a less disinterested role and less objective complexion than their philosophical models. This difference is due to the immediate action-orientation of ideology. The function of ideology affects the structure of the ideological argument inasmuch as at least temporary compromises over principles are demanded by the mere involvement in political action and by the objective to mobilize as much support as possible (or desirable) for a programme of action. Compromises cause ideology to bifurcate into the purer, and hence more dogmatic, fundamental dimension of argumentation and the more diluted, and hence more pragmatic, operative dimension. In the latter, morally-based prescriptions are often attenuated, or have their central place momentarily occupied by technical prescriptions. The tension between the two dimensions gives rise to the question of the sincerity of the valuations which are advanced, whereas out of the interaction between the two dimensions, which normally signifies an increase of ideological pluralism, arises the challenge of ideological change.⁶

From the above one can gather that although ideology depends upon political philosophy for its "principles", and gains a certain sustenance from it, the two remain quite distinct. Ideology accepts its norms (basic principles) in an unquestioning manner and becomes more concerned with "action", whereas the concern of political philosophy is always that of investigating, criticizing, or substantiating these norms from a philosophical stand point. The tools employed by political philosophy are those of logic and rational criticism (i.e. reason); while those of

⁶Seliger, p. 120.

ideology are rhetoric and popular justification. This separation becomes inevitable because ideology will always be concerned with the pragmatic task of "getting the job done"--its end is practical political activity and not rational criticism.

Ideological and moral principles will then always have an affect on policy, though moral principles themselves never can tell the whole story. As H. B. Mayo has argued:

Policy decisions use moral principles--and their importance should not be disparaged--but politics is not reducible to the moral, any more than the moral is reducible to the biological. Though relevant to policy, the moral principles do not determine policy. Morals are, like patriotism, not enough.⁷

But if morals are insufficient alone, policy decisions without moral principles are actions without reason. As W. A. Mullins has expressed it, political ideology is not a mere reflex generated by personal, structural and cultural dislocations but:

Inasmuch as ideology conceptualizes the historical process and orients human beings for shaping it, ideology is itself an active agent for historical change.⁸

Ideology, for Mullins, is:

a logically coherent system of symbols which, within a more or less sophisticated

⁷Henry B. Mayo, "Moral Principles and Politics", Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Vol. 11 Series IV, 1964, p. 156.

⁸Willard A. Mullins, "On the Concept of Ideology in Political Science", American Political Science Review, LXVI, 1972, p. 504.

conception of history, links the cognitive and evaluative perception of one's social condition--especially its prospects for the future--to a programme of collective action for the maintenance, alteration or transformation of society.⁹

If ideology is the maintenance of a logically coherent set of symbols, political philosophy is in part the activity of investigating and occasionally transcending, those symbols. To be sure, the conditions for the dominance of ideology are rarely present, especially in a relatively consensual homogeneous political culture--where parties pursue their self-interest and thereby their democratic duty! Nonetheless in times of historical crisis when traditional truths and customs come to be questioned, the potential for the immediate influence of ideas is heightened. Such a crisis is evident in the present debate concerning the future existence of the Canadian federation itself.

Another terminological consideration which should be dealt with at the outset is the notion of "idea"; that is, insofar as one can readily speak of the influence of ideology and political philosophy upon behaviour one may also wish to speak of the influence of ideas. In politics ideas may be a variety of things; the major ones being:

- 1) Ethical principles or theories about hierarchies of principles.
- 2) Concepts which are a priori, metaphysical theories which order and shape the world for us and thus influence the way we see reality.

⁹Ibid., p. 510.

- 3) Theories about what is in the world. Two politicians, bureaucrats, citizens, journalists, etc. can look at the same set of facts and "see" quite different problems depending on the theories they hold.
- 4) Theories about what means will "work" to produce desired end states.*

If all these senses of the word idea are understood, or accepted, it would indeed be difficult to deny the "influence of ideas" upon political behaviour. However, what seems to be denied by those who reduce political behaviour to the pursuit of private interest and the attempt to cope with socio-psychological strain is the reflective and conscious influence of ideas as expressed in (1) above. Ideas as expressed in (4) above simply reduce the notion of political philosophy and the role of ideas to approximations of what will work with respect to the achievement of certain posited ends--without ever delving into an examination of the worth of those ends themselves; which is the function of political philosophy. The notion of ideas as expressed in (4) becomes the domain of the operative aspect of ideology. By reducing the role of ideas to (4) we would be denying the role and importance of ethical principles (1) and the attempt to approximate these ideals in the real world. Thus, though both are operative when speaking of the role of ideas the influence of (1) cannot be reduced to (4).

*I would like to thank Professor F. Eidlin of Guelph University for drawing my attention to these distinctions.

To put the matter somewhat differently one may argue that any conscious social being has three levels of conscious reflection:

- 1) his specific ideas about things
- 2) his general beliefs or convictions
- 3) his metaphysical dream of the world

The first of these levels are the thoughts employed by the individual "in the activity of daily living; they constitute his worldliness." Secondly, one has his "body of beliefs", or general ideology, certain aspects of which he may have simply "inherited" or acquired through the everyday process of social interaction and others which he will have arrived at through reflection. "Even the simplest souls define a few rudimentary conceptions about the world, which they repeatedly apply as choices present themselves." Above this there lies another level which may be referred to as "an intuitive feeling about the immanent nature of reality, and this is the sanction to which both ideas and beliefs are ultimately referred for verification...The dream carries with it an evaluation which is the bond of spiritual community."¹⁰ To put the matter somewhat crudely this third level is the "ought" or desired "end" implied or expressed in any belief system and justified according to a particular ethical outlook. Again, it is largely with the influence of this aspect (as well as that of 2 above)

¹⁰ Richard M. Weaver, Ideas Have Consequences (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 18.

that we are here concerned. This third level of conscious reflection is essentially philosophical in character and it is with the investigation of its norms that political philosophy deals. When referring to "ideas" alone we will therefore be referring to the specific moral contents of a particular political philosophy or ideology; that is, notions of justice, right, obligation, duty, etc.

II Scientism and Reductionism

The influence of the ideational, basic ethical norms, upon behaviour has become a matter of minor concern as a consequence of the attempt to make the study of man "scientific"--something which it was hoped could be achieved by applying the methods and techniques of the physical sciences to social and political phenomena. Man was seen as part of the natural order and it was therefore assumed that the techniques and method which disclosed the secret workings of the latter could be applied with equal success to the study of the human condition. The ultimate aim was to discover a set of general laws capable of explaining and predicting human behaviour. However, it was the success of "scientific methodology" in other fields and not necessarily its appropriateness for the social analysts which provided for its attraction; physics had become the paradigm to be emulated.

Yet even with its varied attempts at "sophisticated" theory construction and mounds of inductive statistical

data, contemporary sociological theory has fallen far short of its initial hopes and promises. All too often contemporary social scientists have come to rely on their statistics the way a drunk relies on a lamp-post--more as a means of support than of illumination. As Cassirer notes, our wealth of facts has not led to a "wealth of thoughts"; and rather than provide for illumination, many new theories have simply become Procrustean beds "on which the empirical facts are stretched to fit a preconceived pattern."¹¹

It is the irony of such "social scientific" theory that it arose out of the inadequacy of traditional political philosophy whose flaw was to assume the independence of the thought processes and which thus failed to allow for the influence of economic interest and psychological strain. However, in relying too heavily on the latter sociological theory has, in a sense, come to defeat itself. If our thoughts are the products of our interests and circumstances then so is the thought that our thoughts are the products of our interests and circumstances. As Michael Oakeshott remarked caustically:

When a geneticist tells us that 'all social behaviour and historical events are the inescapable consequences of the genetic individuality of the persons concerned' we have no difficulty in recognizing the theorem as a brilliant illumination of the writings of Aristotle, the fall of

¹¹Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 21-22.

Constantinople, the deliberations of the House of Commons on Home Rule for Ireland and the death of Barbarossa; but this brilliance is, perhaps, somewhat dimmed when it becomes clear that he can have nothing more revealing to say about his science of genetics than that it also is all done by his genes, and that this theorem is itself his genes speaking.¹²

In our cynical age we offer a host of explanations for the ideologies of our political parties via the concepts of political expediency and class interest. For example, when R. B. Bennett supported the doctrine of laissez-faire capitalism at the beginning of his term of office it was said to be motivated by class interest; whereas when he attempted to introduce a "New Deal" economic policy toward the end of his term it was said to be an electoral tactic. But it quickly becomes evident that such explanations are in grave danger of being meaningless, for it would appear that nothing is allowed to stand as evidence against the hypothesis. That is, it is assumed implicitly that there are only two possible conceptual categories of explanation--immediate personal or class interest; or long-term personal or class interest. Any action which is not accounted for by the first category is accounted for by default by the second category. But a proposition purporting to assert a truth only has meaning

¹²Michael Oakeshott, On Human Conduct (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 15.

insofar as we understand what in principle would count as a negation of it.¹³ Thus, if every conceivable occurrence, short of the abolition of capitalism, is expressible as class or personal interest in one way or another then we are being told next to nothing. Nothing, or almost nothing, is allowed to stand as negation. Whatever is done to help capitalism is explained as immediate upper class interest. What is done to help the workers is explained as legitimate to foster long-term upper class interest. The possibility of a concern, well suited or misguided, with the public interest is ignored.

Now, of course, we are all aware that there is likely to be a modicum of truth in the assertions about Bennett; we all know from experience that we generally prefer to undertake acts which are beneficial rather than detrimental to us. But this does not mean that we act out of self-interest as a matter of necessity. It means rather that we find it easier to undertake an act which is against our economic interests if we are able to gain some other benefit from it. "It may be true" as Oakeshott says:

that human beings are more strongly disposed to recognize their situations in terms of their own interests than in those of others, but there is nothing to compel them to do so. And what makes possible the one disposition is that which makes possible the other, namely reflective consciousness. Diagnosis in conduct may be in terms of the wants of

¹³One is not claiming, however, that all meaningful statements are such! "Ouch" is meaningful without being in principle negatable, as is "pass me that book" and "whence the rainbow?" It is also true that we are able to state an explicit proposition about our knowledge.

another because it is always
understanding and not syndrome.¹⁴

In addition to the Marxist class interest analysis of behaviour--today common among many non-Marxist social scientists--we are also offered various explanations of behaviour derived from the Freudian psychoanalytic account, currently popular, for example in the coffee shop explanations of the curiosities of William Lyon Mackenzie King. If free conscious activity directed toward some "good" is an illusion for the interest theorist, unless of course one wishes to raise the pursuit of egoistic interest to the level of a political and moral good, this prospect is equally impossible for the Freudian.

...I have already taken the liberty of pointing out to you that there is within you a deeply rooted belief in psychic freedom and choice, and that this belief is quite unscientific and must give ground before the claims of a determinism which governs even mental life. The truth is that you have an illusion of psychic freedom within you, which you do not want to give up. I regret to say that on this point I find myself in sharpest opposition to your views.¹⁵

But what of the influence of political philosophy? Today only journalists and the occasional old-fashioned historian seem to deem it worthy of mention. Social scientists tend either to ignore or to relegate the question to secondary status, while traditional political philosophers oft content themselves with the sophisticated

¹⁴Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, pp. 52-53.

¹⁵Sigmund Freud, General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, translated by J. Riviere (New York: Doubleday, 1938), p. 95.

study of abstractions; and thus ignore the politics of their own national tradition. It seems appropriate then, to ask the question explicitly: "What roles do political philosophy and political ideas play in the determination of political behaviour?"

The answer is not easy in coming and it might do well to discuss the question in the light of some of the reasons for its neglect. The eclipse of our faith in practical reason and the influence of the ideational in politics is not so much due to the "convincing" discoveries of behavioural research but is rather the outcome of an arbitrary ontological reduction in part necessitated by the demands of "scientific" methodological rigour. Contemporary political theory is no longer content to concern itself with the ends of the polity and of human action but rather finds its *raison d'être* in the explication of empirical reality; and normative modes of political philosophy have been relegated "to the status of either historical or ideological curiosities."¹⁶ As in the physical sciences the validity of social explanation becomes its inter-subjective verifiability.

In calling for a wider conception of science, or rather for a return to its traditional usage as being synonymous with any organized and orderly thought, Voegelin identifies two underlying assumptions which have made for

¹⁶Jack P. Geise, "Theory Construction and Political Inquiry", Canadian Journal of Political Science, December 1976, p. 627.

the contemporary depreciation of traditional theory. The first is the notion that because of their success in the natural sciences the scientific methods "were possessed of some inherent virtue and that all other sciences would achieve comparable success if they followed the example and accepted these methods as their model." In Voegelin's estimation, this naive belief would not have presented much danger had it not been coupled with the second which assumed that the methods of the natural sciences "were a criterion for theoretical relevance in general." In itself the first would have been abandoned once the expected results of its application in the other sciences were not forthcoming. It was the combination of these two assumptions which led to the conviction that a study could not be scientific unless it employed a particular method.¹⁷

Only those matters which were amenable to a particular method could become the proper concern of science and all else was simply abstract curiosity. The true nature of science thereby became perverted. In Voegelin's estimation:

Science is a search for truth concerning the nature of the various realms of being. Relevant in science is whatever contributes to the success of this search. Facts are relevant insofar as their knowledge contributes to the study of essences, while methods are adequate insofar as they can be effectively used as a means for this end. Different objects require different methods.¹⁸

¹⁷Eric Voegelin, The New Science of Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 4.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 4-5.

The weakness of restricting the pursuit of knowledge to only one acceptable method is well highlighted in Cassirer's discussion concerning the problems of historical investigation and explanation. Although both physical and historical facts may be regarded as part of "one empirical reality" and though we ascribe objective truth to each we cannot ascertain the nature of this truth via the same method. The methods employed will necessarily be determined by the nature of our subject matter and our theoretical interest. In the final analysis physical facts, though also subject to "...indirect methods of verification and measurement...are always related by causal laws to other phenomena which are directly observable and measurable." Furthermore, the physicist can always replicate and, if needed, correct his experiments, all the while having continuous and "direct" access to his objects of investigation. By contrast, in the case of historical facts the matter is not quite as straightforward for the historian's is always an "indirect" approach to his subject matter:

...with the historian the case is different. His facts belong to the past, and the past is gone forever. We cannot reconstruct it; we cannot waken it to a new life in a mere physical objective sense. All we can do is 'remember' it--give it a new ideal existence. Ideal reconstruction, not empirical observation, is the first step in historical knowledge. What we call a scientific fact is always the answer to a scientific

question which we have formulated beforehand, But to what can the historian direct this question? He cannot enter into the forms of a former life. He has only an indirect approach to his subject.¹⁹

This is not to deny the importance of the theoretical in physical science for all "factual truth implies theoretical truth", and objectivity is not simply a matter of sense data but rather always "implies an act and a complicated process of judgement."²⁰ As Michael Oakeshott explains it:

there can be no absolute distinction between 'a fact' and 'a theorem'. A fact has no finality and no authority over further adventures in understanding: it is a first and conditionally acceptable understanding of a 'going-on'. And a theorem is not an unconditional terminus; it, also, is an understanding awaiting to be understood.²¹

What becomes apparent is that the problems faced by the historian differ in certain fundamental ways from those of the physicist. However, these problems do not arise out of their respective application of differing forms of logic but rather from their differing "objectives and subject matter". In his pursuit of historical knowledge and truth the historian is "bound by the same formal rules as the physicist."²²

¹⁹Cassirer, An Essay on Man, pp. 174-175.

²⁰Ibid., p. 174.

²¹Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, p. 2.

²²Cassirer, An Essay on Man, pp. 175-176.

The methods and techniques employed for arriving at historical explanation will also differ from those of science not only on account of their "subjects", but also because the aim of good "science" is to impart understanding. Our understanding of history and of the men behind the events would necessarily be limited if we were to restrict ourselves solely to the canons of observation and methodological rigour as applied in physics and certain trends of behavioural social science. The understanding pursued here is a qualitatively different one from that of correlating sense data; and the canons of observation and verification which pertain in the physical sciences would have to be softened or supplemented if we hope to have any significant understanding of history. We cannot treat individuals and historic events the way we do "scientific" objects. If we hope to understand the complexities of individual behaviour and historical events we cannot limit ourselves to the techniques of the rat-running psychologist. We cannot reduce the individual to a mere form of sense data.

When confronting his subject matter the historian is presented not with a world of physical objects but rather with a "symbolic universe". His objects are not "things or events" but "documents and monuments". It is these which are "the first and immediate objects of our historical knowledge." As Cassirer argues, it is only through "the mediation and intervention of these symbolic data--the

events and men of the past"--that we can hope properly to understand the matter of history. The function of history is to interpret the past, not merely to reconstruct it, and in order to do this it must, in a sense, go beyond scientific methodology while at the same time making proper use of it. The aim is to "disclose a former stage of human life and culture" and therefore, although historical objects themselves "have no separate and self-contained reality" insofar as they are "embodied in physical objects" they nevertheless belong to "a higher dimension."

What we call the historic sense does not change the shape of things, nor does it detect in them a new quality. But it does give to things and events a new depth. When the scientist wishes to go back into the past he employs no concepts or categories but those of his observations of the present. He connects the present with the past by following backward the chain of causes and effects. He studies in the present material traces left by the past.²³

The historian will also begin by treating events and their causes. He hopes to understand why an event occurred and will not be satisfied with explaining it as mere chance occurrence. In doing so he will trace a variety of antecedent conditions, attempt to establish the causal links between events, and may even, if he is that kind of historian, go on to construct general laws of change and development under which the relationships among these

²³Ibid., pp. 175-177.

events may be subsumed and "formally" explained. For Cassirer this would be by no means a sufficient condition for a complete and satisfactory historical explanation. To the empirical reconstruction of events history adds a "symbolic reconstruction", an understanding and interpretation of which is crucial for historical explanation. It is here that the special talents of the historian come to fruition. His task is not only to describe but also to interpret the past. The historian must be able to, "read and interpret his documents and monuments not only as dead remnants of the past but as living messages addressing us in a language of their own." The distinction between the historian and the geologist or paleontologist lies not in "the logical structure of historical thought" but rather in this "special mandate". The historian cannot limit himself to the discovery and description of events; what he is in search of is rather "the materialization of the spirit of a former age."²⁴

We can perhaps appropriately explain physical facts by arranging them in the order of space, time, cause and effect, but not so with historical facts. If we were to treat historical data in a similar manner we would have a "general scheme" and a "skeleton of history" but not its "real life." The historian wishes to disclose the meaning of an event.

²⁴Ibid., p. 177.

We may try to reduce human actions to statistical rules. But by these rules we shall never attain the end which is acknowledged even by the historians of the naturalistic school. We shall not 'see' the men of other days. What we shall see in this case will not be the real life, the drama of history; it will only be the motions and gestures of puppets in a puppet show and the strings by which these marionettes are worked.²⁵

R.G. Collingwood in his classic work The Idea of History echoes sentiments quite similar to those of Cassirer when dealing with the problem of discovering the "meaning" of historical events. The method of the natural sciences can, again, only be of limited use insofar as one must distinguish between what Collingwood calls the "outside" and the "inside" of an event. The outside of an event is that aspect of it which can be empirically described and which needs no further interpretation; whereas the inside of an event is that aspect of it which can only be "described in terms of thought". An example of the former would be "the passage of Caesar, accompanied by certain men, across a river called the Rubicon at one date, or the spilling of his blood on the floor of the senate-house at another"; while an example of the latter would be "Caesar's defiance of Republican law, or the clash of constitutional policy between himself and his assassins."²⁶ The first of these presents little

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 183, 199.

²⁶ R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 213.

problem in that it simply involves the location of a particular event in space and time. The second, however, requires interpretation and leads to the recognition that the historian's main concern is not the mere description of events but is rather a concern with action; and action is the unity of the outside and inside of an event. For the natural scientist this distinction with regard to the multi-dimensionality of subject matter does not arise in that the "events of nature are mere events" and not the "acts of agents whose thought the scientist endeavours to trace". Whereas the scientist, in explaining a particular phenomenon, will observe its relation to other phenomena and then bring it under a "general formula or law of nature", the historian will have to think himself into the particular action (phenomenon) with which he is dealing in order to discern the thought of its agent. The historian's initial task will be to discover the outside of an event but he can never stop there.²⁷

What Collingwood's discussion points to is the different natures of the subject matter in the natural and social sciences. The historian must discern the intentions of the actors, a consideration which does not even come into play for the natural scientist. There is no distinction in natural science between the inside and outside of an event.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 213-214.

When a scientist asks 'Why did that piece of litmus paper turn pink?' he means 'On what kinds of occasions do pieces of litmus paper turn pink?' When an historian asks 'Why did Brutus stab Caesar?' he means 'What did Brutus think, which made him decide to stab Caesar?' The cause of the event, for him, means the thought in the mind of the person by whose agency the event came about: and this is not something other than the event, it is the inside of the event itself.²⁸

In line with Collingwood's insights one should note that it is also necessary to be able to distinguish between the intended consequences of behaviour and the unintended consequences of behaviour--something not easily done. If Brutus had lunged at Caesar and missed while at the same time impaling himself on Caesar's knife one would have a different set of circumstances. The danger, though not likely to be fallen into here, is that if one were to rely solely on the outside of the event, the strictly observational and behavioural data, one might mistakenly conclude that the intent of Brutus had been to commit suicide. Knowledge of the inside of the event--the actor's "real" intention--is indispensable for a proper understanding of the action. However, the intent can never be inferred only from the overt event itself--from the consequences of the action. It is here where the special talents of the historian again come into play and it is also because of the need to know the

²⁸Ibid., pp. 214-215.

inside of the event that historical knowledge can never rest on perception alone. It will always involve "the discerning of the thought which is the inner side of the event."²⁹ This insight holds not only in the case of historical knowledge but also in that of the social sciences, especially when dealing with legislative output and behaviour. Here one must also be able to discern the intentions of the actors and these intentions cannot properly be discerned by focusing on legislative output alone; if one did one could only have a partial understanding of the actions of the participants. This latter problem will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

It is thus that the simple application of scientific method, and the host of techniques which accompany it, is never sufficient when seeking an understanding of certain kinds of social phenomena. One cannot explain an historical or social fact by simply locating it and then pointing to some of its causal determinants. If we wish to impart a rich and useful understanding of these facts we cannot allow ourselves to reduce the category of meaning to that of being.

One should also note that the emphasis on technique has in large part been a result or function of what might be termed the rationalist cast of mind. By imputing

²⁹Ibid., p. 222.

instrumental rationality to the individual and making rational behaviour coessential with the "efficient" pursuit of ends or goods, knowledge for the rationalist becomes essentially technical; it is knowledge which can be "formulated into rules" and "put into practice".

However, in concentrating all his efforts on technical knowledge and accepting only its legitimacy the rationalist loses sight of that other component of human understanding which Oakeshott designates as practical or traditional knowledge. This latter form of knowledge is not "reflective" and exists only in use. Unlike technical knowledge it cannot be formulated into rules but is rather acquired through the pursuit of any "concrete activity".

The two kinds of knowledge are involved in any scientific enterprise and although the natural scientist will make use of the rules of observation and verification that belong to his method, these rules necessarily "remain only one of the components of his knowledge", and "advance in scientific discovery was never achieved merely by following the rules."³⁰

Thus if knowledge in the natural (and social) sciences cannot be acquired merely by the application of various techniques of the scientific method but is rather also acquired through practical activity, the absolute

³⁰Michael Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1962), pp. 7-8.

distinction between practical and technical knowledge in the political sphere becomes valueless. Though these two forms of knowledge are "distinguishable" they are not "separable" when it comes to concrete human activity.

In short, nowhere and pre-eminently not in political activity, can technical knowledge be separated from practical knowledge, and nowhere can they be considered identical with one another.³¹

Polanyi has noted that not all knowledge can be achieved via the application of technique, for "to see a problem is to see something that is hidden. It is to have an intimation of the coherence of hitherto not comprehended particulars." If all knowledge were explicit and capable of being clearly stated, we could not know a problem or look for its solution. Thus, if problems exist and "discoveries can be made by solving them, we can know things, and important things that we cannot tell":

...we keep expanding our body into the world, by assimilating to it sets of particulars which we integrate into reasonable entities. Thus we do form, intellectually and practically, an interpreted universe populated by entities the particulars of which we have theorized for the sake of comprehending their meaning in the shape of coherent entities.³²

³¹Ibid., p. 9.

³²Michael Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension (New York: Doubleday and Co. Ltd., 1966), pp. 21-22, 29.

Further, if not all knowledge can be explicitly formulated then its transmission from generation to generation must be predominantly tacit.

Statements explicitly derived from identifiable premises can be critically tested by examining their premises and the process of inference which led to them. But if we know a great deal that we cannot tell, and if even that which we know and can tell is accepted by us as true only in view of its bearing on a reality beyond it, a reality which may yet manifest itself in the future in an indeterminate range of unsuspected results; if indeed we recognize a great discovery, or else a great personality, as most real, owing to the wider range of its yet unknown future manifestations: then the ideas of knowledge based on wholly identifiable grounds collapse and we must conclude that the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the other must be predominantly tacit.³³

And if important social knowledge must be tacit, a healthy society will lean upon its traditions, will respect the wisdom of the ages through the cautious veneration of its own historical identity.

For Oakeshott, practical knowledge can "neither be taught nor learned, but only imparted and acquired". This form of knowledge can only be achieved by some form of practical apprenticeship and the student, "in being taught and in learning the technique from his master", comes to the realization that he now possesses a knowledge different from that of a simple technique even

³³Ibid., p. 61.

though he may not be able precisely to say what that knowledge is:

Thus a pianist acquires artistry as well as technique, a chess player style and insight into the game as well as a knowledge of the moves, and a scientist acquires...the sort of judgement which tells him when his technique is leading him astray and the connoisseurship which enables him to distinguish the profitable from the unprofitable directions to explore.³⁴

In his pre-occupation with certainty the rationalist considers only technical knowledge as valid. Yet, if knowledge is not only technical then the rationalist has fallen into the error of "mistaking a part for the whole, of endowing a part with the qualities of the whole." The philosophical error of rationalism lies "in the certainty it attributes to technique and in its doctrine of the sovereignty of technique; its practical error lies in its belief that nothing but benefit can come from making conduct self-conscious."³⁵

The politician in order to be successful and above all wise and just must thus rely on tradition and the "wisdom of the ages" rather than on technical knowledge and individual rationality alone. His appropriate precepts for legislation will be dictated as much, if not more, by tradition and the

³⁴Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, p. 11.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 12, 20.

activity in which he is engaged than the purely instrumental pursuit of desired goods. The epistemological implication is that full understanding is not arrived at solely through the application of technique or one particular method. It is this more comprehensive form of knowledge and "connoisseurship" to which Cassirer alludes when he argues that the historian could not possibly achieve a "higher objectivity" if he were able to efface his personal life. "If I put out the light of my own personal experience I cannot judge of the experience of others." History properly understood is not only knowledge of "external facts" or events but also a form of "self-knowledge".³⁶ The reality of history "is not a uniform sequence of events but the inner life of man". The reality and unfolding of history cannot be anticipated "in an abstract general formula" or reduced to "a rigid scheme of three or five acts", but can only be described and interpreted "after it has been lived."³⁷

By committing his philosophic and practical errors the rationalist also tends to lose sight of the fact that the purpose pursued or the questions asked are defined by the activity and that the questions which the individual knows "to belong to his sort of activity are not known to be such an advance of the activity of trying to answer them."

³⁶Cassirer, pp. 187, 191.

³⁷Ibid., p. 201.

The concepts and methods employed will depend, to a significant degree upon the subject matter being investigated. It is not impossible "to formulate certain principles which may be seen to give precise definition to the kind of question a particular of activity is concerned with; but such principles are derived from the activity and not the activity from the principles."³⁸ An activity, therefore, can never be reduced to the pursuit of an end or the "application of a rule determined in advance of the activity." A particular action does not begin "in its particularity" but rather in a "tradition of activity."³⁹

Discipline reduction--the explanation of political behaviour and phenomenon via psychological or biological laws--and ultimately also the increasing trend toward "methodological individualism" are thus ~~not only~~ inappropriate to history and the social sciences but decidedly dangerous to a healthy society. It is this trend which in large part has led to a de-emphasis of the traditional and the ideational in politics. In looking for a unit or level of analysis the "scientific behaviouralists" turned to the individual at the expense of more appropriate variables. Social praxis and political action were now to be explained largely, if not solely, in terms of psychological variables pertaining to individual behaviour; notions of the nature

³⁸Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, p. 97.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 99-100.

of society and the influence of political philosophy came to be discarded. Only explanations couched in terms of facts about individuals were to be admitted.

However, before dealing with these ontological and epistemological⁴⁰ problems in more detail we should perhaps look at some of the current theories offered for the explanation of our belief patterns. In our present sociological literature there are four standard explanations of our belief patterns: interest theory, social strain theory, cultural strain theory, and truth theory.

III Standard Explanations of Belief Patterns

Marx, Mosca, Hobbes and C. Wright Mills are among the most influential proponents of interest theory. Each of them believed that the ideas we hold are conscious manifestations of some inner force--some interest we hold as a reflection of our class or individual prejudice. Our thoughts become mere rationalizations--"Scouts and Spies, to range abroad, and find the way to the things desired", as Hobbes put it. But if this be true, then what of the thoughts of the interest theorists? Are they mere rationalizations, too? Or are academic writers somehow mysteriously exempt from such biases, as Mannheim thought they could be?

⁴⁰Our use of the term "ontology" refers to those assumptions concerning the nature of man and the appropriate "level of analysis." By "epistemology" we refer to those assumptions and arguments which go to provide the proper methods and techniques appropriate for analysis of a particular phenomenon.

The point is that if the interest theory is correct then the theories of Marx et al. tell us something only about their interests and not about the presuppositions of thought. If, on the other hand, the theory is false, or only partly true, then there is a role for philosophy to play. If our ideologies are nothing save the expression of class or private interests one might ask why it is that Marxist intellectuals are so ready to apply the categories of the master to all save themselves. Have they somehow transcended the problem? If so, is it possible for only Marxists to accomplish such a feat?

The oft-stated point about Mannheim's and Marx's relativism is that if all thought is in principle determined by the social standpoint of the knower then it is impossible ever to escape; and we can thus never say anything worthwhile about anything. The relativist stance only has meaning if it is possible to transcend relativism. The solution to a problem lies in transcending it; not only in pointing it out and then offering a description.

A second explanation offered is that of "social strain theory." Talcott Parsons and F. X. Sutton have viewed our belief systems as "a patterned reaction to the patterned strains of a social role." Our philosophies--termed ideologies--are reflections of our emotional ills caused by the role-demands of modern society.

William T. Bluhm has explained the remedial functions of ideology, according to social strain theory, as consisting of:

"Conspiracy theories which make 'The Jews', 'The Reds', and 'Big Business' responsible for everything that goes wrong in society... (They thus) perform a cathartic function; by allowing the person who is oppressed by his social role to let off steam, they provide an escape valve. Ideologies which emotionally reaffirm the rationale for the existing system (e.g., the struggling small businessman's enthusiastic praise of the American system of free enterprise) perform a moral function by denying the pain-giving strain or legitimating it in terms of high principle. Threatened groups or groups which are pressing for radical change develop ideologies which serve a 'solidarity function' by giving the group the cohesion it needs if it is to win. White supremacy ideology in the American South is a case in point. Ideologies also perform an 'advocatory function' by which attention is called to pressing ills which society can ignore only at the peril of radical upheaval. Black Nationalism is an example of ideology performing an advocatory function."⁴¹

Again, however, we must inquire into the status of the theory. Is the theory itself ideology and thus the expression of an emotional ailment? If so, it is valueless. If not, it leaves room for the influence of philosophy on behaviour. If academics are able to transcend the inhibitions of their own interests and social roles to make unbiased and unprejudiced--or, at least, not completely biased and prejudiced--statements about the nature of reality, then statesmen, too, may transcend those interests and roles.

⁴¹William T. Bluhm, Ideologies and Attitudes: Modern Political Culture (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 14-15.

Of course, this does not demonstrate that political philosophy is significant in influencing behaviour. But it is prima facie evidence that where proclaimed philosophy, intention and behaviour are consistent the proclaimed philosophy has a role to play. In the final analysis we must judge whether philosophy or interest and social strain provides a better explanation for behaviour and we must be careful to phrase our hypotheses so that philosophy does not lose a priori. That is, we must be able to state in advance of a given circumstance what conclusions would be consistent with the significance of interest and roles. Again, if all or almost all potential occurrences are consistent with the sole influence of interest and roles then the hypothesis is potentially vacuous.

A third, and rather more sophisticated, explanation of our beliefs is that of "cultural strain theory" as expounded by Clifford Geertz. Geertz asserts that ideology "results from social dislocations which not only cause psychological strain but which destroy old meanings, old orientations to action." In addition, however:

The function of ideology is to make an autonomous politics possible by providing the authoritative concepts that render it meaningful, the suasive images by means of which it can be seriously grasped... The search for a new symbolic framework in terms of which to formulate, think about and react to political problems, whether in the form of nationalism, Marxism, liberalism, populism, racism, Caesarism, ecclesiasticism, or some variety of

reconstructed traditionalism...is...
tremendously intense.⁴²

As Bluhm puts it, Geertz's theory "defines the end of ideology as 'truth-seeking' so that meaningful action is possible, but it explains the origins of ideology in terms of the psychological stress produced by social dislocations."⁴³

Valuable as Geertz's exposition is, it leaves something to be desired. For if social dislocation is at the root of all social and political thought then how do we explain the social and political thought of those who are dominant in society, those who are not socially dislocated? Is it merely their interest? If so, and if the philosophy of the socially dislocated is a "program...a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes", then any "autonomous politics" is a sham. The search for truth cannot be realistic if it merely arises from dislocation, strain and interest. It can only be realistic if people have a desire to know--and at least some of us, including some statesmen, have that desire. The search for truth necessarily involves a conscious desire to know.

Of course, all relativist theories contain more than a grain of truth. No one would deny that our interests, our

⁴²Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System", ed., D. Apter, Ideology and Discontent (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, Collier-MacMillan Ltd., 1964), pp. 63, 65.

⁴³Bluhm, p. 16.

roles, the social strain we face, are significant factors in influencing our philosophies and the symbols we employ to express these philosophies. But have there not been at least some intellectuals whose political philosophy changed significantly during a period in which their interest, roles and social strain remained substantially the same? And was the change not due to the fact that they were intellectually convinced by the material with which they were dealing and because of the intellectual development they were undergoing? To deny this possibility is to deny the value of all intellectual life. In the final analysis the relativist is a social redneck who must--logically must--require the destruction of our hallowed halls of learning. Indeed, he must--logically must--denounce himself in his professional function as a socially disruptive charlatan.

A few moments' reflection should convince one of the inadequacy of the interest and strain theories, for the reflection must be the consequence either of interest and strain or of an impartial desire to know. And if it is the former, we must ask what interest or strain suddenly came into existence to make the reflection worthwhile. Of course, one may say that it is the social strain of the role of the intellectual which makes us want to know. But do we want to know because we are intellectuals or are we intellectuals because we want to know?

The major problem with the sociological theories discussed here is that by concentrating exclusively on the origin of ideas they become incapable of explaining the role of ideas. In effect, what takes place is that these theories explain away the role of ideas by concentrating on their genesis alone. What these theories do not allow for is the fact that ideas may indeed arise from other than non-intellectual sources and that they may be held regardless of their relevance to economic or political matters.

When discussing "truth theory", the most viable of the sociological explanations proffered, Hannah Arendt points out one of the most serious drawbacks of most other sociological theories when, as Bluhm notes, she claims that:

The view of Marx, which she also attributes to social science in general, disregards the "truth-revealing quality of speech." Other speech we regard as an instrument for communicating about reality, for seeking and stating the truth about things, and political speech also must be so regarded if we are not to reduce the political world to the mere play of passionate force. In this view ideas appear to be an independent cause, grounded not in social or material status or nonrational necessity but in the rational desire to know the truth. Presumably truth, when realized, can serve as a cause of social and political change aimed at conforming external reality to itself.⁴⁴

Unfortunately for Arendt, it is not merely 'political speech' which is regarded as rationalization but for, say a Hobbes, it is all speech, the expression of our ideas,

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 14.

which is involved in 'glorying'. Of course, she is right that we must accept the "truth-revealing quality of (political) speech...if we are not to reduce the political world to the mere play of passionate force". Her adversaries, however, are claiming precisely that this is what the political world is like. Some such as Hobbes and Marx, explicitly, others such as Sutton and Mannheim, by logical implication if not intent.

To make her case stronger Arendt must demand of the relativists, the interest theorists and the role theorists that they explain how and why political speech differs from their own speech when they claim as a rational truth that political speech is irrational. A priori there appears no other ground for the implicit claim than the arrogance of the theorist.

IV Limitations of the Behavioural Argument

The importance of the role of ideas and the necessity for establishing the truth-revealing quality of speech is highlighted in Hayek's contention that "the intellectual history of the last sixty or eighty years is indeed a perfect illustration of the truth that in social evolution nothing is inevitable but thinking makes it so."⁴⁵ Hayek makes the argument that the increasing trend toward central

⁴⁵ Fredrich S. Hayek, The Road to Serfdom (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 48.

planning and control in advanced industrial countries has not been so much a necessary result of the increasing complexity of advanced industrial capitalism, but has rather been the result of a deliberate intellectual choice. As

Hayek notes:

The true relation between theory and practice becomes...clear as soon as we look to the prototype of this development--Germany. That there the suppression of competition was a matter of deliberate policy, that it was undertaken in the service of the ideal which we now call planning, there can be no doubt. In the progressive advance toward a completely planned society the Germans, and all the people who are imitating their example, are merely following the course which nineteenth-century thinkers, particularly Germans, have mapped out for them.⁴⁶

If these choices are indeed intellectual ones and arise from intellectual as opposed to non-intellectual sources (the latter being the claim of the socio-psychological strain theories), then their foundations need to be critically examined. The examination of the worth of the ends and policies pursued is the function of political philosophy and although the moral imperative may stand prior to the effective organization of planned action it nevertheless needs to be taken into serious account for the method of effective implementation will be a morally neutral and objective consideration which can be used for either good or evil purposes. The process of implementation

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

is governed by the intent of the agents and the critical examination of the intent becomes a matter for moral philosophy. If language, the expression of the intent, and the intent itself, are nothing save the reflection of social and psychological strain or the expression of selfish interest the task of moral and political philosophy becomes essentially meaningless. As one contemporary author, writing in the field of systems theory has noted:

What matters...is to pay attention to intent, idea, and to the method of realizing both by evaluating the (a) Objective Goodness of Intent, and its counterpart, (b) Subjective Badness of Intent continually. Analysis shows invariably that the method employed by men to create organized entities is a morally neutral agency through which all kinds of objectives can be realized.⁴⁷

Responsibility for the choice of ends will always rest with the agent and it is to the agent to whom we must look "for information regarding the moral value of 'Objectives' understood as 'Ends' or 'Purposes'."⁴⁸ One will therefore always need to take intent into account when explaining political behaviour. It is never enough to focus on outcome alone and it is certainly erroneous to try and infer intent by restricting oneself to a determination of outcome. Intent stands prior to the activity of implementation and

⁴⁷Nicholas A. Nyiri, "The Problematic Character of System" ed., N. A. Nyiri and R. Preece, Unity in Diversity (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1977), p. 94.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 121.

needs to be examined and evaluated according to different (i.e. moral and philosophic) criteria. Once the intent has been properly understood one may then question whether the means chosen for its realization were the appropriate ones. If the intent was "good" and the means faulty or improper one may indeed have bad consequences, but one cannot infer the initial intent from these results.

The intention and motive of the actor can, in turn, not be understood only in terms of the outcomes of action or be gathered only from behavioural manifestations. Though these will come into play one need also take into account the "active expressions" (verbal, written, etc.) of the agent. The following example may help to highlight the problem:

Any day, I suppose, any one of you may be called to serve on a jury to try a criminal charge. Suppose it to be a charge of murder. One man has shot another and killed him. The testimony of witnesses establishes beyond doubt that the prisoner held the pistol and fired the fatal shot. The witnesses give you a full behavioristic account of the incident. From this you may be able to conclude with confidence that the shooting was not an accident; that the prisoner intended to shoot his victim.⁴⁹

From the behavioural description offered one has here come to a conclusion which is already beyond the purview of

⁴⁹W. McDougall, "Purposive or Mechanical Psychology", in Castell, The Self in Philosophy (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965), pp. 116-117.

Behaviourism and of Mechanical Psychology; "for neither of these can take account of intentions." The court, however, will not yet be content in that it will also have to concern itself with the problem of whether or not the prisoner intended to kill his victim as opposed to merely shooting him. The fullest behaviouristic account would not be able to answer this question adequately. And further, granted, perhaps, that the intent of the prisoner was to kill his victim, "what was the motive of that intention?" Here one has "the most essential problem of the case, and one before which the Mechanical Psychology whether of the behaviorist or the introspectionist variety is perfectly helpless. For to both of them the word 'motive' is meaningless."⁵⁰

What we are confronted with here is purposive activity--with man as a volitional and purposive being whose conduct is the expression of his desires and of his will. In order to understand the purposive nature of this activity we need to take into account his "active expressions", and these cannot be derived from mere behavioural phenomena, nor are they simply a reflection of the individual's social and psychological strains. When dealing with meaningful speech--especially political speech--we must distinguish between "passive-expression forms" and "active-expression forms". The socio-psychological strain and interest

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 117.

theorists, along with the behaviourists, want to reduce language and intent to "passive-expression forms"; that is, they emerge as mere reactions to, or as the manifestations of, external and internal exigencies. However, when dealing with meaningful human speech and culture we are dealing with active-expression forms; they are not "mere reactions like blushing, frowning, or doubling the fist", but genuine actions. Whereas behaviourism views only the given as real and argues that this given "is never for us anything but a determinate association of sense qualities, a manifold of colors, a succession of sounds", one need remember that insofar as these contents exist "something else appears in them". That is, in addition to their physical being a "symbolic value is transmitted by them" and once recognizing this "we go beyond what sense experience alone can tell us."⁵¹ Yet as Russell notes, the behaviourist would contend that the "talk they have to listen to can be explained without supposing that people think. Where you might expect a chapter on 'thought processes' you come instead upon a chapter on 'The Language Habit'.⁵²

If the behavioural argument here expressed is a legitimate one it provides a damning critique of the independence of human consciousness. There is no doubt that much of

⁵¹Ernst Cassirer, The Logic of the Humanities (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 110.

⁵²Bertrand Russell, The Analysis of Mind (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1921), p. 26. Quoted in Cassirer, The Logic of the Humanities, p. 111.

daily speech deserves such criticism but one must ask whether we are "justified in extending this evaluation to all human speech." Once human speech becomes nothing but "empty parroting" then the goals we set ourselves and the intentions behind them become nothing save mindless pursuits and desires; for once the independence of mind is destroyed the entire activity of cultural and political pursuits are reduced to nothing more save the crude satisfaction of wants determined independently of human volition and creativity. The following example and critique of the behaviouralist thesis may help in elucidating the problem. In support of the behaviouralist one might argue the following:

...suppose that a teacher in examining his students sets down a certain problem in arithmetic, for example, a problem in multiplication. From one student he gets a "correct" answer. But does this "correct" answer prove anything more than that a mere word-formula has stamped itself upon the memory of the student and that he is able to repeat it?⁵³

This argument, no doubt, makes a good deal of sense but, as Cassirer notes:

...no real teacher will proceed on the basis of an examination that merely asks for answers. He will find a way to bring the independence of his student into play. He will devise a problem which in all probability the student has never seen before. In this way he will come to know not only the measure of acquired knowledge the student possesses but also the degree to which he understands

⁵³Cassirer, The Logic of the Humanities, p. 111.

how to use it. With this, all reason for uncertainty is removed--uncertainty which, in principle, even the most elaborate but purely passive behavior could not dispel. Surely there is passive speech, just as there is passive expression. It does not go beyond mere "language habit". But true speech, meaningful logos, is something different in kind. It is never purely imitative, it is productive. And only in this productive function, only within this latent energy does it give evidence for and display that other energy we call "thinking."⁵⁴

Meaningful speech and activity is always more than rationalization and determined response. The way to truth and understanding is via the dialectic and it is, further, only through meaningful speech and dialectical investigation that we can come both to an understanding of others and to the realization of ourselves. Here it is never simply a question of "imparting information, but of statement and response" and it is only in "this twofold process that true thought emerges".⁵⁵ The human condition is not only one of activity, for this we share with the animals, but it is also one of thought and feeling. Although man may submit to the rules of society, as animals submit to certain rules of organization, man also has an "active share in bringing about, and an active power to change, the forms of social life"; and it is through this process of action that man, unlike animals, comes to find and express his individuality. Animals may construct certain

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 111-112.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 113.

complex structures but these are all produced "in the same way and according to the same invariable rules." There is no notion or room for individual choice and expression. The distinguishing characteristic of man is that in order to live his life he needs to express it and the product of this expression comes to have an independent existence of its own; having meaning and significance for succeeding generations. Within man we find a constant tension between tradition and innovation--between the attempt to continue along stable forms of life and the need to break through this rigid scheme.⁵⁶ This breaking of established patterns is as much a matter of conscious choice as of necessity.

The common error of modern sociological theory, the elimination of the influence of ideas, is termed reductionism by Reinhard Bendix. He explains that:

social thought since the Enlightenment has developed an image of man as a creature of his drive, habits and social roles, in whose behaviour prudence and choice play no decisive part. If all men are mere creatures of drives and circumstances, then social scientists are not exempt. The investigation of social life would itself be a product of social and psychological conditioning.⁵⁷

The problem to which Bendix here points is two-fold. First, one is confronted with an ontological reduction which

⁵⁶Cassirer, An Essay on Man, pp. 223-224.

⁵⁷Reinhard Bendix, "The Age of Ideology: Persistent and Changing", Ideology and Discontent, ed. David Apter (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, Collier-MacMillan Ltd., 1964), p. 303.

assumes that only individuals are real thereby denying the reality of any notion of "community and common good as well as an intelligible notion of public interest". The reality is assumed to be one of a collection of atomized individuals who pursue their private interests. Here there is no "genuine public interest apart from individual interests as processed by the political system", and groups themselves exist only to facilitate the pursuit of private interest.⁵⁸ This ontological reduction then leads to the second problem, namely, that of a methodological reduction which attempts to explain social and political behaviour solely in terms of facts about individuals.

However, the ontological reduction which attempts to ascribe reality to the individual alone and not also to the group is only a problem if we "define the word 'to exist' in some very restricted sense". If we adopt a wider and more realistic definition, one which does not limit reality only to isolated particulars, the problem becomes irrelevant. According to Andreski:

If (resorting to a definition in use) we say that an entity can be said to exist if an attribute can be predicated of any other entity--including any of its constituent parts as well as any larger whole to which the said entity may be said to belong--then it is clear that,

⁵⁸C. E. Cochran, "The Politics of Interest: Philosophy and the Limitations of the Science of Politics", American Journal of Political Science, 17, 1973, p. 753.

not only groups and organisms, but any assemblage of objects exists just as 'really' as its constituents.⁵⁹

Further, any entity which can be discerned is, of necessity, more than the sum of its parts "because to be observable an entity must consist of parts standing in certain relationships to one another; and the 'sum' is a concept which abstracts from these relationships". As Andreski goes on to show, any form of ontological individualism is doomed to inadequacy:

To assert that whatever can be analysed into its components does not exist would entail the conclusion that nothing exists except atomic particles, so long as these cannot be shown to consist of smaller entities. As every aggregate consists of at least two elements and the relations between them, an ontological...individualism would presuppose that relations do not exist; and since the atomic particles can be known only through their relationships to directly perceptible physical occurrences, we would have to conclude that they do not exist. And if nothing exists, then 'the sentence that nothing exists' cannot exist either...which is a reductio ad absurdum of ontological 'individualism' or reductionism.⁶⁰

With respect to any study of human individuals we must at least concede that man is a social animal, if not by nature then at least by virtue of the fact that he is born into a set of social structures and relationships; and we must also recognize, as did the ancients, that our

⁵⁹Stanislav Andreski, Social Sciences as Sorcery (Manchester, England: C. Nicholls and Co. Ltd., 1972), pp. 192-193.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 193.

truly human potential can only be realized by interacting with others and "by absorbing a culture produced by countless ancestors".⁶¹ Social relationships become of prime importance for it is largely through these and from our traditions that we get our notions concerning justice and other ethical principles. We legitimize and reinforce our ethical and social relationships, at least in part, by interacting in a particular manner. This does not mean that these principles and relationships are not open to reflection and critique; but what it does mean is that the relationships of the individual to others, the community, is more than a mere associational one and must be understood as such. To understand the individual we must understand his relationship to the whole and the influence which the latter has upon him. With a collective aggregation when a part becomes severed from the whole it is no longer the same. Its relationship to the whole is of primary importance. Once this relationship is severed the part also undergoes a characteristic change. Sever the individual from the community and he is no longer that which he was. We become moral beings through habituation and participation in public or community life; we cannot become so in isolation.⁶² Our notions of justice and other

⁶¹Ibid., p. 193.

⁶²Despite Aquinas's reverence for the hermit. The hermit who is above ordinary mortals can only become such after becoming a socially moral being.

ethical principles are then not simply matters of personal preference. "To trace every idea of justice or good back to fundamental personal preferences distorts the meanings of these terms."⁶³ These principles do not become dependent for their existence on only certain individuals. Nor do they vanish with the passing of individuals but rather become embodied in our institutions and traditions. The writing of the treatise may depend on the individual, but the treatise itself depends on the "practical life"; and for this the "collectivity" becomes indispensable. If one is able to allow for non-egoistic motives or values then politics can become "more than an instrument which individuals use to pursue their own interests". Political action for the common good becomes a distinct possibility as does the notion that "men can exist only in communities of which they are parts and whose good they must promote before their own".⁶⁴

In order to properly understand human behaviour in its entire complexity we require a vocabulary beyond that of individual characteristics and attributes. We need to introduce or incorporate into our explanations societal variables. The reductionist or individualist, however, refuses to allow that the "whole" could ever be a cause and excludes "a priori the possibility of human dispositions

⁶³ Cochran, p. 754.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 754-755.

being the dependent variable in an historical explanation." Yet surely our institutions, mores, and traditions, are independent factors which affect our behaviour and dispositions; and these latter cannot be properly explained without reference to the former. Individuals themselves, particularly statesmen, have holistic concepts which influence and orient their behaviour. These terms cannot be done away with either from the point of view of the participant nor from that of the observer. As Gellner points out:

When the holistic ideas of many individuals are co-ordinated and reinforced by public behaviour and physical objects--by ceremonials, rituals, symbols, public buildings, etc.--it is difficult for the social scientist, though he observes the scene from the outside, not to use the holistic concept. It is quite true that the fact that X acts and thinks in terms of an holistic idea--e.g. he treats the totem as if it were his tribe, and the tribe as if it were more than the tribesmen--is itself a fact about an individual. On the other hand, though the holistic term as used by the observer may be eliminable, as used by the participant it is not. Are we to say that a logical impeccable explanation of a social situation is committed to crediting its subjects with nonsensical thought? Perhaps we are. On the other hand, the fact that holistic terms are ineliminable from the thought of participants may well be a clue to their ineliminability from that of observers.⁶⁵

Mandelbaum, in arguing that the study of society can never be reduced to a "branch of the study of the actions

⁶⁵Ernst Gellner, "Holism Versus Individualism", (ed. M. Brodbeck) Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences (New York: MacMillan Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. 260, 264, 269.

of individuals" also shows how societal concepts necessary for a proper explanation are not simply reducible to patterns of individual behaviour which can be readily pointed to. When engaging in a particular "social action" one must also take the intention of the individual into account it is this "intention" which helps connect an otherwise discrete series of events. Thus, to use Mandelbaum's example of withdrawing money from the bank, one could not properly explain or understand the action of the individual without some notion or concept of "bank", an understanding of the roles of the individuals involved, and the intention of the person wishing to withdraw the money. So that unless one admits, according to Mandelbaum, that we "can have knowledge of aspects of human behaviour which are not directly presented to the senses" we cannot understand much of what we consider to be social behaviour.⁶⁶

A strict methodological individualism must then also be abandoned along with any attempt at discipline reduction. As was noted earlier, the questions, subjects and problems of the social sciences are distinct from those of the physical sciences and to attempt to reduce the former to the latter cannot lead to a better form of explanation.

With an increasing reliance on, and faith in, the scientific method we come to also see a decline in the

⁶⁶ Maurice Mandelbaum, "Societal Facts", (ed. A. Ryan), The Philosophy of the Social Sciences (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd., 1970), pp. 105-118.

belief in human dignity. Insofar as the individual is increasingly viewed as acting out of self-interest or as a member of a particular group it becomes difficult to see how the individual could benefit from education and act on the basis of intellectual conviction or principle.

The idols of the mind are now more than "mere impediments" insofar as the quest for knowledge itself comes to be obstructed by the very nature and "social existence of man".⁶⁷ With our emphasis on scientific methodology we

have come close to "instituting a scientism that, in the name of scientific objectivity, jeopardizes science itself".⁶⁸ Paradoxically the insights of Freud and Marx into the social and psychological origins of intellectual life never led them to conclude that reasoning was futile.

Both felt that their respective elites would come into being as a result of "an individual's reasoned choice"; something which is itself inexplicable in Marxian or Freudian terms.⁶⁹ The role of reason will, however, necessarily be negligible if "we conceive of knowledge simply as a repercussion of interests, emotions, or culture-patterns."⁷⁰

⁶⁷R. Bendix, "Social Science and the Distrust of Reason", University of California Publications in Sociology and Social Institutions, 1:1 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), p. 21.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 2.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 23.

As Bendix notes, reason is not something which contemporary social scientists are wont to grant most individuals. Rationality is now a matter of method and technique:

Since they believe that bias is universal, they view the individual as a mere product of "group influences" or culture. And since rationality implies adherence to the rules of logic and scientific method rather than to the rules of conventional action and thought, it follows that thoroughly conventional people are incapable of rationality.⁷¹

The conclusions of relativists, as we have noted, rest on certain arbitrary assumptions. The assumption which is of crucial importance here is the ontological reduction which itself is the result of the attempt to model the social sciences after the physical. Behaviouralism again comes to view the individual as the appropriate unit of analysis; not necessarily because this allows for a fuller explanation of social phenomena but rather because, as in the physical sciences, what is needed are "stable theoretical and empirical units of analysis which would play a role analogous to the role of particles in the physical sciences."⁷² However, what is denied with this reduction and subsequent belief in the interest orientation of individuals is the possibility of discovering "moral

⁷¹Ibid., p. 24.

⁷²Cochran, p. 759.

standards which apply to the community as a whole transcending the preferences of 'values' of individual political actors."⁷³ The epistemology of the behaviouralist is then determined by his ontology, as any epistemology ultimately is. As a result, no one epistemology can claim to be ultimately correct insofar as each "depends upon and is validated by its own a priori ontology".⁷⁴

If this is true it would indeed be difficult to validate ultimately or legislate in favour of, any one particular method. Thus, if we view the individual as being a creative social being rather than as an isolated atomistic creature our manner for coming to understand this kind of individual must be amended and tailored accordingly. We would, for instance, need to take into account his intentions, ideals, and the role and influence of the polity. There is no a priori reason for denying the role of ideas in political behaviour; and we would maintain that consistency between ideas and consequences as not only prima facie evidence for the influence of ideas on behaviour in general but also that the study of ideas is one of the most fruitful and illuminating paths for the social scientist. And the ideas may, as we have seen, revolve as appropriately around a collectivity such as the family or a nation as around the individuals who comprise that collectivity.

⁷³Ibid., p. 765.

⁷⁴Geise, p. 631.

CHAPTER II

IDEOLOGY AND PARTY POLITICS

The cynicism which has long haunted the realm of sociological theory has also found varying degrees of expression in the literature on Canadian political behaviour. It is not uncommon to find it argued that when it comes to the determination of policy "sociological cleavages...carry more weight than philosophical disagreements over the relative merits of collectivism, individualism and other beliefs." Canada's major political parties are generally perceived as not exhibiting any essential differences and those few differences which are conceded to, it is said, do "not conform easily to the notions of those who have sought to explain the party system in ideological terms."¹ With respect to the Canadian political spectrum matters of "principle" or ideological conviction are generally identified with third parties; indeed, it is popular to refer to these as parties of principle. These parties, we are told, have traditionally relegated electoral success to secondary status in favour of the pursuit of certain principles based on "special interests, issues, groups, or ideologies." In such a case, "the

¹Conrad Winn and John McMenemy, Political Parties in Canada (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976), pp. 3-5.

significant fact is that the party leadership has decided that it is more important to retain the distinctive character of the party than to increase its share of the electorate."² Canadian political parties are of either the "practical, flexible and manipulative" variety or they are of the protest variety and are thereby constrained by the ideals which prompted their creation." The former are said to be parties of parliamentary origin while the latter are parties formed in "response to social tensions outside the legislative system."³ Thus, while the behaviour of third parties is seen as predicated upon ideological considerations, that of the major parties is seen as being strictly opportunist.

We do not here wish to deny that there is a good deal of truth in the foregoing observations, nor do we wish to argue with the contention that political parties in office are pragmatic and self-interested. Given Canada's liberal heritage, and the premise of psychological egoism upon which much of that ideology is based, it would indeed be surprising to find a politics of altruism. The very nature of competitive electoral politics dictates that pragmatism and self-interest be ever present considerations. One might even be inclined to agree with those who argue that our parties are more similar in their behaviour than Grant's Lament For a

²Frederick C. Engelmann and Mildred A. Schwartz, Canadian Political Parties: Origin, Character, Impact (Saskatoon: Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1975), p. 20.

³Winn and McMenemy, pp. 10-11.

Nation, Christian and Campbell's Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada and Gad Horowitz's Canadian Labour in Politics would have us believe. However, this is not to suggest that Canadian politics is non-ideological nor is it to suggest that we can adequately account for the similarities among our major parties by the application of nebulous phrases about "class interest" or "seeking the rewards of office", as some analysts are wont to do.* On the contrary, we would suggest that major political parties, just like third parties, may also be significantly motivated or "constrained" by matters of principle and ideological conviction.

I The Problems of an Inadequate Framework

The supposed insignificance of ideology with respect to the behaviour of our major parties is not due so much to the convincing arguments brought forth by analysts, but is rather due to their application of a simplistic and reductionist methodology--all, of course, in the name of better scientific understanding. As one set of authors explained the matter:

One of the fundamental principles of the social sciences is that to understand humanity requires the analysis of behaviour rather than merely intention or purpose. Accordingly, the chapters on party policy assess party dispositions wherever possible on the basis of actual behaviour rather than promises or declarations of intent.⁴

*Witness this tendency in Winn and McMenemy.

⁴Ibid., p. 191.

To assert that we need to look at actual behavior in order properly to understand political phenomena is to assert an obvious truism. However, to concentrate on behaviour alone and to neglect the importance of intent is to leave us with only a partial understanding at best. In an analysis of political phenomena it is important that one distinguish between behaviour*, the consequences of behaviour, and the causes of behaviour. The failure to distinguish between behaviour and its consequences can lead to a variety of unfortunate errors in political analysis.

Let us consider the following examples by way of illustration:

1) Politician A introduces policies which he claims will give more equal distribution of the national wealth but which he knows in fact will give extra benefits to the wealthy.

2) Politician B introduces policies which he claims and believes will give a more equal distribution of the national wealth but which in fact will give extra benefits to the wealthy.

3) Politician C introduces policies which he claims and believes will make everyone wealthier, but in achieving its aims it also turns out that while it doubles the wealth

*By behaviour we do not here mean the routinized performance of certain activities or only the overtly observable "activities" of individuals but rather the active attempt, in terms of the union between conscious design and activity, to fulfill certain goals.

of those with a little, it trebles the wealth of those with a lot.

How will the reductionist type of model deal with these? Clearly, if it concentrates on behaviour alone, ignoring intention, it is unable to distinguish between the first two examples. It either assumes that all political behaviour is corrupt or is unable to distinguish corruption from incapacity. Behaviouralists are wont to tell us that we have no means of establishing a person's real intention and we must, therefore, disregard it, but this implies only that we cannot know what it is important to know if we are to have any real understanding at all. On above examples (1) and (2) the "reductionist" will have to conclude that both are examples of the class bias of the politicians, which may not be the case. However, one should note that in (1) the class bias of the politician may indeed be affecting his motive or intent, while in (2) the class bias may come to be reflected in the politician's mistaken belief, that is, his class bias distorts his perception of reality even when his intentions are egalitarian. In the second instance, though, the matter is not a foregone conclusion and would require demonstration. It would be quite possible for a socialist politician, tied to the working class, to commit a similar error. It is necessary to distinguish between the consequences and behaviour and the intended consequences of behaviour, and the behaviour itself. Again,

in the third example, it would be all too easy to conclude that the policy was an example of class bias if one were to concentrate on the outcome alone, without taking due account of the intent.

It is in instances such as these where the problem of interpretation again comes into play and where it is useful to provide for an analytic distinction between the deed and its character*. The latter necessarily involves an understanding which the description of overt behaviour alone can never give us. Here we are dealing with the anticipated results of the deed and not only the deed itself, independent of any attribution of character. In order to come to terms with the intent of various actions or policies it is important to know the true "character" of the deed, and while this understanding is necessarily based upon information and detail it also requires a certain degree of interpretation. Indeed, two relevantly knowledgeable persons may come to somewhat divergent conclusions; what it is important to note is that there is no independent set of "methodological rules" which can easily be applied to arbitrate the problem for us.

While parties will understandably act in a pragmatic fashion we cannot reduce our understanding of party behaviour to notions of self-interest or class bias. It is all

*This problem is taken up in detail in chapter 4. See also, Roy Lawrence, Motive and Intention: An Essay in the Appreciation of Action (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972).

too easy to assume that whatever principle may be espoused at the moment will inevitably turn out to have been a strategic means toward that greater end--electoral success. The overemphasis of the importance of vote maximization as a determinant of party behaviour may in large part be due to the error, on the part of analysts, of assuming "parlour-game" rationality on the part of political actors. We do not here wish to deny the fact that party ideology is at times modified to gain votes, for as Seliger notes, "the will of the voters must count, if the system is to be democratic", but it is surely equally rational for politicians to try to persuade voters to support certain policy orientations and/or to remain faithful to convictions traditionally upheld by a party, even if thereby electoral success is imperilled".⁵

The modification of policy does not necessarily rule out the influence of philosophy on political behaviour. The standards of vote-maximization or "bare goal achievement" are not adequate criteria of rationality in politics. As Seliger notes:

Parlour games are played for fun and to win. Politics cannot be reduced to that. In adhering to his Vietnam policy, President Johnson did what he thought was right morally and strategically, knowing full well that not only he himself but his party too might have to pay for the consequences. Very much the same applied to Senator Goldwater and many activists

⁵M. Seliger, Ideology and Politics (New York: The Free Press, 1976), p. 253.

who worked for him in 1964. Senator Eugene McCarthy also fought for his beliefs without much illusion about getting the Democratic nomination in 1968. Since such behaviour is irrational by the standard of the pay-off, the standard is insufficient as the criterion of rationality in politics. Bare goal-achievement is a wider but hardly more satisfactory criterion, since by that standard Hitler's and Stalin's elimination of their real and imaginary adversaries would qualify as the height of 'pure rationality'...In short it seems highly unrealistic to consider purposes other than winning the election only as means.⁶

Because of the undue stress on the role of "interests" and "vote-getting" many analysts come to believe that philosophy has little role to play in politics. However, politics also involves the formulation of policies and policies in turn cannot be simply reduced to the on-going pursuit of self-interest. Not all policies are simply reactive and appeasement oriented. Many policies originate from the belief that there are certain problems within the system which need to be alleviated and a policy then necessarily comes to involve a prescriptive element. Policies are often programmes of intention--that which we would like to see come about. Though always subject to and conditioned by facts or constraints they nevertheless involve shaping the environment to some extent. We should therefore have to agree with Seliger when he argues that:

⁶Ibid., p. 254.

...insofar as politics implies the pursuit of policy, i.e. a somehow interconnected sequence of projects of action--there is no politics without ideology.

Policies do not simply become the expression of self-interest for somewhere along the line they come to be related "to ideals that embody moral judgements in favour of the justification, emendation or condemnation of a given order. Rational justifications touch at some point or other on such judgements."⁸ Unless we were to opt for a completely instrumental or utilitarian rationality we would have to allow for the role of substantive values in policy. Wilhelm Reiker offers us such an instrumental definition of rationality when he tells us:

Given a social situation in which exist two alternative courses of action leading to different outcomes and assuming that participants can order these outcomes on a subjective scale of preference each participant will choose the alternative leading to the more preferred outcome.⁹

According to Jurg Steiner, one of the many behaviouralist social scientists who have adopted this utilitarian approach, "this definition of rationality simply asserts that if a

⁷ Ibid., p. 99.

⁸ Ibid., p. 99.

⁹ W. Reiker, The Theory of Coalitions (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 18-19.

person can decide what action will suit him best, then he will choose that action".¹⁰

Yet there are two fundamental problems with such a definition. First, it is perhaps tautological. Whatever is chosen is whatever is preferred is by uninformative definition what is rational. In other words, the proposition tells us nothing. Second, it is reductionist. Did Reiker come to his definition of rationality rationally; i.e. did he choose "the alternative leading to the more preferred outcome"? In which case, his definition tells us something about Reiker's preferences but nothing about rationality. Or was he attempting rationally to discover something about rationality? In which case, his definition is patently false since it allows us no criteria for judging his definition.

Winn and McMenemy find difficulty in identifying the philosophies of our parties. As Winn notes in his chapter on "Bicultural Policy":

Although the expressed attitudes of parties are readily available in documents and in the press, it is nevertheless a complex matter to identify their fundamental attitudes and dispositions. First, because of the flexibility and pragmatism of the parties, individual party declarations may reflect more closely specific circumstances than long-term preferences. Secondly, the

¹⁰ J. Steiner, Amicable Agreement Versus Majority Rule: Conflict Resolution in Switzerland (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974), p. 305. Italics added.

expressed opinions of a party may not coincide perfectly with its policies while in office. If governmental policies were influenced only by ministerial preferences, then policies would be a better gauge of essential party attitudes than declared intentions.¹¹

The dilemma here expressed may be solved by applying a more sophisticated notion of ideology than the principle authors'. One does not need ideological purism or single-minded behaviour in order to allow for the influence of ideas on behaviour. In fact the necessity of having to deal with immediate concrete problems will often require a divergence from "fundamental principles"; and opposing parties with conflicting ideologies may often come to agreement on the means for alleviating problems. One may even come to agreement on certain matters of principle from different ideological perspectives. Politics is often a matter of balancing competing and contradictory goods, a qualitatively different activity from that of mere interest mediation, and one's principles, therefore, cannot be implemented in a simple "rational a priori" manner. It is impossible to ultimately and finally enforce any one particular value or set of goods for they will always come into contradiction with other, and often equally worthy, goods. Though decision-theorists rightly make much of the importance of the decision context and environmental constraint, the fact that policies are to a large extent a

¹¹Winn and McMenemy, pp. 192-193.

response to and are constrained by these conditions does not mean that they are simply "reactive". Nor does it follow that because of these constraints and limitations that philosophy does not have some share in influencing the options chosen.

II The Fundamental and Operative Aspects of Ideology

The use of similar means by competing and ideologically different parties is also not a sign for the coming of the "end of ideology". Party politics may in fact be becoming more multi-ideological and ideologies themselves may be exhibiting a form of "ideological pluralism" not shown before. Again, according to Seliger, the "overlapping of ideologies is inevitable on both the theoretical and the practical levels because belief in different values or different admixtures of values admits of the use of similar means."¹² The convergence between parties is not so much evidence of the declining role of ideology but rather of the fact that "the management of any polity demands adherence to some identical principles of organization".

As Seliger goes on to note:

"...irrespective of the diverging fundamental ideological principles on which an industrial economy is based, production by machines coincides in its management with bureaucratization on the basis of the local concentration of

¹²Seliger, pp. 102-103.

processes of production and working discipline. It follows that, if ways and means of organization denote the implements of the ideological structure, as an action-oriented system of thought, some of these implements for coping with basic social needs are ideologically neutral, insofar as any ideology has to care for those needs and cannot do so in greatly diverse ways. The justification of such implements, therefore, is largely based on the relatively objective description and analysis of needs and circumstances.¹³

However, the neutrality of what may seem to be rather innocuous measures or forms of legislation cannot be guaranteed indefinitely--particularly when it comes time for their adjustment or change. It is at this moment when they come to be linked with, or viewed in light of, more fundamental principles. As Seliger argues, "at some point such laws and the functioning of organization reflect the specific value-judgements of political belief systems, or compromises over them." Thus, even "minor" legislative adjustments will come eventually to bear on more fundamental issues and constitutive principles. If they in any way reflect "fundamental value orientations" they will necessarily bear on the more fundamental issues of "constitutional provisions that either guarantee, abolish or limit property rights, personal liberties, the right of association...and so on".¹⁴

¹³Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 104.

Policy decisions then can never be purely "technical" in the rational instrumental sense. The eventual outcome will be the result of both "normative" and "technical" prescription. The two coming to be necessarily linked in any political decision.

...patterns of decision about policies are the result of ends-means calculations in terms of both norms of justice, the public good and so forth, and of norms of expediency, prudence and efficiency. In ideologies, both kinds of 'ought' tend to take on the forms of prescriptions. The latter kind, here briefly called technical prescriptions, are more or less directly derived from facts, i.e. from their descriptive and classificatory as well as from their analytical and causal perception and preservation. Moral norms and prescriptions are also predicated on the description and analysis of facts, but they present a value judgement on them which may run counter to and prevail over the technical norms.¹⁵

In the reality of policy formulation it is impossible to be an ideological purist for, once one attempts to put thought into action, a tension will ensue between the "possible" and the fundamental principles adhered to. These principles will, of course, inform the policy choice but they will also, more often than not, have to be diluted. Once principle is put into action an ideology will develop a second dimension--the "operative", as Seliger calls it. Thus, one has on the one hand the fundamental principles

¹⁵Ibid., p. 104.

which "determine the final goals and the grand vistas in which they will be realized" and which stand prior to and above the second which involves "the principles which actually underlie policies and are invoked to justify them". In this second or "operative dimension" the rule of fundamental principle will give way to, or be softened by, the consideration of expediency:

...in the justification of policy in the operative dimension, description and analysis exert greater influence through the enhanced consideration paid to the norms of expediency, prudence and efficiency, i.e. to technical prescriptions, which share in, or even replace, the centrality accorded to moral prescriptions in fundamental ideology.¹⁶

Though the dilution of fundamental principles is inevitable when dealing with concrete social problems, the implementation of policies, and vote getting there is a limit to this process. That is, even though the problem of attracting uncommitted votes and swinging the votes of others is often touted as one of the major reasons for the dilution of fundamentals this process may equally help in preventing it. As Seliger argues, voters "must also be able to distinguish between the parties, if we do not want to presuppose that entirely irrational loyalty determines all voting."¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 244.

What Seliger sees in Western societies is not so much the absence of ideology from politics but rather a more general agreement among the parties as to what the goals of social policy should be; the goals themselves often being arrived at from differing ideological stances. What he in effect sees emerging is an increasing tension between the fundamental and operative ideologies within the particular parties themselves rather than between only the fundamentals of the different parties which in fact seem to be increasingly converging.

Given that Western societies' goals of social policy once hotly disputed have become widely accepted in practice, so politics have become more concerned with the technicalities and intricacies of economic growth, and the differences between the policies carried out by different parties have been reduced. Through the overlapping of policy orientations and the resultant approximation of operative ideologies, the inter-dimensional relationships of various party ideologies become connected with another. When the differences between the actual contents of the operative ideologies of different parties tend to decrease, the tension within each party between its operative ideology and its unchanged fundamental principles increases. As long as it does not cause a change of fundamentals and amount to either less or more than is demanded by fundamentals, the approximation between parties in the operative dimension is matched by a growing disparity between the two dimensions of each party's ideology.¹⁸

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 265.

However, although there may be convergence between both levels this does not and cannot spell the eventual end of ideology in politics. As long as one is dealing with political matters ideology, because of the nature of the questions and problems involved, will necessarily play a significant role. This latter point is properly illustrated in Seliger's definition of an ideology, as noted earlier:

An ideology is a belief system by virtue of being designed to serve on a relatively permanent basis a group of people to justify in reliance on moral norms and a modicum of factual evidence and self-consciously rational coherence the legitimacy of the implements and technical prescriptions which are to ensure concerted action for the preservation, reform, destruction or reconstruction of a given order.¹⁹

Even in the case of the Marxist for whom economics becomes the all important factor in the determination of social organization and policy there is a recognition that politics is, and must be, more than the simple pursuit of particular interests or the protection of economic privilege.

As Gramsci notes:

Politics becomes permanent action and gives birth to permanent organizations precisely insofar as it defines itself with economics. But it is also distinct from it, which is why one may speak separately of economics and politics, and speak of "political passion" as of an immediate impulse to action which is born on the "permanent and organic" terrain of economic life but which transcends it, bringing into play emotions and

¹⁹Ibid., p. 120.

aspirations in whose incandescent atmosphere even calculations involving the individual human life itself obey different laws from those of individual profit.²⁰

For Gramsci, politics is not simply the mutual adjustment or arbitration of interests with one's selfish interests as the dominant guide to action. Nor is politics only the reflection of the existent, but rather involves the competition between competing "goods" or "oughts". The ought becomes a matter of real and concrete concern and is itself inseparable from any political action. Marxism or any other form of ideological or political commitment becomes a conscious value choice.

The active politician is a creator, an initiator; but he neither creates from nothing nor does he move in the turbid void of his own desires and dreams. He bases himself on effective reality, but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile, or is it not rather a relation of forces in continuous motion and shift of equilibrium? If one applies one's will to the creation of a new equilibrium among the forces which really exist and are operative--basing oneself on the particular force which one believes to be progressive and strengthening it to help it to victory--one still moves on the terrain of effective reality, but does so in order to dominate and transcend it (or to contribute to this). What "ought to be" is therefore concrete; indeed it is the only reality and historicist interpretation of reality, it alone is history

²⁰ A. Gramsci, "The Modern Prince", in Prison Notebooks (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 140.

in the making and philosophy in the making, it alone is politics.²¹

If our attachment to a particular philosophy or programme of political action can be a matter of conscious value-choice then so can "policy". However, the actual reason for the commitment, perhaps due to the fact that political or intellectual conviction involves the gentle art of persuasion, is not always easy to determine. The problem with the role of ideas is that it is precisely the unpredictable variable and therefore not subject to the traditional scientific method. We cannot reduce our ideas to economic or psychological categories and therefore the role of ideas becomes, in a sense, a residual category. The difficulty in dealing with this category successfully then perhaps lies in the fact that it is a non-predictable, perhaps unknowable except as a residual, variable. Thus, when our explanatory models are unable satisfactorily to predict or account for a particular occurrence it is perhaps due to the fact that it is in these instances where ideas have played an especially important role. And where the occurrences can be fully accounted for by traditional variables and techniques it will have been of less consequence.

Paul Lazarsfeld once described sociology as a "residuary legatee"²² what was left after various specializations had

²¹Ibid., p. 172.

²²P. Lazarsfeld, Main Trends of Research in the Social and Human Sciences (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), p. 1.

been spun off from the general body of knowledge of man. Similarly, and historically more accurately, Aristotle once described politics as "the master science"²³ and from the end of the fifth century B.C. its sub-disciplines began to emerge. W. J. M. Mackenzie has claimed that "what (Aristotle) meant by 'politics' was something wider than political science as now pursued; perhaps nothing less than the comprehensive study of man in his moral and social relations".²⁴

For Aristotle, man is a social and political animal, as zoon politikon is now usually translated. But he is also, for Aristotle, much more: he is an ethical animal.

What distinguishes man in degree from the beast is his use of hands, his use of choice and the numerous wants with which nature burdens him, without the corresponding capacity to satisfy those wants. But what distinguishes man in kind from the beasts is his capacity for self-reflection, his capacity to judge his values. The "residual category" of man's ideas is the category which makes the study of man a human rather than a zoological study. The fact that there is a residual category when all the "scientific" work has been done the indication that what is left is the truly human. If we are to understand man qua man rather than qua animal then it is the residual category which we must study.

²³Politics, 1282b, 1.16.

²⁴W. J. Mackenzie, The Study of Political Science Today (London: Macmillan, 1971), p. 11.

Yet our discipline's unhappy divorce between normative theory and the study of political systems has resulted in a sophisticated theory of man's moral relations without its having much affect on the study of man as a political being.

The problem to which our analysis of reductionism points is one which is pervasive throughout the discipline. As already noted, a good deal of the problem stems from the ontological assumptions concerning the nature of man that behavioural social scientists are wont to make. It is these assumptions which colour their epistemology and ultimately also limit their scope of investigation. A corollary of this problem is the behaviouralist's failure to distinguish between activity and process, which in turn leads to a further distinction between a discipline and a science. As Castell has cogently argued:

...different disciplines, such as philosophy or history or economics, have different modes of activity for the subject matter. A discipline, like a science, is a "body of systematic and orderly thinking about a determinate subject matter". This much they have in common. But a discipline is a body of systematic and orderly thinking about some activity, whereas a science is a body of systematic and orderly thinking about some process.²⁵

The kinds of questions disciplines ask about activities will differ from those questions sciences ask about processes. Both produce knowledge and in each case this knowledge may increase our power to control.

²⁵Castell, p. 30.

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The disciplines increase our self-knowledge concerning our own activities or, if used pedagogically, enable us to increase another person's self-knowledge concerning his activities. The knowledge the sciences can give can be used to increase our control over processes. Such knowledge is technical, rather than rational; it is knowledge of techne rather than knowledge of reasons. There is technical facility in the handling of process, but there is no insight into reasons, because there are no reasons for what occurs as process.²⁶

The danger is that in wanting to be scientific in one's study of human behaviour one may reduce human activity to process and the thinking individual to nothing more than independently propelled matter. That is, whereas one can correctly speak of the behaviour of planets or the neuro-physiological makeup of the individual as process, meaningful human behaviour is activity. Activity is purposive and critical, it is reasoned behaviour involving judgement with reference to criteria; and along with these considerations activity is also subject to education and persuasion. By concentrating solely on overt behaviour on the one hand and in his attempt to find clear empirical referents and causal laws on the other, the behavioural analyst may inadvertently misconstrue activity for, or reduce it to, process. In fact, once having constituted his ontological object domain the conclusion is all but foregone. Human activities are performed whereas processes are discovered; and insofar as man is a rational animal capable of reason

²⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

he cannot be understood in the same manner as natural phenomena which can only be reasoned about. It is because of this necessary distinction that the tools of the natural sciences will never be sufficient for a proper understanding and explanation of human behaviour. Reducing human activity to process is as unacceptable to the social analyst as personifying nature is to the natural scientist. If we reduce activity to process we may be wont to view man solely as the product of independent socio-psychological processes; but once we recognize the error and allow for intention, ideology and political philosophy, we will require a vocabulary and method beyond that which the behaviouralist is willing to grant.

CHAPTER III

SYSTEMS AND INTENT

In the first two chapters we presented some of the reasons for the neglect of "intention" in explanations of political behaviour. Having done this we must now deal with the problem of intent, as an explanatory category, in more detail and situate it in a general theory of action. The methodological problem of discovering intent, as such, will be approached from the perspective of "interpretive understanding"; while the importance of the role of intent in action will be pursued via an examination and reinterpretation of some of the principle tenets of systems theory. With respect to the latter we will show how the recent re-evaluation of systems theory by Professor N. Nyiri helps to shed some interesting light on the problem under consideration. That is, Nyiri, as opposed to those in the mainstream of systems thinking, can help in providing us with a strong argument for the necessity of taking intention into account in our explanations of political behaviour. Unfortunately his argument does not go far enough in terms of an explication of the essentials of the notion of action nor does it satisfactorily solve the methodological problems of discovering intent itself. However, the

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argument, especially when contrasted to others in the field, does serve as a useful springboard for our discussion.

I General Systems Theory

The language of systems has long been part of our discipline and one might readily agree with Herbert Spiro when he contends that "...anyone who attempts to study politics scientifically must at least implicitly think of politics as though it were functioning as some sort of system".¹ Spiro is here pointing to the notion that one can best discern the relationships between political variables and between political and non-political variables via the application of the categories of systems theory.

Generally, the development of GST stemmed from the hope that one could arrive at some method whereby principles from one field could be transferred to another, thereby avoiding any unnecessary duplication in the discovery of the same principles in differing areas of investigation.² The ultimate hope was one of constructing a general theory capable of cutting across discipline boundaries and thereby ending the "encapsulating isolation of academics working in varying disciplines". The evolution of modern science and the concomittent discoveries of similar problems and

¹H. Spiro, "An Evaluation of Systems Theory", in Charlesworth (edit.) Contemporary Political Analysis (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 164.

²L. V. Bertalanffy, "An Outline of General Systems Theory", The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, Vol. 1 No. 2 (1950), p. 142.

conceptions in different fields meant, at least initially, that the prospects for such a theoretical development were quite good.³ What ensued was that, for the systems analyst, the mechanistic approach to scientific investigation came to be replaced by the concept of wholeness. Whereas the mechanistic approach held that certain aspects of a particular process had to be investigated in isolation if one were to properly understand it, the organismic conceptions of the systems analyst hold that it is necessary to investigate not only parts "...but also relations of organization resulting from a dynamic interaction and manifesting themselves by the difference in behaviour of parts in isolation and in the whole organism".⁴ The discovery of formally identical or isomorphic laws in various disciplines then became one of the fundamental aims of systems theory, and these isomorphies are to be found where general principles regarding phenomena can be described only in ordinary language or where they can be formulated in mathematical terms.⁵

Ludwig von Bertalanffy has identified three basic reasons for the existence of these isomorphies, the first centering on the fact that we have only a limited number of conceptual schemes, at any given time, with which to

³L. V. Bertalanffy, "The Theory of Open Systems in Physics and Biology", Science, Vol. III, No. 2827 (Jan. 1950), p. 30.

⁴Bertalanffy, "An Outline of General Systems Theory", pp. 134-135. S

⁵Ibid., pp. 136-137.

investigate our subject matter. Thus, "...while it is easy to write down any complicated differential equation yet even innocent-looking expressions may be hard to solve, or give, cumbersome solutions". Therefore, since the "number of simple differential equations which are available and which will be applied to describe natural phenomena is limited, it is little wonder that laws identical in structure will appear in intrinsically different fields..." This structure holds as well for those statements formulated in ordinary language. The second reason for these isomorphies is that the world is of such a nature that it allows for the application of intellectual constructions. And finally one need recognize that laws of the kind here considered are characterized by the fact that "...they hold generally for certain classes of complexes or systems, irrespective of the special kind of entities involved".⁶

Thus, according to Bertalanffy, there exist general system laws which apply to any system of a certain type, irrespective of the particular properties of the system or the elements involved; and general systems theory becomes defined as a "...logico-mathematical field, the subject matter of which is the formulation and deduction of those principles which are valid for 'systems' in general". Systems theory, then, is in itself purely formal but claims to be applicable to all sciences concerned with systems.

⁶Ibid., pp. 136-137.

insofar as there exist principles which "apply to systems in general, whatever the nature of their component elements or the relations or 'forces' between them".⁷

From the systems perspective the world shows a structural uniformity which manifests itself by isomorphic traces of order in its different levels or realms. And reality, in turn, comes to be viewed as a "tremendous hierarchical order of organized entities, leading in a superposition of many levels, from physical and chemical to biological and sociological systems". The unity of science is here achieved not by a "utopian reduction of all sciences to physics and chemistry", but by the structural uniformities of the different levels of reality. Given these structural similarities it is also hoped by the adherents of this school that even the gap between the natural and social sciences can be narrowed,⁸ though the two can never be collapsed nor brought under the exclusive domain of one method.

In his work Bertalanffy quite rightly recognizes^o the all important ontological distinctions between the human and natural (including animal) worlds. One of the basic errors of many theories, though the theories themselves may be opposed in other essentials, is their acceptance of

⁷ Ibid., p. 139.

⁸ L. Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 59-61.

the "robot model of human behaviour". Opposed to this notion we are offered that of the "active organism"--that is, a notion of man as creator, and not simply receptor, of his environment. As a consequence Bertalanffy comes to reject the explicit, and often implicit, standard assumptions of much of contemporary social science. Under attack come such notions as (a) the stimulus-response scheme of human learning and motivation, (b) environmentalism, (c) the preference or assumed naturalness of equilibrium, and (d) the principle of economy or the belief that behaviour should be "carried through in the most economic way". These notions are the result not merely of epistemological considerations but are rather also the "expression and motor force of the zeitgeist of a mechanized and commercialized society", in which psychology through its mechanized learning, advertising techniques, motivation research and brainwashing" oft becomes little more than the "handmaiden of pecuniary and political interests".⁹

Upon brief reflection the spuriousness of the above assumptions becomes quickly evident. Given its premises the S-R scheme for the explanation of behaviour cannot adequately treat realms of spontaneous activity "such as play, exploratory behaviour or any form of creative activity". Environmentalism comes to be refuted by the sole fact that

⁹L. V. Bertalanffy, General System Theory (New York: George Brazillier, 1968), pp. 188-191.

"not even fruit flies or Pavlovian dogs are equal" which says little for Watson's well known boast concerning the conditioning power of a controlled environment.* Nor can life as such be correctly viewed as the "maintenance or restoration of equilibrium", for it consists in precisely the opposite. Insofar as the organism is an open system it seeks to maintain disequilibria, for equilibrium would mean "death and consequent decay". Thus, to ensure psychological health requires not only the release of tension but also its building up. Stress then comes to function in a dual capacity as a danger to life which needs to be "controlled and neutralized by adaptive mechanisms" on the one hand, and a spur to higher culture on the other. What we come to recognize is that there is a large gamut of human activity that cannot be accounted for by the precepts of utility or adaptation. Indeed, one can rightly argue that any cultural achievement has nothing to do with these precepts. As Bertalanffy quite rightly jests:

Michelangelo, implementing the precepts of psychology, should have followed his father's request and gone into the wool trade, thus sparing himself lifelong anguish although leaving the Sistine Chapel unadorned.¹⁰

*Give me a bunch of kids, (said the founder of behaviourism) taken as they come--and I will make them doctors, lawyers, merchant men, beggars and thieves, solely by the power of conditioning. (See Bertalanffy, *Ibid.*, p. 189).

¹⁰ Bertalanffy, General Systems Theory, p. 192.

By replacing the robot image of man with that of "system" Bertalanffy wants to stress the creative side of human activity. As a consequence one is now able to also emphasize immanent activity as opposed to outer-directed re-activity and thereby recognize the "specificity of human culture" as compared with "animal behaviour". From the perspective of General Systems Theory man can then not be properly understood if viewed as a "passive receiver of stimuli coming from an external world", for, in a very real sense, man "creates his universe". Individuals come to occupy and interact with not only a physical environment, as is the case with animals, but are also part of that "man-made universe called culture". It is within this realm that man comes to be confronted with a reality different from that of his physical world--namely, the universe of symbols. This latter reality comes to govern all save man's most basic needs.¹¹

We will have occasion to discuss the importance of the role of symbols later in the chapter. For the moment, however, it is important to note that Bertalanffy's argument permits an important methodological consideration. Through his critical appreciation of the ontological problem involved, when dealing with human action, he opens the way for the employment both of concepts of "form" and "causality";

¹¹Ibid., pp. 194-197.

recognizing that one need not be sacrificed at the expense of the other. This is particularly important when applying systems theory to the humanities, for it is here where strictly causal explanations, or attempts thereof, often prove to be severely limiting. Upon examining the virtues of structural and causal thinking it becomes apparent that a proper study of the humanities cannot be achieved without the concept of form. "In linguistics, art criticism, and the study of religion, the very things we are trying to understand are specific forms, forms which we must understand purely in themselves before we can possibly attempt to derive them from the causes".¹²

One must be careful not to confuse the "causal relations of the genesis of culture" with the study of culture because the former is only a "single dimension of the science of cultural events". We must also realize that before we can provide for the causal relations between particular cultural phenomena we must first have an overall view of the achievements of the culture as a whole--of what it is that it has to say to us. According to Cassirer such a study and explanation involves one in a rather difficult yet necessary hermeneutic. It is only after having performed this complex task that one can advance to questions concerning the nature and function of the distinct forms of

¹²E. Cassirer, The Logic of the Humanities (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 59-61.

the culture and then move to questions of the relations of these forms to each other. And, once having completed such a structural analysis we can finally proceed to questions concerning the origin of the distinct cultural forms, or to what Cassirer refers to as "act-analysis":

This is not a question as to the achievements, the works of culture; nor is it a question as to the general forms in which they present themselves to us. Our question concerns the mental processes from which they have come into being and whose product they are. What we are looking for here is for example, the character of that "consciousness of symbols" which makes itself known in the act of human speech; we are inquiring into the manner and orientation of the building of representations, feelings, fantasies, and beliefs in which art, myth, and religion have their being.¹³

The problem here discussed can be somewhat highlighted when trying to provide for a strictly causal explanation of the origin of that complex yet everyday phenomenon 'language'. What often takes place in this instance is that the category of cause and effect is applied to the form as such rather than to the phenomena within the specific form and when this is done the notion of cause and effect as an explanatory device leaves us somewhat at a loss. For example, it was long hoped that one would be able to provide a strictly causal explanation of the origin of language by viewing it as having developed from nature through a variety of intermediary stages: "before it could be explained as a

¹³Ibid., pp. 173-174.

mental process it would have to be explained as an organic process". However, it soon became evident that any causal explanation would be severely limited. When the attempt was made to ground the origin of language in the sensation of sound it remained to be explained just how the cry became a word, that is, how it came to have "the power of objective reference". And when the earliest source of spoken words was considered to have been "based on imitation of sounds" one still had the origin of the sentence left unexplained. What quickly becomes apparent is that "each linguistic phenomenon, however primitive, already contains the whole of language within itself inasmuch as each sentence encloses the function of 'signification' and 'meaning' within itself".¹⁴

A strictly causal explanation, in this instance, would be a limited, if not impossible, one and one comes to recognize that the function of speech, just as that of art, religion, etc., is and remains an Urphänomen (an irreducible fact)...¹⁵ This does not mean that we always need abandon a causal analysis in favour of a structural one, it is simply to assert that each be given its proper place and that the one cannot be reduced to the other.

Once we have ascertained the "essence" of language by means of the method of form-analysis, we must then attempt to find

¹⁴Ibid., p. 175.

out, by way of causal knowledge...
 just how it is that this essence
 develops and transmutes itself.
 In doing so we are wholly concerned
 with a case of pure becoming; but
 this becoming remains within the
 determinate frame of being; for
 always it remains within that
 "structure" which is language.¹⁵

Again, we here come to a conclusion reached earlier--
 namely that no one particular method can be applied success-
 fully to the study of all problems.

II Some Recent Applications of GST

What then interests us here is the extent to which
 systems theory, as traditionally expounded and applied, can
 help us in understanding the human condition. We will
 explore its possibilities via an examination of three
 recent works in the field; the first two of which represent
 a rather traditional and limited prospect for systems theory.

In one of his more recent articles, "Framework for a
 General Systems Theory of World Order",¹⁶ Professor Erwin
 Laszlo provides us with some interesting, though not par-
 ticularly novel, insights into the possibilities of systems
 theory. If Laszlo's argument suffers from one particular
 weakness it is the argument's explanatory power. Indeed,
 it is at times difficult to discern precisely what it is
 that the article is trying to say or explain. We do not

¹⁵Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁶E. Laszlo, "Framework for a General Systems Theory
 of World Order" in Nyiri and Preece (eds.), Unity in Diversity.

wish to suggest that explanation is, or should be, the sole function of theory; for it clearly is not. Yet, though theories perform a variety of other functions--the organization of hypotheses, the derivation of new propositions, the prediction of future events, an accurate description (or so one hopes) of the environment--it is on the basis of their explanatory power that they will ultimately be judged. Unfortunately, for Laszlo, his schema does not come very close to fulfilling the requirements of a good theory--unless, of course, speculation be elevated to the status of theory. If we view theories as a set of logically connected propositions from which we can derive testable consequences, Laszlo's schema leaves us somewhat in the lurch.

In fact Eugene Meehan's rather standard criticism of systems theory is quite applicable in the present case. Meehan argues that "systems theory", as traditionally expounded in the social sciences, is not a theory at all: it is rather an approach or a "suggested framework" for the investigation of social phenomena.

Systems theory, ¹⁷ implies no more than the view that society is best investigated within a framework provided by a "system", nominally defined.

However, although it is easy enough to level a variety of standard criticisms at Laszlo--including the ambiguity of

¹⁷E. Meehan, The Theory and Method of Political Analysis (Illinois, The Dorsey Press, 1965), p. 147.

the concept of system, the problem of adequately defining and establishing system boundaries, the difficulty of merely describing the state of a particular system, etc.-- there are other more interesting questions and dilemmas raised by the argument.

Laszlo begins by rejecting the notion that societies are the product of a social contract brought about by the coming together of a number of independent "wills". Rather than being peculiar unto itself society shares some of the same attributes of other complex highly organized systems-- hardly a revelation, and one that we need not wish to necessarily contradict. However, once having rejected the sui generis nature of society Laszlo finds it somewhat difficult to explain just how society does develop and what the roles of concrete individuals are with respect to that development. Laszlo's system seems to have some sort of purpose--tautologically defined as self-maintenance. But what of the purposivity and intentions of its active creative components, human individuals? Given the picture that Laszlo paints man seems to have little influence in determining his destiny. Yet at the same time it is our short sightedness, in terms of an overidentification with and perpetuation of the nation state, that prevents the development of a stable world order and peace. A peace which it is assumed can only be brought about with the coming into being of supra-national organizations. On the

one hand progress takes place according to inevitable laws and on the other humans, if only they were not so short sighted, could provide for a better world--somewhat of a contradiction.

Laszlo tells us that the notion of the nation state is a "recalcitrant and totally inadequate concept". Is he suggesting that human ingenuity may perhaps come up with a better blue print for world order? If he is, then the 'inevitability' of progress is subject to conscious directional guidance; and if this is so then should we not pay careful attention to the intentions of those drawing the blueprints. And if this sort of activity is possible now was it not also possible in the past?

Also, insofar as the author sees the inevitable growth of the nation-state system into a supra-national system, he pays little, if any, attention to the problem of disintegration. That is, there is no logical necessity for a world political order to be a stable and perpetual one. According to the logic of systems theory itself this system too would inevitably decay. Unfortunately the points of growth and decay seem to be more easily established "after" than "before" the fact--which says little for the theory's predictive capacity.

Once having broken through some of the jargon, what Laszlo's "systems interpretation of sociocultural evolution" seems to be saying is that as one gets an increase in the social division of labour one necessarily develops a

concomittent set of complex institutions and values which help cope with new demands and strains. While Laszlo is able to tell us of the particular functions performed by a variety of variables he is not able, nor is there anything in his theory which would help us, to isolate the variable (or variables) performing the function at a given moment. Thus we are told that "in any complex sociocultural system there are sets of coexisting dynamics serving to maintain continuity by counterbalancing deviations from 'law and order'. There are institutional structures, value systems, as well as methods of persuasion and coercion, whereby the system seeks to reduce the effect of disturbance and return to its steady-state".¹⁸ Values may also aid in transforming a system and there is little in the theory which helps us in indicating which sets of values are pattern-maintaining and pattern transforming. The value of "individualism" or "individual rights", say, may at different moments, and depending upon the group which is seeking its realization, do both. And, insofar as the notion of steady state is not defined in a more substantive manner it is left open to arbitrary interpretation and we are left without any real idea of where it is that the system is moving to or where, on the basis of the logic of systems theory, it should be moving to.

¹⁸Laszlo, pp. 6-7.

Insofar as Laszlo rejects the sui generis concept of society as suffering from the defect of "abstract theory" he has only succeeded in pointing to a sin to which he himself ultimately succumbs. Had Laszlo distinguished between the categories of "form" and "cause-effect" he may have overcome some of his difficulties. We are told very little by the statement that:

...when we compare parts of the process that involve consciousness with those that do not, we find that what changes is the specific character of the emerging structures; but they continue to arise through mutual adaptation, competition, natural selection, and the symbiotic formation of superstructures. Whereas in the subconscious phases of the process energy transfers are the key agents of change, in phases where consciousness is already involved communication-flows (i.e. information super-imposed on low energy transfers) are the agency of interaction.¹⁹

Laszlo is here drawing an isomorphic relationship between the development of structuration in the biological and social realm. We can accept this as an interesting application of systems thinking but must then ask what does it really help us to understand. Does it help us to understand the all important function of language and other forms of socio-cultural interaction and development, or is it merely a simplistic reductionist argument trying to explain the origin of culture and society? What in effect is being done is that the individual is somehow being taken

¹⁹Ibid., p. 4.

out of the creative process because Laszlo and his brand of systems theory cannot cope with him. The author seems to be explicitly tied to the Baconian dictum that one should conceive all aspects of reality "ex analogia universi" and not "ex analogia hominis".²⁰

If the above bears any resemblance to what Laszlo is in fact doing then he is, at times, acting according to those very reductionist principles against which systems theory was first established.

However, lest we be too unfair it might be worth noting that Laszlo is not alone in the world of pseudo-scientific jargon. A. M. Taylor, another of the contemporary gurus of the systems approach suffers from the same frailties-- unless, of course, we concede that the ability to bamboozle has become a prerequisite for profundity in the discipline. Thus, we are authoritatively told by Professor Taylor that:

...organisms with sensory-cognitive circuits are at the stage of manipulative equilibrium to the extent that they possess deviation-amplifying capabilities. Applying the principle of integrative levels, we can understand why adaptive, i.e. instinctive homeostatic equilibrium can be retained at the lower levels of an organism such as Homo, who, at the same time, functions consciously at the highest, or cognitive, level in order to adapt the external environment to fit his own constructs.²¹

²⁰ Quoted in Cassirer, An Essay on Man, p. 228.

²¹ A. M. Taylor, "General Systems and Their Value For Academic Research and Teaching", in Nyiri and Preece (edits.), Unity in Diversity, p. 35.

Would it not have been equally profound to have stated that when we enter the human realm we find that though man is bound by nature in his necessity to fulfill certain biological (bodily) needs and functions, he is also capable, because of his mental abilities, to escape nature and shape the environment in accordance with his particularly human needs and wishes. Needless to say, if we "translate" Taylor in this manner his insight here may be construed as rather mundane--which indeed it is.

We are also told that man is "self-consciously teleological and axiological", that he has purpose. Yet, in terms of the assumptions that are made concerning systems analysis we are not quite sure how to treat this assertion. That is, at what crucial points--ones that can be empirically established--does purposivity make for system change? To what extent is such a change the inevitable unfolding of the logic and growth of systems as such and to what extent is human purposivity instrumental in bringing about the change? With regard to these questions Taylor offers us very little in the way of guidance. His application of the concept of "system" as "a whole functioning as such by virtue of the relations of its parts", and his subsequent application of systems analysis to the evolution of geopolitical structures does little more than to reiterate the already well established--and well worn--precepts of structural functionalism.

The notion of systems analysis presented by these authors, rather than being a proper theory with a high degree of explanatory utility, simply leaves us with a variety of somewhat useful organizing concepts for delineating and categorizing certain types of phenomena and processes.

Whereas Taylor and Laszlo fall into the "traditional" mainstream of systems thinking--at least as applied to our discipline--Nyiri comes to break radically with that tradition. However, this break with the tradition of systems thinking was a positive step and has permitted the re-introduction of the individual and the notions of intent and purposivity; both of which are crucial for a proper understanding of human action.*

According to the argument presented, the crucial error of those working in the field has been that when dealing with the notion of system most, if not all, have confused "System" with "organizations" or organized entities. These latter are, in effect, the result of the application of system thinking, and therefore the notion of System must stand prior to these and be understood and examined accordingly. Nor does systems theory become an attempt

*Bertalanffy recognizes the importance of these notions in his discussion of the role of symbols but never develops them fully. See, L. V. Bertalanffy, "A Biologist Looks at Human Nature", in R. S. Daniel (edit.), Contemporary Readings in Psychology (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965), pp. 269-275.

to copy the methods of the natural sciences. Nyiri quite rightly recognizes the fact that different objects of investigation may very well require different methods and techniques. Again, our epistemologies are inevitably related and tied to our ontologies or ontological assumptions concerning the nature of our subject matter. In recognizing this fact Nyiri helps us to escape from the unnecessarily restrictive assumptions of the methodological and psychological reductionists one of whose major aims has been to import the methods and techniques of the natural sciences. This is not to say that these methods and techniques come to be neglected but only that they are assigned their proper place and role.

Thus, in order properly to come to grips with the notion of System, as such, we cannot look only to the "technical consequences of systems" but must also look to the antecedent conditions which give rise to these consequences. This necessitates our making a clear distinction between what constitutes "system" as opposed to organized entities. In line with this, System now comes to be viewed as a "plan or a method of acting" and the following precepts are offered for consideration.

1. The systems approach is not a scientific pretention in the social sciences that attempts to copy the method of inquiry employed by natural scientists. It is rather a method of understanding things and beings as the consequents of the idea that all

things and beings are the result of conscious design and planning and hence understandable only in terms of a Process of Creation.

2. "System" as such has been poorly defined due to a variety of traditional misconceptions. Therefore, system should be defined in terms of its antecedent conditions rather than by pointing to its technical consequences.

3. System-theorists must focus on the important functional pre-requisites of system, namely, (a) the necessity of organizing collective efforts in order to realize objectives in mind, and (b) the necessity of imposing restrictions on selected components within an organized entity to ensure their continued performance of functions.²²

The third statement highlights the role of "system" as a method of achieving intended or desired objectives. It recognizes the fact that the non-compulsive or free status of ontological entities cannot be permitted if man is to produce any sort of socially beneficial goods. The pre-systemic condition of existence is a non-productive one and it is only at that moment when men and women become components of social, political and economic organizations that socially beneficial goods can be produced. This in turn requires collective effort and the imposition of certain restrictions on human freedom. Individuals are incorporated into specific organizational frameworks and conditioned, often beforehand, to ensure their proper

²²Nyiri, "The Problematic Character of System", p. 68.

performance of assigned functions. Conditioning may take place via the rather general mechanism of socialization or through the more direct application of incentives, sanctions, deprivations or punishment. As the author goes on to note:

The very intent behind the legal system, factory rules and constitutional restraints is to eliminate individual freedom in order to create an organized existence in which the human element is compelled to act according to the rules laid down by those who conceived organized existence.²³

The implication here is that organized existence is not a matter of mere chance or the chance coming together of certain forces. Rather, it necessarily involves the intervention of conscious goal-directed individuals. This kind of organization became possible not with the simple emergence of the species but rather with the emergence and development of symbolism.

III Symbolism

The importance of the development of symbolism cannot be overstated.* It is with the development of symbolism that human history becomes truly possible. *Phylogenetic*

²³Ibid., pp. 68-69.

*For purposes of the present discussion we will accept Bertalanffy's general definition of Symbols. For Bertalanffy "Symbols can be defined as signs that are freely created, represent some content, and are transmitted by tradition". These characteristics are considered "necessary and sufficient to distinguish symbolism, and language in particular, from sub-human forms of behaviour". See Bertalanffy, "A Biologist Looks at Human Nature", p. 272.

evolution as found in the animal world is replaced by history "based on the tradition of symbols", rather than on mere hereditary changes. Thus, whereas phylogenetic evolution is possible only within "an evolutionary time scale" historic development, or human history based on the tradition of symbols, "has a time scale of generations".²⁴ A time scale which is increasingly becoming more narrow as our symbolic network becomes more complex and sophisticated--both in the scientific and general social realm. With respect to the latter we might note that as any polity develops a populace increasingly sophisticated in its political vocabulary and conceptual understanding of social relations the possibilities for social change increase dramatically. Initially, this involves the destruction of mythological thought and, over time, develops into the self-conscious critique of dominating ideologies.

Secondly, symbolism allows "reasoning" to replace the "corporeal trial and error found in subhuman nature". When confronted with a problem man does not engage in a series of disconnected attempts which eventually lead to a chance solution. Whereas this may be true of the rat caught in a maze, man, in a similar situation, would begin by conceptualizing the problem in terms of images of the things involved. Once having scanned a variety of possibilities he will base his actions on those which promise

²⁴Bertalanffy, "A Biologist Looks at Human Nature", p. 273.

optimum success. And finally, symbolism "makes true purposiveness possible". By purposive is here meant not simply the maintenance or re-establishment of order, as is the case with organisms, but true purposiveness in the Aristotelian sense.

Purposiveness in a metaphorical sense--that is, regulation of function in the way of maintenance, establishment, and re-establishment of organic order--is a general characteristic of life. It is based on such principles as equifinality of the steady state of the organism, homeostatic feedback mechanisms, learning by trial and error and conditioned reflex, selection in evolution, and so forth. But even in the most amazing phenomena of regulation and instinct we have no justification for and definite reason against the assumption that these actions are carried through with foresight of the goal. This true or Aristotelian purposiveness is unique to human behaviour and is based on the fact that the future goal is anticipated in thought and determines actual behaviour.²⁵

Symbols in isolation are of little use, except in so far as they may help refer to or identify certain objects or simple events. However, once combined according to established and agreed upon rules the system of symbols becomes a powerful mechanism; as illustrated in the case of language and the algorithm. With a suitably established choice of terms and presupposed rules we can "handle symbols as if they were the things they represent". The mental

²⁵Ibid., p. 273.

operation carried out comes to "correspond to that of the real course of events". This operation, especially when applied to nature, enables us to predict unknown facts and relationships and to control future events. In the case of man, that is, as a social force, it "creates the sanguinary course of history". Once established, the symbolic universe becomes independent of its creator, wins a life of its own and eventually even becomes more clever than the creator.

...the symbolic system of language, and particularly of the artificial languages called mathematics and science, develops into a colossal thinking machine. An operational command, a hypothesis with the necessary specifications, is fed in; the machine starts to run and eventually by virtue of pre-established rules of the connection of symbols, a solution drops out which was unforeseeable in the individual mind with its limited capacity.²⁶

²⁶Ibid., p. 274. It might do well to note that the notion here expressed by Bertalanffy may be seen as somewhat similar to Karl Popper's notion of the "third world". This is the world of those objective contents of thought resulting from scientific, literary, and artistic endeavours. Of particular importance are theoretical systems, problems, problem situations, critical judgements and the contents of books, journals and libraries. Much of what we find here may also be the "unintended by-product" of the various contents and arguments of this realm. This third world of Popper's is then considered to be "largely autonomous" and a "natural product of the human animal". Man continuously acts upon this realm and is, in turn, acted upon by it; and it is through this very interaction that "objective knowledge grows". The first world consists of physical objects or physical states while the second comprises states of consciousness. See, Karl Popper, Objective Knowledge, An Evolutionary Approach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 106-119.

While symbolism comes to provide for an effective "liberating" and "control" force--a liberating force in the sense of freeing man from the exigencies of his natural environment and a controlling force in that it permits him to subdue that environment to his needs and to organize his social world--symbolism also provides for the anxieties of the human condition. "The conceptual anticipation of future events", which makes true purposiveness possible, creates in man the fear of certain future states; particularly the fear of death, which is unknown to brutes. War itself becomes a human invention fought out not merely for survival but for the symbolically "charged values of religion, ideologies, economics, etc". Yet, at the same time we need recognize that truly rational human behaviour is behaviour "directed by the symbolic anticipation of a goal" and not behaviour according to conditioned reflex. It is this latter form of behaviour that is illicit through the effective use of propaganda and advertising. There is little new to propaganda and persuasion, but in the contemporary world it is applied in such a scientific and consistent manner that it results in an unprecedented degree of power for those doing the manipulating.²⁷ For a society to ensure a healthy state of affairs it must then permit for the revision of its symbolic code. Here we would agree with Whitehead when he warns that:

²⁷Ibid., p. 275.

The art of free society consists first in the maintenance of the symbolic code; and secondly in fearlessness of revision, to secure that the code serves those purposes which satisfy an enlightened reason. Those societies which cannot combine reverence to their symbols with freedom of revision, must ultimately decay either from anarchy, or from the slow atrophy of a life stifled by useless shadows.²⁸

Thus when dealing with human action we are dealing "with a broad range of potential criteria of action" and with the "possibility of self-conscious choice among sets of alternative criteria". Men and societies do not only respond to "perceptions of reality" or to stimuli coming from the environment, but also, and perhaps more importantly, they respond to the "extrapolation of reality into possible future states". If the choices we make depend, albeit not entirely, on the image of a desired future state of affairs then "the abstract ideology or the utopia expressed in concrete terms plays a critical role in defining social purpose and hence in conditioning social decisions".²⁹ As a consequence we must pay careful attention to the language with which these goals or "intentions" are presented. A proper understanding and interpretation of symbolic language is no mean task. It is not always easy

²⁸A. N. Whitehead, Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect (New York: Capricorn Books, 1959), p. 88.

²⁹C. R. Dechert, "The Development of Cybernetics", in Dechert (edit.), The Social Impact of Cybernetics (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), pp. 27-28.

to decipher exactly what is meant and political language in particular is often highly ambiguous. Yet, if dealt with properly it can aid us in the task of dealing with the problem of intention in political action. Given that social organization on an ever larger, and increasingly sophisticated, scale is a reality then the method of "issuing in planned organized entities" along with the reasons for their establishment also become of crucial importance. In order to deal with these latter problems then let us return to our re-evaluation of the notion of System.

Given the facts of ordinary everyday life established above we can concur with Nyiri's attempt to establish the notion of system as being a prerequisite for, and standing prior to, organized existence. The general assumption which emerges is that:

System is a method that issues in planned organized entities in which elements (parts or components) are organized and conditioned to realize a preselected objective through collective effort. Hence system is not an organized entity but a method for the effective realization of objectives by superimposing restraints and compulsions on ontological entities to do the will of those who conceive organized entities.³⁰

This notion falls in line with the argument for the necessity of systems thinking as presented by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. Though Bertalanffy does not draw the same

³⁰Nyiri, "The Problematic Character of System", p. 68.

analytical distinctions between system and organization that Nyiri does he nevertheless recognizes the need for, and the problem orientation of, systems theory in an increasingly complex world. For Bertalanffy the realization of objectives requires the systems approach. When an objective is given "the ways and means for its realization" require the systems specialist whose task it is to "consider alternative solutions and to choose those promising optimization at maximum efficiency and minimal cost in a tremendously complex network of interactions."³¹

By having equated, or confused, "system" with organized entities and by having studied them "in their technical aspects only as mechanisms", analysts have come to neglect a variety of issues. The first, and perhaps most crucial, of these has been their reluctance to ask why systems exist in the first place or "what are the reasons for systems?" Along with this the "functional significance of System as the means to an end" has never received adequate treatment; nor have the "consequences regarding the fate of components conditioned to perform functions within organized entities" ever been properly dealt with from the system perspective.³²

The reasons for these shortcomings become quickly apparent in Nyiri's analysis of traditional system

³¹Bertalanffy, General Systems Theory, p. 4.

³²Nyiri, p. 69.

definitions. Though we cannot go into great detail here it might do well to highlight some of the more important points of the analysis. The definitions examined are:

1) System - is a set of elements standing in interaction.³³

2) System - is a set of objective^s with relationships between the objects and attributes.³⁴

3) System - is an integrated assembly of interacting elements designed to carry out cooperatively a predetermined function.³⁵

4) System - is a whole composed of many parts and is an ensemble of attributes.³⁶

5) System - is a collection of interacting diverse functional units, biological, human or machine, integrated with an environment to achieve a common objective by manipulation and control of materials, information, energy and life (i.e. resources).³⁷

The first definition does not really tell us very much. From it we cannot know, nor is it suggested that we ask, by whom and "for what purposes" the set of interacting elements was constituted. Nor do we know whether "these

³³Bertalanffy, General Systems Theory, p. 38.

³⁴A. Hall and F. Fagen, "Definition of a System", in General Systems Yearbook, Vol. I (1965), p. 18.

³⁵R. E. Gibson, "The Recognition of Systems Engineering", in C. A. Flagle (ed.), Operations, Research and Systems (New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960), pp. 58-81.

³⁶C. Cherry, On Human Communication (New York: Wiley and Sons Inc., 1961), p. 307.

³⁷I.E.E.E. Newsletter, (Systems Science and Cybernetic Group), No. 7 (May 7, 1967), p. 6.

interacting elements constitute a system or an organization". On the basis of this definition any innocuous set of interacting elements or variables, either put together by design or coming together by accident, would constitute a system. The second definition is somewhat confusing and again ignores the entire problem of the pre-systemic conditions which give reason for the existence or "creation" of systems in the first place. It is important to first know "the reasons for system" and then to proceed to an analysis of the inter-connections, interdependencies, interactions, etc. of the component elements. Definition three is somewhat of an improvement upon the previous two but it also fails to separate system from its consequents--thereby once again confusing it with organization. However, it does recognize the necessity for cooperation and implicitly hints at a pre-systemic state in which an agent is responsible for the integration of elements whose function it becomes to realize a given objective. In the fourth definition we again come across similar problems. It is not clear whether the attributes referred to are those of an organization or those of system. That is, if system is the method whereby organized entities are issued in then the attributes of system must be different from those of organizational attributes. Though we may identify the attributes of organized and living entities--such as the competitiveness, domination, progressive mechanization,

hierarchization, interconnectivity, interdependence and interactivity of parts we still need clarify the difference between System and Organization. The last definition helps us somewhat in this matter. This definition refers in part to an organized entity and in part to the notion of system as a method for the achievement of an objective through the manipulation and control of units. However, the definition does not make it clear as to who it is that does the manipulating and controlling of entities "either before they are placed within the organized whole", or after they have been conditioned and manipulated.³⁸

From the above discussion we can then conclude, with the author, that a more appropriate definition of system would be the following:

System--is the method of creating organized entities by way of conditioning selected components to produce intended ends under pressure.³⁹

This general definition succeeds in separating "the method from its consequent"--the organized entity--and as such can be applied to organized entities in a variety of fields.⁴⁰ It also enables us to ask the reason for the creation of specific organizations and encourages us to look beyond the formal structure in an attempt to discover who it is that does the "manipulating" or "creating". The "reason"

³⁸ Nyiri, pp. 69-74.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 100.

for the existence of various institutional structures is an important question and one that cannot be addressed by simply looking at the properties of the institutions themselves; though the latter too is of fundamental importance.

System, insofar as it is concerned with the achievement of desired objective^s, becomes an "information based activity regarding the nature of ontological entities", and a "logico-mathematical enterprise", whose purpose it is to efficiently apportion the appropriate functions for entities in order that the end can be achieved. The component parts are assigned the functions or duties according to a preconceived design. Thus, both the plan (Idea) and System (as method of achievement) stand prior to the actual organization and the work of its component parts. From the above we can then deduce that insofar as "roles are assigned to components in advance" the choice of functions is arrived at independently of the desires of component organizational units. The organized entities themselves, once established, become "self-maintaining and self-perpetuating mechanisms". This self-maintenance is assured by the principles of inter-connectivity, interdependence and interactivity which ensure the exertion of pressure by components on each other in the realization of the given objective. And superimposed upon the component elements is the hierarchical organization pattern through which the

"leading part commands and controls the work performance" of subordinate entities. Thus at the level of concrete reality we come to deal with an organization that is designed to achieve objectives, whereas at the conceptual level we have the abstract principles of what such an organization should entail. Once established the organization will, of course, behave according to general systemic laws.

For these reasons, we identify "system" as the concept of how a given objective might be realized. Therefore in the abstract the System is the "Idea" that lays down the abstract principles whereas the Organization that follows the Idea embodies the Idea in concrete form. Form in turn becomes a Concrete Entity, an Organized Whole to produce Objective X or to fulfill the Mission and Destiny of Object X so intended.⁴¹

The process here discussed is one of a "movement from the unorganized existence of singular entities" toward their existence in "combined forms...as organized complexities". However, this movement does not simply entail the random coming together of disparate components for behind the process stands the agent (or agents) whose desire it is to attain a certain objective. And the objective can only be reached through the application of the appropriate means--dictated by the notion of system

⁴¹Ibid., p. 80. Though Nyiri seems to feel that this process is at work both in the natural and human (i.e. social) spheres it is only with the latter that we are here concerned.

as here redefined.⁴² As a consequence, in order to understand organizations and their particular forms, we need to look at the intentions of the agents for it is here that the initial notion of pursuing a particular objective first arises. Once the objective is set logic will dictate, albeit on the basis of imperfect knowledge, the kinds of concrete organizations--along with the proper arranging and conditioning of components--that will have to be established. It is this latter function which becomes the purview of experts.

The notions here discussed can be summarized under the following categories. The creation of organized complexities (organizations) or the general pursuit and realization of objectives will entail the following:

-
- A Intent = that something "should be" to realized a purpose or objective X.
 - B Idea = that something called X is necessary before objective X can be realized. This requires (a) the design of X as an organization, (b) a method of realizing object X, and (c) a control force to condition components.
 - C Form = that object X is a concrete entity capable of producing objective X.
 - D End = intent is realized in the form of fulfilling mission and destiny.⁴³

⁴²Ibid., p. 80.

⁴³Ibid., p. 80.

In this process system comes to mediate between Idea and Form and is recognized as the method which "translates the idea into concrete form". It is the agency whereby "concrete reality is brought into being".⁴⁴

Although this schema provides for the role of intent within the general process of action it is important to note that the intent of the "creative agent" cannot be explained by examining the methods used in the establishment of concrete entities. As a result "the subsidiary methods employed by system, namely logic, mathematics, information and conditioning are virtually useless in this enterprise". The study of system as a method of creation can tell us what has been accomplished, but the question of "why" a particular organization has been established or particular course of action followed requires a different methodology. System as such can only help in harmonizing the four stages of creation by laying down the proper guidelines for the effective achievement

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 85-86.

of objectives; but it cannot tell us why the objective is being pursued.⁴⁵ Yet, what the above analysis does do is to establish the primacy of intent within action and also helps us to recognize the necessity of taking intention into account for a proper understanding of action as such. It is here where the question of why becomes ultimately important. While it is easy to answer the how and what of a particular matter, the why becomes exceedingly difficult to fathom. Unfortunately the theory of system cannot help us much here insofar as system is an independent and objective means for arriving at certain ends which can be used for either good or bad purposes.

However, one of the virtues of Nyiri's schema for the explanation of action is that it turns out to be an improvement on that offered us by the traditional systems and functionalist approaches. Briefly taking Parsons as an example we might note that although he recognizes that the means employed for the achievement of a certain end cannot be "conceived either as chosen at random or as dependent exclusively on the conditions of action, but must in some sense be subject to the influence of an independent, determinate selective factor" he has difficulty identifying this factor except to say that "what is essential to the concept of action is that there should be a normative orientation", that is, "a future state of

⁴⁵Ibid. pp. 98-120.

affairs toward which the process of action is oriented".⁴⁶ What Parsons does not do well, if at all, is to distinguish between the intentions behind a particular course of action and the logically necessary mode of creation and implementation, in this case system. What Parsons lacks is a specific connecting link between his categories of what he considers to be necessarily involved in action, except to say that there is a "certain mode of relationship between these elements", that is, between the actor, the end, and the situation--aspects of which the actor can control and aspects of which he cannot.⁴⁷ Thus, the schema of Intent, Idea, Form, and End, as presented above, seems to have considerably more explanatory utility. However, there are also problems. For instance the methodological problem of firmly establishing the intent of the actor, that of distinguishing between the intended consequences of action and the unintended consequences of action, and the problem of discovering who in fact the originators of certain programmes are. Yet, we must again emphasize that the policies of governments, corporations, etc. are not mere rationalizations of what has been brought about by unaccountable forces and insofar as this is true the role of intent becomes of primary importance. Without an understanding

⁴⁶T. Parsons, The Structure of Social Action (New York: The Free Press, 1949), pp. 44-45.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 44.

and explanation of this all important variable we cannot hope properly to deal with the problem of action.

The above insights, concerning our reinterpretation of system, also fall in line with the notion of the "programming of acts" as set down by Warriner. According to the author "social acts are organized into systems of activity by actors and by social systems", or by what we would refer to as organizations. The activities set into motion may be "minor acts" for the realization of short term objectives or pleasures or they may be "grand strategies covering many acts" over an extended period of time. These "programs of action" may be socially established in terms of the performance of the basically required and accepted duties of all citizens or they may be initiated by individuals and organizations for a specifically designated purpose, after careful analysis and "explicit consideration of functions". Accordingly programming comes to involve three major elements:

- 1) the specification of particular social acts.
- 2) the articulation of these acts in terms of order, time, place, actor and content.
- 3) the specification of the major function⁴⁸ for the acts.

⁴⁸ C. K. Warriner, The Emergence of Society (Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1970), pp. 36-37.

However this schema, as with some of the definitions of system examined earlier, only hints at the role of intent without making it explicit.

Warriner then goes on to specify four distinct if interrelated types of programming. The first is what is referred to as "productive programming". Productive programming amounts to little more than the pursuit of concrete goals on the basis of a given body of knowledge; in this instance scientific-technical knowledge. Thus, "in western society a large number of systems of action are programmed by a given end or goal to be achieved in combination with a given set of beliefs about the functional interconnections in the empirical world". Secondly one has what is referred to as ideological programming. The programming here is "designed to express a belief system and programming acts are designed so as to ensure adherence to a given doctrine or dogma." Another form of programming is "performance programming" and is usually found in recreational groups though it may be found elsewhere as well. Here "the acts and their articulation are given with an emphasis upon the acts as providing pleasure to the actors in their performance". And finally one has what is called relational programming. Relational programs "emerge out of the interaction between particular sets of actors, these programs take account of the character of each of the actors as it is presented in the interaction

(the self-in-situation), articulates acts in terms of the positions the actors occupy in relation to each other, and emphasizes the relational function of acts". In an organizational context these programs would entail "roles, etiquette, human relations", etc.⁴⁹

If various types or combinations of such programming do in fact take place then much of what ensues is again directed by key individuals with purposes and motives. One should also here note that very often components (sub-systems) of organizations develop their own goals, which may in fact come to stand in contradiction to those of the leading component or creative agent(s). This may itself simply be a by-product of relational programming or be due to the specific designs of individuals. Nevertheless, if the original intent is not to be lost then those setting priorities and goals must intervene, from time to time, to ensure the proper performance of functions. In fact, one might suggest that if an organization is to function properly then sight of the goal, or knowledge of the original intent, cannot be foregone. As organizations, both political and private, begin to break down there is always much talk of the proper or original goals and intentions for which they were created. As long as intentions or future goals are clearly defined, and kept in mind, things will generally run

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 41-42.

smoothly; but once this is lost dysfunction sets in.* As Dechert has noted:

As given future goals become increasingly clear, that is, concretely defined social behaviour may increasingly resemble that of a servomechanism in which guidance is reduced to control "...by the margin of error at which the object stands at a given time with reference to a relatively specific goal". Action may then become a routine problem of technical administration.⁵⁰

*Though we are here speaking of original intentions and future goals in one and the same breath it is important to note the close tie between intent and end as established above.

⁵⁰Dechert, p. 28. One might here also note that due to imperfect knowledge organizations may have to be restructured or even destroyed for the intent to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER IV

INTENT AND ACTION

I. Action

When speaking of goal directed or intentional behaviour we are speaking of action. Behaviour, as such, is little more than the routinized performance of certain activities for which the individual is programmed; or it may simply consist of the response to a host of stimuli. Action, on the other hand, is the active attempt (in terms of the union between conscious design and behaviour) to fulfill certain goals. Action then needs to be understood as the very "reverse of man's adaptation to his environment." In his role as an active creative agent man attempts not to adapt to his environment but rather to mould that environment to his will.

Choice is not a selection for some reason or under some form of compulsion of one out of a number of given courses of action, because this view ignores initiative and creativity, and forgets that a choice is not in essence the choice of any given thing, but an act of self-creation, a further determining of what I shall be or of what society shall be.¹

¹M. Knox, Action (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968), p. 105.

The "rationalistic" choice between particulars--between different courses or options--is made only after this "larger" choice has been made. If this argument is to be taken seriously, as it must be, then we come to the realization that the ability to predict human conduct rests not on the fact that it is determined, which to a certain extent it may be, but more importantly it rests on the fact that human conduct is reasoned.² Behaviour, as defined above, may very well be determined; but action which is the expression of a creative self-constituting will is reasoned behaviour and can be understood by the fact that it is reasoned. Action, therefore, is always more than behaviour.

If one were to argue that men were "determined by appetite alone" we would have to conclude that they "would be governed by a chaos of unordered and changing whims and prediction would be impossible". To this the social scientist, particularly those of the reductionist variety, might well counter that though this may be true, underlying and "controlling this chaos there are laws which in due course he will discover". We cannot, of course, simply dismiss such a claim even if we believe that appetite can be transcended and true choice achieved. Yet at the same time we need be careful of the ontological assumptions

²Ibid., p. 79.

involved in the claims of said social scientist. If man is again considered to be a part of the "natural environment" and therefore understandable according to those kinds of laws which unfold the "secrets of nature" then all of our previous criticisms of such a position once more pertain. "A natural life would indeed be one as much dominated by natural law and as much determined as nature is itself". However, our discussion of symbolism showed that once man gains access to, and develops, this new realm he ceases to live a natural life. The failure of determinism is its failure to recognize that "we need not live a purely natural life". Through the increasing sophistication of the symbolic realm and the concomittant development of self-consciousness and reflection "we can win our way to choice and freedom" in at least part of our life and would agree with Malcom Knox when he argues that "it is our moral task to enlarge the area of choice and of freedom to the greatest possible extent"--a belief with which Marx would also be in accord. As Knox goes on to argue:

Knowledge and self-consciousness are the source of freedom. Insofar as our choices are caused, they are caused by ourselves, and by our conscious thought; the unconscious complex may compel, but it cannot compel a choice. It is no answer to say that if a choice is caused by thought, that thought is caused by another thought and so ad infinitum. This language only darkens counsel. Thoughts do not cause one another in any intelligible sense of the word 'cause', eg. in the sense in

which the electric charge causes
water by fusing hydrogen and oxygen.³

Actions involve conscious agents, yet, we must emphasize that although actions are events we cannot properly describe all events as actions. Actions come to involve responsibility of both a causal and moral nature. Brutus in killing Caesar was responsible in both a causal and moral sense. As a consequence, actions may be "appraised for either their efficiency or their correctness" or for both. For an event to be an action the causal responsibility of that event must be attributable to an agent and not merely to some prior cause. Thus, agency "is of central importance to the concept of action" and it is something we can attribute only to people and not something we can attribute to events or things. At the same time it is important to remember that when speaking of action we are not suggesting that most everything becomes possible for people are constrained in both their choice of goals and in the means adopted for their realization by social conventions and rules (i.e. laws).^{*} To act, in any meaningful sense of the term, is to act "on something and so to change it". That which is acted upon and changed "is a state of affairs in the world" and this change is brought about by the "agency

³Ibid., p. 77-80.

^{*}However, this is not to suggest that there are not moments in history when these conventions and rules have not been bypassed or neglected in the pursuit of certain overriding objectives.

of a person" who is both initiator and observer. The agent, insofar as he does not work in a vacuum, "has beliefs about the situation in which and on which he is acting" and, along with this, he also has definite intentions "about the way that situation is to be changed by his action".⁴ In the final analysis we always need to remember that "man can distinguish between what happens to him and what he does, and it is because of this that man can change his world, and with it his economic systems".⁵

II Action and the Problem of Explanation

Intentional actions are then those kinds of actions to "which a certain sense of the question 'why?' has application".⁶ However, it is precisely the asking of this question which embroils one in a host of methodological dilemmas and it is because of these dilemmas that the role of intentions in explanations of behaviour is neglected. What often takes place in attempted explanations of action is that the question of why an individual acted as he did is re-formulated in order that it be amenable to so-called scientific explanation.

In asking the question "why" something happened, there is always the implication that the event took place because

⁴G. Langford, Human Action (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971), pp. 1-96.

⁵Knox, p. 73.

⁶G. E. M. Anscombe, Intention (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), p. 11.

of an agent's having some purpose or end in view. This assumption then further entails our asking for a "description of the purpose or plan or design toward which the act was directed". When asked with regard to physical and biological phenomena a variety of difficulties ensue. As Warriner cogently points out:

To say that a cow has a tail in order to swat the flies on its flank requires a tremendous leap of faith and the full acceptance of an omniscient, patient and omnipotent planner. Since we can neither identify the planner nor the plan independently of the phenomena, which are supposedly evidences of the plan, we are reduced to the statement that a cow has a tail because it has a tail.⁷

As a consequence the question of "why" is changed to that of "how" which then enables one to look for the "antecedent and concomitant conditions" of the phenomena under consideration.⁸

However, in the social realm the planners are identifiable and the why question is assumed to be explicable in terms of the agent's intent, or design, and the motives which he has for pursuing a particular course of action. One of the reasons we may feel comfortable in imputing motives to others is that people are, on the whole, "engaged in familiar programmes of action", and share at least a modicum of common values and aspirations. As Warriner

⁷Warriner, p. 41.

⁸Ibid., p. 41.

argues: "when we see a segment of action that is part of a programme familiar to us we infer the total programme and knowing the end points or immediate consequences of the programme we infer that the actor also has that end point in mind and that he embarked upon the programme in order to achieve that end". Though the inference is a natural one it may nevertheless be inappropriate. Often, people are "swept into the beginning acts of established programmes without any immediate desire for the end".⁹ The reservations here expressed by Warriner may have some foundation, but one must remember that we are ultimately interested not in the routinized performance of functions, as seems to be the kind of behaviour implied in Warriner's observation, but we are rather interested in the reasons for the establishment of certain "programmes" as such. We must again draw attention to the difference between action and behaviour. Our aim is to isolate those responsible for the creation of "programmes", or organizations, and then to determine their intentions and motives for doing so. An individual working for a particular organization may be doing so in order to sustain himself and his family without having any particular interest in the overall purpose or end product of the organization--something which would certainly not be true of those responsible for establishing the organization or programme. Thus, Warriner's caution, though well taken, does not adequately

⁹Ibid. p. 42.

distinguish between behaviour and action.

Rather than deal with the influence of intent on behaviour (i.e. action) what Warriner does is to circumvent the problem by changing the question of "why?" into that of "how?"

If we are unwilling to make the assumption that action is caused by the motives of the actors, then the question must be changed to the more general and scientifically sound question "what factors are associated with the performance of other acts?" In this form the question does not preclude the consideration of motivation, but it does require that motivation be specified and that its variations be observed independently of the acts which it purports to explain. Motivation in this way is treated as any other variate is treated and our "why" question has become the generally acceptable scientific question "how?" Moreover this does not put us in the untenable position of pre-judging the relevance of non-personal factors in the causation of action.¹⁰

By treating the problem of action in such a manner what Warriner hopes is to provide for a "scientifically acceptable" explanation and for him, as for most, this entails the application of the nomological-deductive theory of explanation. It is this theory which dominates the natural sciences and for which much hope has been expressed as regards its application in the humanities. We do not wish to suggest that this theory is inapplicable to the social sciences but rather that, though it may be necessary,

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

it often needs to be supplemented by further considerations.

The nomological type of explanation strives to explain events by subsuming them under general laws.¹¹ In the case of scientific explanation the explanation is divided into two major parts, the explanandum and the explanans. The explanandum consists of those sentences "which are adduced to account for the phenomenon". The explanans, in turn, consists of two subclasses one of which contains sentences specifying certain antecedent conditions and the other of which consists of statements representing general laws. For a given explanation to be considered acceptable its constituents have to satisfy certain logical and empirical conditions of adequacy. As outlined by Hempel and Oppenheim these conditions involve the following:

- 1) The explanandum must be a logical consequence of the explanans, that is, it must be logically deducible from the information contained in the explanans.
- 2) The explanans must contain general laws, and these must actually be required for the derivation of the explanandum.
- 3) The explanans must have empirical content, that is, it must be capable at least in principle, of test by experiment or observation.

¹¹ A. C. Isaak, Scope and Methods of Political Science (Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 101. It might do well to here note that although Isaak considers this the appropriate theory of explanation and applicable to political science it is still an ideal not yet fully realizeable in the discipline.

- 4) The sentences constituting the explanans must be true.¹²

An explanation based on these requisites can then properly be referred to as a causal explanation. Its most outstanding characteristic being its predictive capability, which in turn rests on the contention that statements in the explanation must be subject to empirical verification.

The type of explanation which has been considered here...is often referred to as causal explanation. If E describes a particular event, then the antecedent circumstances described in the sentences C-1, C-2,...C-k may be said jointly to "cause" that event, in the sense that there are certain empirical regularities, expressed by the laws L-1, L-2,...L-r, which imply that whenever conditions of the kind indicated by C-1, C-2,...C-k occur, an event of the kind described in E will take place. Statements such as L-1, L-2,...L-r, which assert general and unexceptional connections between specified characteristics of events, are customarily called causal, or deterministic laws.¹³

Though certain reservations may be expressed as to the applicability of this type of explanation to purposive behaviour, Hempel and Oppenheim argue that the causal type of explanation is quite adequate even here. The general

¹²C. G. Hempel and P. Oppenheim, "The Logic of Explanation", in H. Feigl and M. Brodbeck (eds.), Readings In The Philosophy of Science (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953), pp. 321-322. See also C. G. Hempel, Aspects of Scientific Explanation (New York: The Free Press, 1970), pp. 297-330. The logical form of explanation discussed here also holds for those explanations based on statistical probabilities.

¹³Ibid., pp. 323-324.

character of explanations are, for them, the same in both the physical and social sciences. One of the arguments presented against the Hempel-Oppenheim thesis is that whereas events in the natural sciences presuppose "repeatability of the phenomena under consideration" this is not the case where individual or group behaviour is concerned. Human activities are considered to be unique. However, this argument is considered to be inconclusive and to rest on a misunderstanding of the "logical character of causal explanation". In the physical sciences events may also be considered unique in that the individual event "with all its peculiar characteristics does not repeat itself". All that a causal law asserts "is that any event of a specified kind, i.e. any event having certain specified characteristics, is accompanied by another event which in turn has certain specified characteristics; for example, that in any event involving friction, heat is developed". Thus, in order to explain an event on the basis of a testable empirical law is to demonstrate that the event take place under specifiable antecedent conditions. It is these conditions which, when repeated, produce a particular event. It is not to the repetition of "individual instances" that we look but only to the repetition of particular characteristics which provide for the occurrence of similar events.¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid., p. 326.

A second argument often pointed to as a counter to causal explanation is that which focuses upon the peculiarities of individuals as individuals. Thus, the manner in which an individual may be expected to react in a given situation depends not only "upon that situation but also upon the previous history of the individual". To this Hempel and Oppenheim simply retort that there is no a priori reason why one should not be able to provide for generalizations which take due cognizance of the agent's past history.¹⁵ However, choosing the appropriate factors for human agents is a considerably more difficult task than that of choosing the appropriate antecedents of physical systems. The authors pay no attention to this consideration. What is often involved in the former is a good deal of description and interpretation of life histories and the methodological problem of adequately dealing with these is somewhat more difficult than that of specifying the past states of physical systems. In dealing with historical antecedents one need also remember that our understanding of past events becomes richer over time and therefore more complete than the "empirical observation at the moment of their happening permits". In providing a full understanding of historical events we are again confronted with a problem of meaning. The meaning of historical events is not fixed

¹⁵Ibid., p. 327.

and it is a meaning that "accrues to them partly in the light of what happens later and from the point of view of those who were born later".¹⁶ We need always be careful not to allow our desire to predict to overshadow the necessity to understand.

A final argument confronted by Hempel and Oppenheim is the belief that insofar as purposive behaviour involves references to motives we require a teleological rather than a causal analysis. This, in turn, comes to necessarily involve references to goals sought and the type of explanation required would differ from that of the physical sciences. In this instance the future "appears to affect the present in a manner which is not found in the causal explanations of the physical sciences". Again, the authors do not consider this argument to present them with an insurmountable obstacle. In response they argue that when an individual is motivated to pursue a particular course of action it is not "the as yet unrealized future event of attaining that goal" which determines his present behaviour. The agent's behaviour is rather determined by "his desire, present before the action, to attain that particular objective" and his belief, also present before the action, that a given course of action will have the desired effect. As a result "the determining motives and beliefs...have to

¹⁶T. McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1978), p. 176.

be classified among the antecedent conditions of a motivational explanation" and, according to the authors, there is then no "formal difference on this account between motivational and causal explanation",¹⁷

From the foregoing one can agree that the argument presented by Hempel and Oppenheim is a sound one. However, we must still question its ultimate value for an explanation of action. Again, we will argue that though some consider it an ideal worth striving for, it does not suffice for all considerations. If our general argument is to have a sound foundation we will need to argue that there are instances when the as yet unrealized goal does indeed determine behaviour. Thus, whereas modes of verification in the natural sciences are more or less standardized, in the human sciences--the sciences which "rely on the interpretation of human activity and the products of that activity"--the problem of verification presents us with difficulties not faced by the natural scientist. When dealing with the role of symbols and the meaning of political language what we may require is not empirical verification but rather an anthropological verification.¹⁸ Statements concerning intentions and actions cannot be reduced, without significant loss, to statements about observable behaviour. One

¹⁷Hempel and Oppenheim, pp. 327-328.

¹⁸D. M. Rasmussen, Symbol and Interpretation (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 1-4.

of the reasons being that "statements about intentional action refer to a domain that is already linguistically structured". These statements "belong to another level or type than first-order statements about physical objects and their behaviour". What we must not lose sight of when dealing with human behaviour, that is with action, is the connection to ideas that is constitutive of such behaviour. Action and ideas do not function as independent variables in that actions come to express intentions that "cannot be comprehended independently of language". It is due to the methodological neglect of this connection that analysts oft tend to view human behaviour as little more than a separate class of animal behaviour.¹⁹ We cannot permit the reduction of action to behaviour and to recognize this is to recognize the necessity of providing access to our data via an understanding of meanings.²⁰ We will return to the methodological problems hinted at once having discussed, in detail, the notions of intent, motive and purpose as regards human action.

The problem of dealing with intentions in explanations of human behaviour is that the term, though commonly used in everyday language, is not easily defined. Often we may be inclined to speak of the intentions of someone in rather

¹⁹ McCarthy, pp. 150-151.

²⁰ J. Habermas, Theory and Practice (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 10.

vague terms or to refer to them as the mental associates of certain actions. All too often we refer to someone's intention, or statements concerning his intention, without also examining his resolve to follow through. The term may be applied to rather vague forms of wishful thinking; "someday I intend to do X", or "he probably will intend to do such and such". It is thus often difficult to determine whether intentions do in fact guide the outward actions of individuals or not; particularly if the term is used in such vague fashion.

When speaking of intentions we must then distinguish them from vague wishes. A genuine intention is one which is clearly formulated in the mind of the agent. As a consequence, the decision to act "is the beginning of the action, not the last step before the action starts". If the intention is genuine the step towards objectivity follows forthwith. The intention is distinguished from the vague wish by this passing "over of the subjective into full objectivity" and this resolve persists throughout the entire programme of action.

There is no gap in continuity between the crystallization of intention and the ~~beginning~~ the objective side of the action, and the crystallization is incomplete until the intention passes over into action. When this is denied by those who cite a decision made today to do something in the future, what is forgotten is the fact that our intention if genuine does affect our

conduct between its formation and what is prima facie called its subsequent execution.²¹

Once setting out on an intended course of action one keeps the sought-after goal or end in view and arranges one's conduct accordingly. One pursues those programmes which will bring out the fulfillment of intent and avoids others. If the intention is genuine it begins at once to be fulfilled "though the fulfillment may not be complete until days or even years later". A genuine intention will be such as to govern our outward conduct and thus becomes fulfilled in the process of action. If, on the other hand, it should not be genuine it will simply fade away and be recognized for the idle fancy which it was.²²

III Intent, Motive and Purpose

In light of the foregoing we can now proceed to distinguish between intention, motive and purpose and here we will find ourselves largely in agreement with the arguments set forth by R. Lawrence. Thus:

- 1) Intention: an intention (for the future) is an action in prospect.
- 2) Motive: a motive is a circumstance because of which one may take (certain) action.

²¹Knox, p. 97.

²²Ibid., pp. 97-98.

- 3) Purpose: a purpose is a desired condition seen as achievable.²³

To cite a motive is to offer an explanation, but to mention an intention is not.²⁴ In giving someone's motive for behaving in a particular way we are giving the reason why he so behaved. However, in determining an individual's motive it is necessary to distinguish between two separate, but related, senses of an individual having a reason for acting. When distinguishing between (a) the reason why he so behaved (or might so behave) and (b) his reason for so behaving we find that the former is less definite than the latter. For explanatory purposes the sense of the word reason as used in (b) is preferable, and more complete, though at the same time more difficult to determine. As used in (a) we have the generic sense of the term while (b) gives us the possessive sense of "reason for doing such-and-such a thing and (b) is, as it were, a determinant of (a)".²⁵ His reason for so acting is the reason why he so did. Thus, when dealing with motives in explanations of action what we are interested in delineating is the reason--the reason he possesses--for a given action.

At the same time we must be careful to distinguish between those reasons which we attribute to someone for

²³R. Lawrence, Motive and Intention: An Essay in the Appreciation of Action (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 4.

²⁴A. R. White (edit.) The Philosophy of Action (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 14.

²⁵Lawrence, p. 6.

acting in a given manner, or those which we would consider him to have as motives for action, and those which are regarded by him as his reasons for so acting. There is a difference in distinguishing between (1) a reason an agent has for a given course of action and knows that he has (when the action is one in prospect) and (2) a reason he has but does not know that he has. "To say that such-and-such is his reason, therefore, is not thereby to say that it is (regarded by him as) his reason".²⁶ When dealing with political action we must be careful to deal with the problem of motive in light of these factors. To properly delineate the motives of purposive behaviour we must determine whether the agent was cognizant of the circumstances under which we attribute motive to him and whether he in fact regarded, the reasons attributed, as his reasons for so acting. When a person is said to have a reason for doing X, that reason must "contain a reference either to X or to something which is thought by the agent to be a means to X". A motive explains an action by virtue of this characteristic and not by virtue of any psychological or physiological characteristic.²⁷

Reasons can also legitimately be regarded as either good or bad; they are subject to moral critique whereas causes are not. As a result reasons can be known in a way

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷ White, p. 17.

that causes cannot. A brief example by White will suffice to illustrate the point.

...if my curiosity to see what would happen can be said to have caused me to press a button and caused the death of some people in a room, then my curiosity might be said to have caused their death; but though curiosity to see what happened was my reason for pressing the button, it was not my reason for killing the people.²⁸

A further complication of motive explanations is the view that motives are properly construed as conditions generally taken to be emotions private to the person concerned. Only the individual can know what, for him, constitutes a motive. Yet, this notion, which conceives motives as private episodes, will, upon examination, prove false to experience. The attribution of motives can often be found in historical narrative, "especially in those giving an explanation for a discrepancy between what given circumstances lead one to anticipate a certain person would do and what he is known to have done". Following is an example offered by Lawrence.

The chief advisers of Henry did not scruple to connive at infractions of the proclamation (forbidding priestly marriages). Both Cranmer and Cromwell favored the Reformation: the former was himself secretly married...while the latter, though, as a layman, without any such personal motive was

²⁸Ibid., p. 17.

disposed to relax the strictness of the rule of celibacy.²⁹

What is here attributed to Cranmer as a motive is a civil condition--that of being both priest and married. It is apparent that such a condition should be motive for the actions described.³⁰ Upon further research, and evidence, we might also be able to determine, with greater certitude, whether this was in fact also taken by him to be motive for so acting. However, in any instance this latter qualification will always be difficult, if not impossible, to discern. Ultimately the attribution of motives will be a result of reasoned and careful historical research--perhaps more a matter of scholarly persuasion than of "absolute" empirical verification. Yet, this in no way denies the importance, nor the necessity, of offering motive explanations. Our ability to attribute motives to agents increases as our knowledge and familiarity with the subject matter increases.

Take a further example:

In March of 1929, he (Warburg of the International Acceptance Bank) called for a stronger Federal Reserve Policy and argued that if the present orgy of "unrestrained speculation" were not brought promptly to a halt there would ultimately be a disastrous collapse.

²⁹Lawrence, pp. 12-13. Quoted from H. C. Lea, The History of Sacredotal Celibacy in the Christian Church (New York, 1957), p. 396.

³⁰Ibid, p. 13.

This...would "bring about a general depression involving this whole country". Only Wall Street spokesmen who took the most charitable view of Warburg contented themselves with describing him as obsolete... Others hinted that he had a motive--presumably a short position.³¹

What is here imputed as motive for the act is a particular aspect of the individual's relations with others. It is important to here note that though the given motive "is a disturbing aspect of those developing relations" the motive itself is "not said to be the felt disturbance (exhilaration, emotion, or what have you) possibly provoked by the circumstances in question". In neither of these examples is the imputed motive an "internal condition of operative agitation". The only feature which the motives have in common is that they were reasons possessed by the agents for taking a given action. "It is an aberration, surely, to construe talk of a man's motive as...reference to a quasi-metabolic process mediating stimulus and response". However, though we have shown the importance of circumstance in motive explanations there are also those instances in which no mention of any public circumstance is made. Here we find the use of such expressions as "fear of", "devotion to", or "love for" as motive. The danger of employing these terms in historical narrative without due reference to the circumstances under which choices are made is that we end

³¹Ibid., p. 13. Quoted from J. K. Galbraith, The Great Crash, 1929, (Boston, 1954), p. 77.

up with little more than a gratuitous confirmation of first principles. An example of such danger is the following:

Under the stimulus of constant agitation the leaders of the southern branch of the Democracy (i.e. the Democratic Party) forbade the voters to elect a Republican President unless they wished him to preside over a shattered government. A number of voters sufficient to create a Republican majority in the Electoral College defied the prohibition. Then southerners, in a state of hypermotion, moved by pride, self-interest, a sense of honor and fear, rushed to action; they were numerous enough and effective enough to force secession.³²

Rather than simply jump to the conclusion that the expressions cited are indeed sufficient to provide for a motive explanation it would be better to simply view them as features of an explanation which "put us in mind of the particular features of the situation which could have served as reason for the action taken in that very situation". Upon examination the list of imputed motives can be regarded as such only when viewed in relation to the moving social prospects facing the actors. Independent of these there is no "common element among them by virtue of which they can be regarded as motives". When put in a proper historical context such expressions may provide us with what we believe to be the actual motive involved; but they cannot do so independent of the circumstance. An explanation which construes motives solely in terms of mental states is thereby

³²Ibid., pp. 14-18. Quoted from R. F. Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy, (New York, 1948), p. 516.

rendered inadequate. What here provides for understanding is not the listing of a variety of discrete variables pertaining to individuals but rather an "adequate fund of knowledge concerning the context of the action". It is only on the basis of sufficient information (in this case historical) that we can come to understand by what events and circumstances men were moved to act as they did. Thus, even in the passage quoted above it is via the historical narrative that we are shown "what was taken by these men as an affront to their pride, a threat to their mingled self-interest and sense of honor, and what prospective social changes constituted their fear".³³

In turning to a consideration of intention there are again certain conventional wisdoms which need to be examined. We have already defined an intention as an action in prospect and therefore "intentions are actions, at least of a kind". A person's intention is that which he is to do and his purpose that which he is to achieve by so doing. However, a widely held view deserving special attention is that which considers intentions as "desirous foreknowledge" or expectant desire. Under this one formula we can, in fact, identify four possible specifications. These, according to Lawrence, are the following:

- 1) one's desire that S be the case;
- 2) one's desire to bring S into being;

³³Ibid., pp. 18-20.

- 3) one's belief that S will be the case;
- 4) one's belief that one will bring S into being.³⁴

The least plausible pairing as a definition of intent is that of (1) and (3). For a person to intend that "some particular thing shall come to be the case" (P intends S) is not to simply say that he desires it and believes that it will be achieved or realized. This amounts to little more than a form of wishful thinking on the part of the agent. The conjunction of (1) or (2) with (4) proves equally unsatisfactory. One's intention cannot fully be disclosed by merely declaring that "I believe I shall..." Again, for an intention to be genuine the step towards objectivity follows immediately. It is this crystallization of the intention and the doing which permits us to distinguish between real intent and empty promise.³⁵

The one remaining pairing which offers some hope is that of (2) and (3) which comes to say this: "to say P intends S is to say he desires to make S the case and believes that S will come to pass (through his own doing)". However, the problem which immediately comes to bear is that one may in fact intend to do something one does not desire to do. When compelled to do something--anything done unwillingly--the actor may not desire or want to do it. Thus, as cogently noted by Lawrence, to import "into the

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 4, 84.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

picture an element of desire (or the like) for the thing intended is a denial of the phenomena". Yet, at the same time the notion that one desires what one intends (on all occasions, as the argument suggests) is not quickly dispelled and has an understandable attraction: One defence suggested is the Hobbesian inspired notion that "what one does unwillingly one desires to do on balance". It is very difficult, if not impossible, to know what would stand as evidence against the proposition. The assertion amounts to little more than an a priori preconception. "To say that anything done intentionally is as such something the actor desired on balance (or, in some sense, to some degree, in the last analysis) is a mere restatement of a thesis, not an appeal to the facts". To impose such a thesis on the following kind of example is, to say the least, unfitting. "Aubrey plunged into the icy waters to save Audrey, whom he saw drowning". If Aubrey knew the water was icy, did not particularly enjoy icy water, as few of us do, but responded to the situation without first calculating the consequences for himself of doing so, then the thesis is belied.³⁶

Behind what we have termed the standard version of intention there lurks the conviction that an intention necessarily involves or is related to some inner state of mind. That is, it is the belief that "citation of an intention could not account for an act if the intention were not

³⁶Ibid., p. 87-88.

a quasi-propulsive inner-episode, or essentially related to one". However, though we may have registered some severe misgivings of the standard version this is not to conclude that it is totally unrelated to the facts. As Lawrence cautions:

...the standard version is certainly not unrelated to the facts. To the contrary, it is the reverse aspect of a certain complex fact: when P intends S, it is neither the case that P ipso facto desires not to bring S into being nor that P believes S will not come to pass...It is the preconception that when speaking of P's intention we must have in view, the obverse, a positive desire on his part to do or to achieve S, joined with a belief that in fact he will gratify this desire, conditions permitting.³⁷

In accepting the notion that an intention must be "a (positive) inner state" of some sort the traditionalists can then continue on and claim that a man's intentions must therefore be categorically distinguishable from his actions and that his as yet unfulfilled intentions are "temporally distinguishable from the relevant deeds".³⁸ It is with the unqualified acceptance of these beliefs that we now wish to quarrel.

In a description and explanation of human intentions we do not simply attribute an intention to the agent but rather present one of the following claims:

³⁷Ibid., p. 98.

³⁸Ibid., p. 99.

- 1) the claim that some (perhaps quite unspecified) thing must have been intended by what was done;
- 2) the claim that there is a genuine possibility that a particular sort of thing, here named or described by the historian, may have been intended; and
- 3) the claim that a specified thing, and so not a certain other, was (or must have been) the intention in view.³⁹

Lawrence offers the following as an instance of (1). This example also comes to closely approximate the claim made in (3).

The new Secretariat consisted of Stalin, Kaganovich, Kirov, and Zhdanov...There was one notable fact about the laconic announcement of this election which appeared in the press. Stalin, who since 1922 had invariably been described as "General Secretary", now was described only as "Secretary". Such points of formal title are always a matter of scrupulous care in Soviet practice. Any question of error in Stalin's title is quite inconceivable...⁴⁰

The author of the quotation then goes on to tell us that "it was plain to all that some diminution of authority was thereby intended". What is important here is that the change of title is not represented by the author merely as the means to an end--the diminution of authority. It is apparent from the account offered, especially with regard

³⁹Ibid., p. 100.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 101. Quoted from L. Shapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (New York, 1960), p. 398. For a more lengthy and explicit consideration of claim 3, see Lawrence, pp. 104-106.

to the care taken in such matters by Soviet authority, that the title change did in some measure constitute a diminution of Stalin's authority. Again, the thing done is the intention. According to Lawrence, the same point can be made by asking what inference, if any, the historian made in attributing an intention to those responsible for the change in title. In the present case the inference is a sound one. It is an inference from "the known relevant practices, to the character of the thing done". Insofar as we need not accept the "inner state" notion of the traditional view, we find that the inference made is a sound one, based on evidence, and is not a "blind passage from the thing done to the inner antecedents of the public act".⁴¹

The above point becomes clearer when examining an instance of the second claim:

A historian writing on medieval English society wishes to illustrate the bitterness aroused by the forest law. She notes that in a mid-thirteenth-century account of a contemporary episode of deer poaching in Northampton, mention is made of the poachers having impaled the head of a buck on a stake in a clearing, jaws agape, facing south. The historian then suggests it is significant that the area had once been the Danes' land, given a similar and consciously contemptuous practice on their part.⁴²

On the basis of the facts and description offered, the historian, in conjunction with her further expertise in the

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 101-102.

⁴²Ibid., p. 102. Adapted from D. L. Stenton, English Society in the Early Middle Ages (1066-1307), (Harmsworth, 1952), p. 111.

area, could very well have concluded that the agents intended their act as a gesture of defiance to the authorities. Even if the historian had "only reported the act of impaling the deer head and then confessed having no idea of any specific intention in the light of which we could understand the act" she could still have legitimately concluded that the poachers had some intention in so doing. It is very unlikely that they would have done it for no good reason, that is, out of no conception of the meaning of the act.⁴³

Our discussion so far has provided us with a sound footing for dealing with motive and intention explanations. In order to do this it was necessary to challenge the traditional view and its preconceptions. Thus, rather than begin with time honoured preconceptions what Lawrence's treatment of the problem does is to allow us to proceed phenomenologically--from the concrete perspective of how these terms actually function in historical explanation and everyday speech.

However, there is still one problem to be taken into account. Those who adhere to the inner-state theory instead of taking our "exoteric form of account at face value", might be inclined to argue that the reported fact--the diminution or ritual defiance of authority, for example--

⁴³Ibid., pp. 102-103.

may only be the outward expression of covert processes. This argument presents little problem for the inner-state theorist. Yet, rather than concede the point one can effectively deal with it by recognizing "the genuineness of a simple distinction", namely, the "difference of a deed from its character". By the character of the deed is meant "what the deed may be taken as being by a relevantly knowledgeable person". And by the deed one is referring only to "the thing done under some description not partial to a particular reading of its character". In simple cases there is no problem in claiming that the character assigned to the deed is the intention. Thus; "Odysseus' intention in twisting the heated olive pole was the damaging of Polyphemos' eye". In problematic cases, or complex acts, demonstrating the assignability of a particular character to the thing done is not as straight forward. The issue also raises the question of what is meant when we are told that someone knew what they were doing.⁴⁴ Again, our solution to the problem will stand on the evidence presented.

When claiming that a particular agent knew what it was that he was doing we are ultimately referring to the character of the particular deed under consideration. We are here again confronted with a problem of interpretation, for though we can look to the pronouncements of the agent his own expression of belief may be insufficient evidence taken by

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 107.

itself. It is up to the analyst to determine the matter and here one can legitimately concede, without damage to our argument, that different persons may indeed give divergent yet reasonable interpretations of a deed by giving differential consideration to pertinent circumstances. Thus, "when it is that the historian states what it is that someone held himself to have done we often need help to see the deed as the actor does". To take an example:

By his policy...Pym had brought the Crown under the control of Parliament ...He did not advertise his achievement as a revolution and it did not appear so to him. He believed that he was restoring the ancient balance between the sovereign and the people glorified under Elizabeth.⁴⁵

Here we have an instance of the historian's disagreeing with the actor's appreciation of his achievement and it therefore becomes incumbent upon the analyst to discover the ground of the agent's belief and to make it intelligible "that such and such a belief could have been sustained on that ground". As Lawrence goes on to note, it was then necessary for the historian to argue, and for the reader to find it sufficiently reasonable, that Pym had been impressed by Coke's work on the meaning of the Magna Carta.⁴⁶ To present a deed as having a certain character opens the "judgement of any relevantly knowledgeable person".⁴⁷

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 110-111. Quoted from C. V. Wedgwood, The King's Peace, 1637-1641 (New York, 1956), p. 433.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 115.

We can now come to the further conclusion that when "P intends S, S is a certain one (or set) of the characters of the deed". This refers to that character of the deed which the agent cannot credibly deny knowing.

It is that character P cannot credibly deny knowing the deed to have, given that he appreciates its character at such a time and in such circumstances as give him opportunity to act upon that appreciation, for example, to refrain from the deed. Both parts of this can be regarded as explications of the original formula. The first, as it were, attaches the deed's significant character to its author; it is this which is prospectively his. The second part insures that the deed, in that character, is chargeable to him as his action.⁴⁸

Insofar as the arguments presented above do not require us to make a categorical distinction between action and intention our ability to deal with the problem of intention and motive explanations is put on a sound methodological footing. We can now also deal with the moral implications of intended action in a sound manner. Here considerations will revolve around the character of the deed and once having established this character (as taken by the actor) we can pass judgement concerning the ethical sincerity of actions. Again this character can be determined on the basis of evidence and will always entail going beyond what the behaviouralist will be wont to accredit as evidence. Our understanding accrues not from merely examining behavioural manifestations and

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 116.

discerning certain patterns but rather from a complex, yet necessary, act of interpretation. Though this is not to say that we arrogantly dismiss the importance of what the behavioural tradition has been able to teach us.

In our understanding we look both to the actor, and his verbal expressions concerning his intention, as well as observations concerning his actual deed. Thus we do not need to maintain a categorical distinction between intention as "a piece of mental planning" and its being little more than a "coherent pattern (or the gratifying end point) of outward action". Our re-evaluation of systems showed how they are both connected and essential ingredients of action. For a proper understanding of action we need to pay heed to both. The utterances of an agent concerning a proposed programme of action can aid in determining the question of sincerity, that is, whether or not his actions bear witness to his avowed intentions. Yet, we cannot rely solely on such evidence when trying to discover the intent of an actor. Learning of an agent's intent by simply focusing on utterances is not comparable to the kind of "penetration achieved by interpreting some body of gestures, acts, and expressions so as to discover what hitherto had been concealed by the uninterpreted 'behavioural' materials".⁴⁹

One last problem remains to be considered; that of explanations dealing with the unintended consequences of

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 120.

action. In these instances the action goes through, yet, once completed the agent will find that "what transpired was seriously incongruent with his intention". These cases are different from those in which there is disagreement as to the character assigned to the deed by the agent on the one hand and the author on the other. The existence of these cases may again lead some to infer the "reality of some categorical distinction of action and intention". Our consideration of the following examples should help dispel any such inclination. The first deals with the League of Nation's condemnation of Italy's move in Abyssinia, as a consequence of which;

The Stresa front was gone beyond recognition, Mussolini forced on to the German side. In attacking Abyssinia, Mussolini had intended to exploit the international tension on the Rhine, not to opt for Germany. Instead he lost his freedom of choice.⁵⁰

In the second example, quoted by Lawrence, the historian continues to explicitly tell us that the outcome was the opposite of the agent's intention. The account deals with the role of the British in the events leading to the Munich Agreement:

Their motives (in raising the Czechoslovak question) were of the highest. They wished to prevent a European war. They wished also to achieve a settlement more

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 121. Quoted from A. J. P. Taylor, The Origins of the Second World War (London, 1961), p. 108.

in accordance with the great principles of self-determination than that made in 1919. The outcome was the precise opposite of their intention. They imagined that there was a "solution" to the Sudeten German problem and that negotiations would produce it. In fact the problem was insoluble in terms of compromise and every step in negotiations only made this clearer. By seeking to avert a crisis, the British brought it on.⁵¹

In this latter example we are told that the British authorities initiated discussion on the matter at hand with the intention of averting a war. Their deed "was that of initiating certain diplomatic discussions" and the intention, referred to by the historian, was that of averting a crisis. However, the deed to which the narrative attaches this particular intention as its character is not the deed of initiating negotiations, but rather "the intention of averting a crisis is the character attached to the anticipated result of that deed, namely, the satisfaction of the last apparent major source of German territorial grievance". Similar observations can be made with regard to the case of Mussolini; "the situation which Mussolini is said not to have wanted is not that of having attacked Abyssinia, but rather that of having thereby sacrificed Italy's previous relative freedom of choosing from among alternative places in European power alignments". It is important to here note that when properly dealt with neither of these cases "can

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 121-122. Quoted from Taylor.

be said to turn upon a differentiation of the thing done from what it was intended to be". Rather, what we find is that the differentiation is "of the actual from the anticipated character of the outcome (here, the result) of the whole course of events in which the thing done is placed".⁵²

By not having fallen into the traditional trap of maintaining a categorical distinction between intent and action we are now in a sound position to deal with intention-motive explanations. Through our re-evaluation of systems and the incorporation of intent and motive in explanations of human action we can intelligently, and on sound methodological grounds, deal with the question of "why"; the answer to which is found in the intentions and motives of actors. It is to concrete actions and circumstances to which we turn for a determination of intent and motive; rather than to the mysterious "inner-states" of agents. Analyses of action programmes in terms of only the "what" and "how" of the matter are incomplete. We need also address ourselves to the question of why actions are undertaken and the answer is, again, to be found in the intentions and motives of those undertaking certain programmes of action. The problems involved in determining the why of a particular matter will, as we have already suggested, involve us in the interpretation of certain subject matters whereas the what and how can be dealt with from the perspective of the more

⁵²Ibid., pp. 122-124.

standard preconceptions usually subsumed under the rubric of empirical analysis. It is this latter realm which emerges as the proper domain of quantification and the variety of techniques put forward by the behavioural school. Thus, our analysis of action does not necessarily stand in total opposition to these methods but rather states that for certain questions they need to be supplemented by further considerations. In a sense what we are involved in is a question concerning different levels of meaning and understanding. A discovery of intent and motive in explanations of action programmes is more complete than would be a treatment of these matters solely on the basis of statistical regularities, structural analysis, psychology, etc. Though this is not to say that aspects of these latter methods are not essential components of a complete explanation.

We can fully appreciate that societies are also social systems and therefore analysable, in part, according to certain "objective" criteria (i.e. statistical laws, or some of the general precepts derived from systems theory and cybernetics). However, in accord with this we also need recognize the importance of intentional action with respect to their development. It is this which people like Laszlo and Taylor neglect at their own peril.

...the structure of action-involving motives and intentions, principles and values, choices and goals--is not that of a mere happening. As an actor, the individual subject cannot regard his own future simply as a matter of

objective determination and he cannot therefore regard the meaning of the past that opens onto this future or of the life that includes both, as simply a theoretical-empirical question.⁵³

Action, then, is normatively oriented both in the sense of pursuing ends and in the sense of being subject to "certain normative conditions, to rules which guide it." In the latter instance ideas come to be viewed as "considerations limiting the acceptable range of alternative means, choice among which is to be guided by considerations of rational efficiency".⁵⁴

IV. Intention and the Importance of Symbolic Systems

To continue a point made earlier (p. 103), when dealing with human intentionalities we need pay due attention to symbolic systems and the problem of meaning inherent to their consideration. At the level of animal behaviour intentionality as such is not yet "disconnected from behavioural modes and transformed in symbolic systems". What we find here is the routinized performance of functions according to instinct and environmental exigencies. True action, creative action, is first made possible "when intentional contents have been rendered independent in language". Here the motive for action is no longer found in the realm of basic (i.e. biological) drives but rather

⁵³ McCarthy, p. 131.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

in the realm of linguistic communication. Linguistic symbols are then always more than mere "signals" illiciting automatic response--as they inevitably become in behavioural research.

A more or less stringent system of drives which defines species-specific significations (from behind, as it were), and attaches them to selected environmental conditions, is released from univocal correlations with the environment only at the cultural level. Only then can it (the system of drives) be itself subjected to new definitions through a linguistic system with variable significations. Whereas significations in the form of signals depend on need dispositions and merely announce preselected instinctual objects, the symbolic significations rendered independent in linguistic systems have acquired power to react back on the interpretation of the needs themselves. Action theory relies on this state of affairs in presupposing that a course of action must be grasped through the interpretation of the actor himself--the motive for action shifts from the level of the drive system to that of linguistic communication. In contrast, behavioural research--even when concerned with social action--requires an orientation in which linguistic symbols are once again conceived as signals, motivation through symbolized meaning as drive motivation, and intentional actions as modes of stimulated behaviour.⁵⁵

In light of the foregoing we come to recognize the symbol as a potentially powerful agent of socio-political transformation. Utopian symbolism, for example, can

⁵⁵J. Habermas, Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970), p. 73. Passage quoted in McCarthy, p. 151.

initiate social transformation insofar as it becomes the potential project of a given social group. Its meaning is not literal, but symbolic, and offers the hope of a better world to be attained.* This is as true of the utopianism found in Marx as of any other. As a social group or a given society "resolves itself along the lines of the symbol" it undergoes several phases of transformation. The development is that from a state of general unawareness to that of a heightened political and social consciousness; often involving the desire to achieve some ultimate goal.⁵⁶

Initially, individuals or groups may find themselves living in a system of "thought and value closed to potential alternatives". In such a situation the dominant values and norms of a given society are accepted without question. It is this kind of situation in which Marx saw the proletariat as living, while at the same time seeing within that class the possibility for change. For years workers lived in "almost total unawareness of their potential rights" and were often at the same time almost "unaware of the economic deprivation which was their lot".⁵⁷

*It is important to take note of the fact that the "intention of symbolic language is multivalent, combining levels of reality in such a way that a distinctive universe of meaning is created". Poems and dramas, for example, need to be understood "by a careful revelation of the layers of meaning which they contain". The same may be said to be true of much of political language. See Rasmussen, pp. 7-24.

⁵⁶Rasmussen, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 87.

In what Rasmussen refers to as the second phase of transformation we find the coming to consciousness of individual or group as a result of the "imposition of the symbol on the unconscious situation"; raising the group to a level of conscious awareness and reflection that was not possible before. Now we find juxtaposed to the original condition of servitude and ordinary common sense experience an alternate possibility, and common interest, represented by the symbols of freedom and harmony. Whereas the first phase of transformation is essentially pre-reflective, in that the "common sense world of experience" is simply accepted as given and unalterable, the second phase involves a conscious and reflective awareness of the situation.

At this level (i.e. the first) the terms discrimination or freedom from discrimination are not meaningful, for no one is aware of the basic discontinuities being experienced by the present group. To understand the meaning of discrimination assumes that one is cognizant of and has begun to question his ordinary status within the society. The second phase of transformation involves the process of becoming reflectively aware of one's own experience. It is at this point that one questions that set of "assumed to be true" values and judgements which were heretofore accepted as valid.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 87. Of interest here are the insights of Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz concerning the structure of bias argument. See P. Bachrach and M. Baratz, "Decisions and Non-Decisions: An Analytical Framework", APSR, Vol. 57 (Sept. 1963), pp. 632-642. And also their "Two Faces of Power", APSR, Vol. 52 (June 1958), pp. 463-469.

It is at this point that the symbol functions as an agent of transformation and presents both group and individual with a different and, one might suggest, more profound interpretation of experience. With respect to our example of utopian symbolism it is now the symbol of a just society which juxtaposes the pre-reflective understanding of social experience with a now reflective and critical understanding of that experience. Beyond this, the symbol also comes to provide the group with a project or given course of action that it may decide to adopt as its own.⁵⁹

At the third stage of transformation we come to the problem of decision. The symbol not only offers an invitation for reflection but also for action; that is, it offers the possibility of a choice. The symbol "outlines a future meaning toward which a group may project itself" and whether or not it so does will depend on the group resolve. In light of our earlier discussion, it will depend on the genuineness and sincerity of the intentions of those involved in setting the course of action.* In terms of the

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 88.

*The close connection between the symbol and ideology is apparent. Ideologies may, as Rasmussen suggests (p. 89), be viewed as composed of a series of primary symbols. However, one must be careful not to lose sight of the fact that rather than being motives of change, ideologies are also strong deterrants to it. It is through the reflective critique of existing ideologies and the subsequent suggestion of new projects that change is often spurred.

process of political action and the movement from seriality* to group resolve the symbol again performs an important function. Groups may emerge for a variety of reasons. These may include external threats, certain needs, problems of alienation and the need to find purpose and a variety of others depending upon historical and social circumstance. Though these reasons, or needs, can often be easily recognized, without the mediating influence of the symbol group resolve would be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain in other than a serial manner. It is the "symbol which functions as the medium for the process of group formation". As an illustrative example of a symbol's transformative power in bringing about a new consciousness and group identity one need only look at the recent phenomenon of Black Power in the United States. The articulation of this symbol provided both a critique of existing conditions and a project to be realized for the future. The symbol presented a "foundation for both reflection and action (decision) which had an enormous impact on the transformation of black consciousness moving from a relatively amorphous mass with no consciousness of itself to an

*Witness Sartre's example of people standing at a bus stop. One of the dangers of technological rationality in terms of both the desire for control and explanation, is that it simply views individuals as serially related. The assumption is necessary for the effective application of control techniques, but from the perspective of problems of explanation and understanding it cannot adequately deal with the question of how a group serially related develops a common sense of purpose. See Rasmussen, p. 90.

articulate political group with self-awareness, self-identity and, to be sure, power".⁶⁰

The importance of the symbol as an agent of transformation, along with a concern for a future project, is also to be found in Marx. What is being striven for is a realm of human existence, a realm of freedom, in which men relate to each other cooperatively in the fulfillment of their truly human needs. Thus, communism becomes the ideal which

...is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a social, i.e. really human, being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development.⁶¹

It is only by achieving this ultimate goal that man can, according to Marx, become fully human.

The positive supersession of private property, as the appropriation of human life, is, therefore, the positive supersession of all alienation, and the return of man from religion, the family, the state, etc. to his human, i.e. social life. Religious alienation as such occurs only in the sphere of consciousness, in the inner life of man, but economic alienation is that of real life and its supersession, therefore, affects both aspects.⁶²

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 89-92.

⁶¹ K. Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts", in T. B. Bottomore, Karl Marx: Early Writings (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 155.

⁶² Ibid., p. 156.

The symbol of the future society outlined, albeit not very explicitly, by Marx, performs all the necessary functions of the symbol as an agent of transformation and group resolve. It operates at all levels--reflection, critique and decision.

Yet, though Marx often spoke in symbolic (utopian) terms he never really seems to have come to grips with the importance of the symbol as an agent of change. There is a constant tension between the necessity to strive for this consciously sought after good and the belief, on the other hand, that real change would only come through the inevitable development of material contradictions. It is perhaps due to the neglect of the power of the symbolic realm (except in its negative sense of a restrictive bourgeois ideology) and its concomittent realization of the importance of intentional action, that Marx never explicitly formulated his materialist interpretation of history. As Kamenka has noted:

...the materialist interpretation of history...comes out...as a theory that is formulated loosely, ambiguously, without proper care; it is never demonstrated in detail in even a single case; it is frequently ignored and virtually subverted in the discussion of concrete social developments. Its most concrete point seemed to be that economic conditions determine ideology and never vice versa, yet even this had to be modified the moment it was seriously questioned.⁶³

⁶³Kamenka, p. 140.

As a consequence of this tension, what we find in Marx, is that the process of reflection is ultimately reduced to the level of instrumental action and is eliminated as a motive force of history only to be replaced by productive activity. The nature of reflection is reduced to labour.⁶⁴ Yet, at the same time, and as seen in our previous chapter, Marx also makes room for the fact that the emancipation of the proletariat requires revolutionary activity and the reflective critique of ideology. This was a tension which Marx was never able to resolve.

However, though Marx may not have been precise on all matters he did have a definite programme of action in mind--one leading to an ultimate good. And this intended good, as much as anything else, was to provide the spur to action. Marx's programme for political change could then also be dealt with from our general perspective of the categories of Intent, Idea, Form, and End.*

⁶⁴J. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 43-46. This problem led to Marx's never explicitly dealing with the meaning of a science of man. As Habermas goes on to note: "He considered unnecessary an epistemological justification of social theory" and thereby continually compared his analysis to the natural sciences. However, "Science in the rigorous sense lacks precisely the element of reflection that characterizes a critique investigating the natural-historical process of the self-generation of the social subject and also making the subject conscious of this process".

*Of particular interest here are some of the precepts offered by Marx and Engels for the revolutionizing and re-organization of the mode of production as set down in the Communist Manifesto. See K. Marx and F. Engels, Manifesto of The Communist Party, p. 126.

In light of our rather lengthy analysis we can now summarize our argument in diagramatic form. (See last page this chapter.) What the model highlights is the importance of intent within the general process of action. Intent is, in turn, connected to the idea (the design phase) and ideology which expresses the normative consensus under which components are conditioned. It is here where Marx's notion of ideology as false consciousness is particularly important for, as we have seen, the incursion of new ideologies can in fact make for system change or disintegration.* It is because of this that elites will always insist upon a particular normative consensus within given parameters. Action is the realm of creative endeavour, largely the purview of leading components, and therefore linked to intent whereas behaviour is a sub-category comprising the performance of component functions. Thus, Intent and Motive give us the why? of the matter, Idea and Ideology the how? and its justification and Action and Behaviour the what? or the expression of intent in concrete form.

*The maintenance of this consensus is particularly important with respect to the prevention of sub-components pursuing their "own" intentions which may come to run contrary to those of the original initiators.

**We should here note that, while GST can help us in providing an argument for the necessity of taking into account the role of intent it cannot help us choose.

between competing epistemologies. Indeed, in the final analysis, it can function only as a mid-range or middle level theory. Thus, when dealing with the explanation and analysis of intention and motive statements we were best able to deal with the matter from the traditional hermeneutic approach. GST could not help us here.

PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

CHAPTER V
CATEGORIES FOR THE EXPLANATION
OF PARTY DIFFERENCES

Given the condition of contemporary political reality in Canada one might be wont to define, or for that matter dismiss, politics as the pursuit of "cardinal" self-interest. Increasingly we are confronted by the particularisms of social groups and provincial governments. The problem, itself, may simply be a reflection of a deeper malaise referred to by George Grant, amongst others, and that is the almost uncritical acceptance and longevity of our liberal bourgeois world in the English speaking countries.¹ However, as we have argued, if democratic politics is to make any sense then there must at least be something to choose from amongst the various parties seeking office. At the same time we suggest that the oft perceived, and real, ideological congruence among our parties may be due to reasons other than their pursuit of self-interest alone, though the latter cannot be dismissed as being of operative importance. Reducing the similarities among our parties to the pursuit of self-interest alone may, in fact, stem from a misunderstanding of the constituents of the dominant belief

¹George Parkin Grant, English Speaking Justice (Sackville: Mount Allison University Press, 1974).

structures in our political culture. We will return to this matter in our next chapter.

What we propose to do here is to offer some general categories which might aid in determining party differences and similarities. In the case of an ideology which represents a definite negation and critique of the existing order the role and influence of ideas are easily discernible when related to a programme of political action. The intentions of Marxists, for example, are easily determined insofar as they represent a definite critique of the existing order and offer us a definite alternative in terms of political action and social programmes. The problem of discerning the influence of the role of ideas becomes problematic when dealing with those who, though representing different ideologies and systems of thought, take the worth of the dominant values and institutions of a society largely for granted and who thus uphold and justify them. This is frequently the case with our two major political parties. Although both Conservatives and Liberals differ in certain ways they tend to be representatives of the prevailing status quo; though this is not necessarily to assert that they are completely uncritical of the given state of affairs. It simply means that insofar as there exists a relatively high agreement on certain fundamentals the "role of ideas" becomes more difficult to discern. Again, what we then

(continued on page after chart)

3

Factors Making for Similarities and
Differences Between Parties

	Factors Making for Differences	Factors Making for Similarities
Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ideology 2. Fundamental Commitments 3. Election Promises 4. Rhetoric 5. Internal and External Group Influence 6. Desire and Need to be Different 7. Majority-Minority Situation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Realities 2. Civil Service Influence 3. Inherited Commitment 4. Given Factors 5. Past Compromises 6. Electoral Competition 7. Public Expenditure 8. Majority-Minority Situation 9. Ideology
Opposition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ideology 2. Criticism of Government 3. Role of Opposition 4. Desire and Need to be Different 5. Rhetoric 6. Size and Membership in House 7. Internal and External Group Influence 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prospect of Government 2. Electoral Competition 3. Past Compromises 4. Ideology

propose to do here is to offer some preliminary categories which need to be kept in mind when dealing with party differences and similarities.

Our interest is in isolating the "ideological" factor in order to be able to determine its importance. It is this residual category which is of primary concern here. The preceding figure helps to highlight those factors which are important in determining differences between "major parties" in liberal democracies.

FACTORS MAKING FOR DIFFERENCES

Ideology

As has already been noted, although there exists a fairly high level of congruence between our two major political parties, and the Conservatives in particular espouse values which encourage congruence, each still retains certain fundamental divergent values that come into play when shaping important social policies. The underlying ideological commitment of a party will also influence the manner in which that party goes about approaching the fulfillment of various political values. Conservatives, for instance, would be significantly more hesitant about the virtues of popular sovereignty than, say, the Liberals. Though a Conservative may uphold the notion of popular sovereignty as a general good, though he is more likely to espouse parliamentary sovereignty, he would nevertheless

be more hesitant than the Liberal in trusting or relying upon the will and desires of the majority. The Conservative would also be much more hesitant or cautious with regard to such matters as institutional reform and change. He would much rather put his faith in the "tried and true" than in some new and novel formula for the amelioration of a particular problem. Liberals would tend to argue more in favour of egalitarianism while the conservative would tend also to uphold the right to be unequal. For the conservative, individual rationality will occupy a secondary role to the "wisdom of the ages". Whereas the liberal would be more likely than the conservative to argue in favour of individual rights, the conservative would place a larger emphasis on the responsibility of the individual to the community rather than only to himself. Thus, the emphasis for the conservative would be as much on obligation as on individual rights.

It is these and similar fundamental ideological values of a given party that will colour its general outlook and approach to problems. The worth of an important policy will at some point or other be viewed in terms of the extent to which it helps either to fulfill or retard our general approximation of these values. However, insofar as fundamental values, and their role in determining policy, are different to discern the ideological influence may only become apparent when other exigencies have been accounted for.

Fundamental Commitments

Another factor which may help make the differences between parties clearer and which is also an integral part of the previously discussed ideological category, is that of a party's commitment to certain long-term aims. It differs from the ideological category in that although ideological values can be expected to be quite pronounced, what comes into play are not only underlying values but also concrete programmes of action. Over a period of time a party may come to identify itself with a deep commitment to a particular good or fundamental policy which does not form as substantive a part of the other party's programme. Thus, the intensity of commitment to provide for a more equitable distribution of the national product may vary considerably between parties as might the best considered approach for the approximation of such a particular goal. Notions concerning the legitimate degree of state intervention within the economy may be another such example, with one party seeing certain virtues in the nationalization of various sectors of industry while the other, though also committed to economic stability and growth, may prefer and argue in favour of a different approach. Once a party commits itself to the fulfillment of a particular goal, such as, say, increased bilingualism or the establishment of comprehensive social security, it will often be difficult for it to divest itself of such a goal even when political opportunism may

dictate that it do so. Consistency in pronounced aims and the subsequent attempt at their fulfillment is an important factor in maintaining party legitimacy among the electorate. No party can ever permit itself to become completely opportunistic in the game of electoral politics.

Internal and External Influences

This category is composed of those influences which stem from internal party organizations, splinter groups amongst the elected representatives themselves, and sympathetic external or affiliated pressure groups. Thus a party may seek advice from certain intellectuals within the academic community or be privy to certain demands from leading pressure groups whose support it may seek and who feel that their aims may best be pursued by aligning themselves with that major party most likely to be sympathetic to their desires. Thus, even within the Progressive Conservative Party, one can see differences between the so-called left and right wings of the party.* Such a tension can be considerably different from tensions within the Liberal Party and, depending upon which faction is most influential or successful in having its policies and stances adopted, may help in differentiating it from the opposing party. For instance, whereas proponents of free enterprise,

*Given the ideological affinity of Canadian political parties, one may indeed find greater intra-party differences than between the median positions of the parties.

such as Sinclair Stevens, would tend to put their faith almost exclusively in economic growth and individual initiative, there are those others who, like John Fraser, would place a greater emphasis upon "customs, traditions and institutions that have stood the test of time". Party researchers and strategists would be another source of intra-party influence particularly if after a successful election they become appointed to strategic posts.

Election Promises and Rhetoric

During elections parties often commit themselves to a variety of goals and once elected there is at least some pressure to fulfill those promises. Parties are often sensitive to charges of broken promises that may come to haunt them at a later date. During elections parties may also tend to be more rhetorical in exaggerating real and apparent differences between themselves and others. When this is the case one will have to relate pronouncements back to fundamental ideological commitments in order to determine whether electoral rhetoric is just so much window-dressing and then see how these are implemented in future policy decisions.

The Need to Be Different

At election time each party has at least some need to differentiate itself from others in order that the voter be given some reason for making an other than completely irrational or mere personal choice. This differentiation

may vary from simply exaggerated rhetorical differences to fundamental policy stances which may indeed provide for a substantial difference.

Majority-Minority Situation in the House

Whether or not a governing party commands a majority in the House comes to bear upon its range of options. If it needs the support of one of the other parties it may have to tailor its policies accordingly. However, should it command a majority these restraints upon its action would not be significant. The relative strength of a party can then prove to be a determinant of either increased differences or similarities between itself and the others. A strong opposition faced with a weak and vulnerable majority, or a minority party holding the balance of power, may have a considerable impact upon governmental decisions and will try to impress its point of view whenever possible. However, there is always a limit to the degree of compromise which the ruling party can make, and if not forced to call an election through parliamentary defeat, it can always decide to do so on its own. This power of the ruling party may then also act as a break on the demands of the opposition--particularly those of a minor party, holding the balance in the House, which has found itself in a position of power and bargaining strength it previously lacked. In fact, by supporting the government it may try to take part credit for any popular measures enacted.

Role of Opposition and Criticism of Government

One of the advantages of the opposition role is the factor of irresponsibility. That is, opposition parties can vote for or demand a variety of expensive and popular amendments to government legislation. If they succeed in their demands the government will have to find the appropriate funds and if they fail they can always accuse the government of being unresponsive. There is a double advantage to this: if the opposition is successful it may be able to take credit for the desired changes while the government may have to raise taxes in order to initiate the new programme and thereby face the ire of tax payers.

Insofar as it is the function of opposition parties to oppose, there will be an incentive for them to find and emphasize differences between themselves and the government as succeeding legislative matters come to be proposed. Over a period of time the sought after differences may in fact become part of their next election platform or party manifesto, and ultimately of their deeply held commitments.

FACTORS MAKING FOR SIMILARITIES

Having looked at some of the factors which make for the differences amongst parties we can now look at those which are influential in promoting party congruence.

Economic Realities

Economic conditions, favourable or unfavourable, will always have a significant influence on governmental policy.

Insofar as all parties once in office are faced with similar social problems and demands, the limited resources available for dealing with these matters will play an important role in curtailing the scope of governmental action. This is especially true of contending parties that accept the legitimacy of a particular form of economic organization; and with this, limited resources may only permit a limited number of approaches and solutions to particular problems. Although there may be disagreement as to the extent of state interference within the economic realm, many major parties within liberal-democratic countries have a commitment to uphold the free enterprise system.

Inherited Commitment and Given Factors

When a new party assumes power it does not do so in a legislative vacuum. Each new government will be faced with administrative programmes set in motion by the previous administration, and, more often than not, these programmes will be difficult, if not impossible, to reverse or change quickly, if at all. Previous policies may very well be left alone because of cost in time and effort involved in changing them and also because of the difficulty in finding an expedient and suitable alternative. Furthermore, certain public sectors may have come to expect and depend upon the benefits of such policies and it might therefore be electorally unwise to alter them in any significant way.

A new government may also come closer to its predecessor once it has to deal with a variety of real social problems which it may have tended to ignore or misunderstand while in opposition. Once in office it may find that the possible solutions to those problems may not be as varied as it had once thought; and thus when dealing with the relevant interest groups involved the problem of compromise will once more come to the fore.

In a federal system such as Canada's the problem of dealing with provincial demands and rights will also have to be taken into account. Thus no matter which party holds federal office it will be confronted with similar provincial demands and again the options of dealing with these will need to be tailored accordingly. Provincial demands may then also provide for increased pressure towards similarities between major parties. When taking office a party will be confronted with handling certain inherited commitments and certain "givens" of the general political situation.

Electoral Competition and Past Compromises

Although most major parties have a fairly regular and steady support base there may often exist large minorities that cut across party lines and for which the parties may bid. Thus parties may be inclined to offer similar "goods" to these groups in order to win them over to their respective sides. For example, parties may offer pensioners an increase in their stipend or make guarantees for ethnic

minorities. Over a period of time these commitments and compromises may become part of the general package offered by both parties at succeeding elections and written into their general party manifestos.

Public Expenditure

No matter which party is in power there is usually a steady growth in public expenditure. Even though an incoming government may be committed to restraints upon or even reductions in public expenditures the attempts are more often than not only minimally successful. One of the reasons for this may simply be ministerial or bureaucratic defence of particular budgets; the more a minister can get for his department and its varied programmes the more successful he may consider himself to be. Programmes such as social security benefits may be simply uncontrollable insofar as they depend upon the number of people eligible for benefits. In matters such as language training in order to increase bilingualism in the federal services, productivity cannot be said to increase in any traditional sense because there is no real output and therefore the only manner for providing increased services is to provide for more bilingually trained civil servants and this then necessarily requires increased expenditure.

Public Service Influence

The continuity and influence of the public service also helps to provide for congruence between the major

parties. Incoming governments may find it difficult to foist new or radical programmes upon an entrenched and traditional bureaucracy. Governments will also get much of their advice from senior civil servants who have come to identify themselves with particular programmes and ways of doing things. Bureaucratic scenarios for handling social problems will not change--other perhaps than tactically--with a change in parties.

Prospect of Government

When an opposition party finds itself confronted with the prospect of government it might very well decide to temper some of its more radical stances in order not to jeopardize its chances. Once office becomes a reality it will also be confronted with translating election promises and manifesto pledges into concrete programmes; at this moment the realities of bureaucratic influence, compromise and the dealing with various interest groups will come to the fore.

Ideology

Ideology may, of course, also function as a factor making for similarities. In Canada this is, in part, simply due to the ideological affinity of our two major parties. Also, given the role of the modern state, its management requires that one adhere to some basic principles of organization to which most, if not all, can agree.

From the above rather brief and impressionistic analysis it becomes painfully obvious that the problem of delineating ideological influence in party policies and programmes is no mean task. It is only after we have accounted for a variety of other factors that we are then able to go about delineating the "role of ideas" in political behaviour. However, though the task may be arduous it is certainly important and indeed necessary to the understanding of human behaviour. It is our values and the manner in which we pursue their realization that define our essence as human beings.

CHAPTER VI

ASPECTS OF CANADIAN POLITICAL CULTURE

Until now our interests have been primarily theoretical. We have concentrated on the epistemological problems of taking into account the role of ideas and intentions in explanations of political behaviour. Having done so it is now incumbent upon us to apply our insights to a concrete situation.

In light of recent political developments it seems particularly appropriate that we apply our analysis to the ongoing debate over Canadian Federalism. It is during times such as these that one might readily expect political ideology and the intentions of significant actors to play an important role in the attempted restructuring or maintenance of political institutions and action programmes. Though this is by no means to suggest that we have begun by pre-judging the case. Nor are we suggesting that the questioning of Canadian constitutional arrangements is peculiar to the present. However, it is within recent years that the collapse of Canadian federalism has become a distinct possibility; and political debate over the matter has heightened appreciably.

In order fully to understand the present problems of union we need also take account of the intentions of its

founders. As we have already shown, the intentions of action programmes may take considerable time to be fulfilled and will inevitably be subject to the vagaries of sub-organizational components, poor planning or changing circumstances. At the same time it is during times of crises and rapid change that we often return to an examination of original intentions, and, as a consequence, we can expect these first principles to provide certain limits to the scope of attempted changes. Some might be inclined to view such an examination of first principles as little more than the trodding of well worn ground. Yet, we cannot fully appreciate the present without an understanding of the past and must at the same time recognize that the success of any political programme will depend on the soundness of its foundation. What we then find in the humanities is that solutions to problems are, often as not, arrived at via critical reflection and the examination of first principles rather than through the discovery of new evidence. This is not to say that new evidence is not a welcome addition but it is rather to assert that moments of reflection are of equal importance--for, after all, the most important methodological tool to which we have access lies between our ears. Those recognizing the importance of such an enterprise, and who oft find themselves defending it against the data gatherers and methodological purists, may find some solace in the following observation.

Obviously historiography cannot be a science. It can only be an industry, an art, and a philosophy--an industry by ferreting out the facts, an art by establishing a meaningful order in the chaos of materials, a philosophy by seeking perspective and enlightenment. The present is the past rolled up for action, and the past is the present unrolled for understanding.¹

I Canadian Ideology and the Problem of Conservatism

Before entering a discussion of the intentions of the founders of Confederation, we must first deal with certain questions concerning Canadian political ideology. The quarrelsome issue facing us here is that pertaining to the nature and influence of conservatism in this country. There is little, if any, debate over the existence and influence of either liberalism or socialism. Conservatism, however, has been more difficult to come to terms with. In a current text on Canadian politics, liberalism and socialism are given what the authors refer to as "an incontestable actuality" while conservatism is dismissed as never having taken root. Rather than having had a debate between two competing ideologies--liberalism and conservatism--what we in fact have had, so the argument goes, is a debate within one ideology--liberalism. As a consequence the authors argue that differences within an ideology can be as significant as differences between ideologies and that it is the failure

¹W. and A. Durant, The Lessons of History (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 12.

of not having recognized this which has led many analysts in a vain search for the conservative aspect of Canadian ideology. Thus, it is concluded that

...neither Disraelian nor Burkean conservatism took root in Canada. Furthermore, Canadian liberalism will not be marked by the penchant of English liberals to blame various forms of social distress on the landed class, even when much social upheaval was the result of Liberal, rather than Conservative policy.²

We can quite readily concede the absence of Disraeli's brand of conservatism, but when the influence of Burke is dismissed in the same breath one need pause and wonder whether these gentlemen have perhaps not been too hasty.

Though the authors quite rightly stress the central role played by tradition within conservative thought they place an inordinate amount of emphasis on the notion of the "organic" community--an element they believe fundamental both to Burke and Disraeli. Thus,

Conservatism is based upon a conception of an organic community, clearly delineated class divisions arranged hierarchically and dominated by the landed proprietors, a respect for ancient traditions, and a defence of establishment, throne, and altar.³

It is this emphasis on the conception of an "organic community" which has led to some of the problems in our

²W. L. White, R. H. Wagenburg, R. C. Nelson, Introduction to Canadian Government and Politics (Toronto: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1972), p. 156.

³Ibid., p. 155.

coming to terms with Canadian conservatism and which has also led to our constant chasing of the "Red Tory" phantom. On the one hand, the dilemma stems from the failure of certain intellectuals not having adequately distinguished between feudal and bourgeois conservatism in their analysis of Canadian ideology. On the other hand, the emphasis so often placed on the "Tory Streak" may simply be a reflection of the desire to somehow distinguish Canadian ideology from its American counterpart. However, this emphasis has done little to enhance our understanding of Canadian history. As noted by McRae,

...much of Canadian history has been distorted by being placed within an almost exclusively North American frame of reference, and by a tendency to magnify ideological distinctions between English Canada and the United States as a means of asserting a Canadian political identity. If these ideological differences are small, there is no need to inflate them, or to invent new ones, because political identity is not necessarily founded on ideological distinctiveness.⁴

In a recent article entitled "The Myth of The Red Tory", R. Preece comes to challenge some of the conventionally held, and cherished, wisdoms of Canadian politics. At issue is the conception of Canadian conservatism as set forth by Horowitz⁵ and those others who place a strong emphasis on

⁴K. D. McRae, "Louis Hartz's Concept of the Fragment Society and Its Application"; A paper presented to the Colloquium on Ideology and Political Life, Toronto, 1977, p. 8.

⁵This argument is well known and there is no need to re-iterate it at length here.

the importance of the Tory touch. According to Preece the Horowitz thesis is misleading with regard both to the history and the philosophy of Conservatism. For Horowitz, the British and Canadian Conservatives have some important pre-capitalist, collectivist traditions which still influence their outlook. It is these pre-liberal values which have permitted their supposedly less reluctant, though still grudging, acceptance of the welfare state. Aside from enabling Conservatives to rationalize their acceptance of the welfare state these notions have also permitted them to develop a concern, albeit a paternalistic one, for the working class, and to even view themselves as the champion of the working class against the less enlightened elements of the bourgeoisie. As a consequence Canadian Conservatism not only has its fair share of "orthodox elitist--collectivist toryism, but also an element of tory democracy or tory radicalism". Both the British and Canadian Conservative parties are then seen as still having significant strains of old pre-liberal values.⁶

In opposition to this Preece has come to argue that,

...Conservatism is explicitly more a form of Whig than Tory doctrine, and has been since its origins in the nineteenth century--and hence "business liberalism" is an integral not an alien aspect of Conservatism; ...Grant, Horowitz, and Christian and Campbell

⁶G. Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), pp. 19-21.

confuse Conservatism with absolutism and romanticism; ...the Toryism they describe has had a negligible effect on English Canadian political practice, at least since the 1840's--and for that matter, its influence on British Conservatism has been of only secondary significance.⁷

In terms of historical development Preece sees three major oppositional strains as having emerged in response to the French Revolution--absolutism, political romanticism, and Burkean Whiggism. Though these strains are discrete, and often contradictory, they have been commonly labelled conservative. This tendency to ascribe to such discrete phenomena a common designation has done little to facilitate our understanding of the nature of the conservatism which has influenced Canada.⁸

For Preece the conservatism which has been most, if not exclusively, influential in the English speaking world is that of Burkean Whiggism; which differs substantially from the other two. As regards the influence of reactionary absolutism the author finds the best, and longest-lived, version to have existed in the "successive and confused Germanic regimes of the nineteenth century". For intellectual legitimation one here turned to the likes of von Gentz and Hegel. Von Gentz, the publicist, used the principle of legitimacy to "defend the regimes of Metternich

⁷R. Preece, "The Myth of The Red Tory" in Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring - Summer, 1977), p. 4.

⁸Ibid., p. 5.

and the Holy Alliance". Although he may have been a popularizer of Burke and although he viewed Burke as a defender both of the constitution of the ancien regime and its aims and values, the differences between the two are profound.

The principle of legitimacy amounts to no more than a resurrection of the medieval dictum that something is justifiable if it has been sanctioned by history; previous practice is itself a guarantee of appropriateness. Prima facie this resembles Burke's view of prescription whereby a constitution has legitimacy "because it is a constitution whose sole authority is that it has existed time out of mind". The difference is that, for Burke, the prescriptive constitution was the appropriate vehicle for reform, albeit reform with a delicate touch; for von Gentz, the principle of legitimacy was the means to evade reform. Von Gentz stressed tradition, order and stability, as did Edmund Burke, but whereas Burke developed these principles as the means to liberty, von Gentz employed them to avoid the necessity of liberty.⁹

The kind of thinking espoused by von Gentz found little, if any, sympathy in Britain and was certainly not influential in the founding of the Canadian state. As Preece cogently notes, as regards British ideational history "to find a philosopher remotely representing 'corporate-organic-collectivist' thinking one has to resort to work prior to the revolution of 1688, to the hapless Robert Filmer and his

⁹Ibid., p. 6.

Patriarcha published in 1680".¹⁰

Political romanticism, the second reaction against the French Revolution, comes to be identified with such individuals as Joseph de Maistre, Louis de Bonald and Félicité de Lamennais. Here we find the reiteration of the virtues of "absolutist royalism and paternalistic religion". Man, it was felt, needed to be governed and preferably governed according to "transcendental and usually ultramontanist principles". If these virtues were to be extolled and maintained then the revolutionary conceptions of individual liberty, materialism, and scientific rationalism would have to be abandoned. The most influential spokesman to emerge from this romantic tradition, however, was the German Adam Müller who, according to Preece, "thought of the cooperative society of medieval feudalism as an absolute ideal".¹¹ For Müller,

The state is not a mere industry, an estate, an insurance agency or a commercial establishment; it is the earnest association of the total physical and spiritual needs, the total physical and spiritual property, the total domestic and external life of a nation in one great energetic, infinite and active whole.¹²

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 7-8. According to the author Toryism as a philosophy in Britain was of little consequence by 1688. By 1789 it was ceasing to even have influence as an ideology despite its resurrection in novel form by Carlyle and Disraeli.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 8.

¹² Ibid., p. 9. Quoted from Von der Idee des Staates (1809) reprinted in Albert Baumhauer et al., Dokumente zur Christlichen Demokratie, Eicholz, 1969, p. 33.

In this we of course find the notion of the organic state so often ascribed as an integral part of Horowitz's Red Tory. Here the state is no mere aggregation of individuals but is rather viewed as an organic whole whose function is not only the maintenance of law and order but also the political, social, moral and religious education of its citizens.¹³ In Müller we also find that criticism of unchecked industrialism so much a part of Horowitz's "Tory democracy". Thus, for Müller

When the division of labour in the large cities and manufacturing and mining regions dissects men--fully free men--into wheels, cogs, cylinders, spokes, spindles and the like, it restricts them to a totally one-dimensional sphere of the satisfaction of a single need.¹⁴

However, for Müller the condition can only be ameliorated through the re-institution of corporative feudalism. This was most clearly shown in his reaction to the attempted modernization (rationalization) of Prussian agriculture and commerce under Karl von Hardenberg. Upon becoming State chancellor von Hardenberg issued "a number of financial laws, designed to bring about a revolution from above". Some of the reforms included the secularization of church property, a general ground tax, a general tax on luxury items and a proclamation of complete freedom of trade.

¹³Preece, p. 9. See also K. F. Reinhardt, Germany: 2000 Years (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1971), Vol. 11, p. 498.

¹⁴Quoted in Preece, p. 9.

For Hardenberg, as for Smith, "unlimited competition was 'the best incentive and regulative principle of industry'". The new legislation was based on the liberal precepts of "equality before the law, freedom of ownership, and freedom of contract".¹⁵

When, through the efforts of Albrecht Thaer and his The Principles of A Rational Agriculture, the profit motive was made "the basic principle of agriculture" it was only natural that the old "patriarchal economic ethics" would come under strong attack. The purpose of agriculture now was to produce for maximum profit--it was to be understood and dealt with as any of the other economies. The landed nobility countered these reforms with appeals to the old patriarchal order and the sentimental attachment to the soil assumed to have been a part of both aristocrat and peasant. For the nobility the system of traditional agricultural organization was more than economic; "for them agricultural activity was a moral 'office', performed in the service of State and community". Personal service and obligation was being replaced by "devotion to the impersonal power of money" and with this, it was felt, one would inevitably also have the subjugation of agriculture to trade and manufacture. Thus, the patriarchal system of agriculture was more than mere economics, indeed, it was considered by its proponents to have been "a divinely

¹⁵Reinhardt, p. 435.

established order, the basis of family and State alike, an order that was arbitrarily threatened and disturbed by the innovators..."¹⁶

In Britain vestiges of political romanticism could be found in the works of such literary figures as Carlyle, Southey and Coleridge as well as in the writings, if not always in the political practice, of Disraeli. The romantics attacked laissez-faire economics and democratization. As in Prussia, they sought the strong paternalistic state. Similar sentiments were espoused by Disraeli in his desire for "an organic feudal union of the classes of England under the leadership of the traditional landed aristocracy". However, Disraeli was already an anachronism in his own time; his old Tory notions being superceded by the new conservatism. As Preece goes on to cogently note:

The Conservatism which superceded Toryism was a synthesis of waxing Whig and waning Tory doctrines, sympathetic to the burgeoning capitalism, favourable to greater religious toleration and amenable to, if not enthusiastic about, the political emancipation of the middle classes. It was this novel phenomenon, inspired by Pitt's policies at the end of the eighteenth century and brought to fruition by Peel in the 1830's and 40's which was repudiated by Disraeli... Certainly, Disraeli was an anachronism in the British Conservative Party, a relic of a past that had died before the close of the eighteenth century and a phenomenon that was not to be repeated in the

¹⁶Ibid., p. 436.

Conservative Party after the
Victorian age of equipoise had
closed...¹⁷

II Burke and Modern Conservatism

The third type of reaction against the French Revolution, considered by Preece, was that brand of conservatism expressed in the writings of Edmund Burke. The sentiments expressed therein were decidedly more in tune with the emerging bourgeois era. It is through an evaluation of Burke that Preece hopes to clear up some of the problems in our understanding of Canadian political ideology. Essential to the argument is the notion that conservatism and classical liberalism are in essence "merely different emphases within the same general doctrine".¹⁸ By establishing this point, though in itself not a particular novelty, the author is able to demonstrate the inappropriateness of the notions of organicism and collectivism for an accurate understanding of both conservatism and Canadian ideology in general. We are now able to avoid the pitfalls of Horowitz on the one hand and those of White and associates on the other. With respect to the former we can cease chasing the ever illusive tory phantom and with respect to the latter we are able to establish that conservatism indeed did ~~not~~ take root in Canada. The major error committed by White et al is that,

¹⁷Preece, pp. 10-11.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 11.

from the outset, conservatism is assumed to be necessarily distinct from liberalism--for them the differences are assumed to be differences in kind rather than differences of degree. The Horowitz mistake, of course, is that he is looking for something that could not possibly have taken root in that it had long ceased to have any influence even at its supposed point of origin. Thus, when dealing with the ideological differences between Conservatives and Liberals in Canada, or the English speaking world in general, we should be looking for differences of degree rather than for fundamental differences in kind.

Burke's reaction to change differed considerably from that of the absolutists and political romantics. Whereas Burke was reticent about change he did not oppose it in the sense that these others did. Nor did Burke yearn for the resurrection of an anachronistic past. A slow and imperceptible change was considered the best. However, when necessary, governments should be willing to accommodate themselves to the changing times as well as to the newly emerging needs and desires of their constituents. A wise government is one that does not become obstinate. As Burke argued in the House of Commons:

If there is any one eminent criterion which above all the rest distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this: "well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep"... Early reformatations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late

reforms are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy: early reforms are made in cool blood; late reforms are made under a state of inflammation.¹⁹

When governments cease to be responsive to the needs of their people the latter are likely to resort to the extreme measure of revolution. There comes a point when compromise and reason can no longer prevail. Once this point is reached the people will "...never attempt to correct or regulate; they go to work by the shortest way: they abate the nuisance, they pull down the house".²⁰ Yet, while it is in the interest of governments to act in due course when change is required it is in the interest of the populace that such change not be radical. Moderate reform has a lasting value and the potential for further improvement. Also, while it is in the interest of governments to act in due course when change is required it is in the interest of the populace that such change not be radical. Moderate reform has a lasting value and the potential for further improvement, whereas radical reform leads only to further, and often greater, injustice. In attempting to bring about wholesale change, radical reformers lose sight of what history and experience have taught--particularly when they attempt to proceed according to a pre-conceived all embracing

¹⁹E. Burke, "Speech on the Plan for Economical Reform (1780)", in Bredvold and Ross (eds.), The Philosophy of Edmund Burke (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1977), p. 171.

²⁰Ibid., p. 172.

plan. It is far better to proceed according to the dictates of moderation in that one can at least pause to reflect, examine one's work to date, and then determine whether or not one is on the right track.

...as it is the interest of government that reformation should be early, it is the interest of the people that it should be temperate. It is their interest, because a temperate reform is permanent, and because it has a principle of growth. Whenever we improve it is right to leave room for a further improvement. It is right to consider, to look about us, to examine the effect of what we have done. Then we can proceed with confidence, because we can proceed with intelligence. Whereas in hot reformations, in what men more zealous than considerate call making clear work, the whole is generally so crude, so harsh, so indigested, mixed with so much imprudence and so much injustice, so contrary to the whole course of human nature and human institutions, that the very people who are most eager for it are among the first to grow disgusted at what they have done.²¹

Thus, for Burke, there is an accumulated wisdom in social reason that cannot be found, nor possibly developed, within any one individual's reason. Burke never advocates blind faith, nor an unthinking adherence to the status quo, but does believe that there exists an accumulated wisdom enshrined in a society's institutions and traditions. Nor can the kind of knowledge here alluded to be captured in a series of intellectual abstractions. The human mind is such that "it does not reason reliably about society and politics

²¹Ibid., p. 172.

in the abstract. Time is needed for the achievement of political wisdom, time and the long experience of successive generations".²²

What Burke does is to attack the rationalist-deductive model of his predecessors. It is inappropriate, he felt, to assume a few principles of human nature and from them to go on and deduce an entire descriptive and prescriptive politics. In doing so one tends to ignore the all important empirical circumstances under which men in fact do live and govern. Ruling wisely involves more than being conversant with the logical relationships between abstract principles. For Burke, if one is to rule wisely one must take into account historical circumstance and not simply look to a deductive system based on the relations between abstract ideas which may themselves have no historical basis. Political science, then becomes a science of the common social good insofar as that good is or should be the object of political authority. Authority and liberty are both social values and an increase in one will necessarily involve a decrease in the other. The two cannot, as Rousseau had believed, coexist in their fullness.²³

Furthermore, Burke also realized that social values are very much dependant upon the actual social order of

²²F. Canavan, "Edmund Burke", in Strauss and Cropsey (edits.), History of Political Philosophy (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1972), p. 661

²³W. Bluhm, Theories of the Political System (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1971), pp. 426-428.

which they were a part.) Order emerges as primary to liberty, for without order liberty itself is impossible. Rights and liberties, as they are understood by Burke, can then only be achieved in a society structured "by rank and property".

As Canavan has argued:

Burke conceived of men's rights and liberties as concrete parts of an actual social order on which their existence depended. Rights have meaning and effect only when they exist in a society structured by rank and property, ordered by law, and supported by long-standing sentiments and prejudices. In Burke's social philosophy, therefore, the idea of order is primary, while that of liberty is secondary and functional.²⁴

At the same time man's loyalty to a given order is a matter of cultivation and not only a matter concerning the demonstration of abstract principles; as it was for the rationalists. Thus, political wisdom as a guide to proper action involves an understanding of history and of those institutions which have existed over generations. "The individual will act rationally if he defers to the guidance of the society in which he lives, as it expresses itself over time."²⁵ The art of government is one that takes time to cultivate and one that cannot proceed successfully according to a set of preconceived notions. Nor is it ever a matter of simply starting anew when something goes awry, for the long term effects of a course of action can never

²⁴Canavan, p. 665.

²⁵Bluhm, p. 429.

be predicted. Even those things which seem unjust at the moment can prove to have beneficial results in the long term. As Burke expressed it:

The science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught a priori. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science; because the real effects or moral causes are not always immediate; but that which in the first instance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may arise even from the ill effects it produces in the beginning. The reverse also happens; and very plausible schemes, with very pleasing commencements, have often shameful and lamentable conclusions.²⁶

What we find is that the long-term prosperity of states often depends upon causes of which we may not even be aware and which may not become clear to us for some time. This observation again helps to underline the "practical" nature of politics and the necessity of always approaching legislative matters cautiously.

The science of government being therefore so practical in itself, and intended for such practical purposes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any person can gain in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an

²⁶E. Burke, Reflections On The Revolution In France (London: J. Dodsley, 1790), p. 90.

edifice which has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purposes of society...²⁷

Burke counters the experimental exuberance of the rationalists with a reliance on what he terms "inbred sentiments". In matters of politics and morals, he finds it preferable to rely upon these sentiments as standards of judgement rather than upon the so-called new discoveries of the enlightenment--for the true principles of morality have been with us all along and will be with us for some time to come.

We know that we have made no discoveries; and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality; nor many in the great principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty, which were understood long before we were born, altogether as well as they will be after the grave has heaped its mould upon our presumption...²⁸

Prejudice comes to lose its pejorative connotation and comes to represent that storehouse of wisdom found in Europe's traditional institutions. In fact it is this "prejudice" upon which decision-makers should rely when deciding matters

²⁷Ibid., p. 90. In his First Letter on a Regicide Peace (1796), Burke notes that "the rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact, never universal". In a similar vein he notes in Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents (1770) that "no lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition". See Bredvold and Ross, p. 35.

²⁸Burke, Reflections on The Revolution in France, p. 128.

of state. In so doing, they will never be at a loss during moments of crises. Burke, then, is not in favour of "intellectualizing" the relations between men nor of "intellectualizing" the reasons for their loyalties. For him, the precepts of sound judgement and the reasons for man's political attachments and choices are to be found as much in the non-rational aspects of human nature as they are in reasoned argument. Again, pure "reason" itself is never sufficient for it is our sentiments and prejudices that are the basic guardians and foundations of morality. To quote Burke at some length:

In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; we still feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals...You see, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold to confess, that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of notions, and of ages. Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom

which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, skeptical, puzzled and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.²⁹

Yet, despite the fact that Burke places a good deal of emphasis on the affective aspects of human nature he did not neglect the importance of reason. There is a definite relation between sentiment, or natural affection, and reason. Natural affection, as Canavan notes, helps to "express and manifest the basic needs of human nature" while the function of reason is to "recognize the true structure of human values in and through the affective expression of needs". This structure then becomes formalized in the "rational dictates of moral law". But again, one must be careful to note that those rights to which members of a society are entitled are not matters of a priori precept, nor are they based upon some notion of an abstract

²⁹Ibid., pp. 128-130.

individual in a pre-political state of nature. The statesman is properly concerned with "situations and objectives in regard to which he can act". His good is a concrete good and not the abstract good of the philosopher.³⁰

For Burke, man can only fulfill his potential within the bounds of civil society. Society emerges as an artificial creation which at the same time is man's natural milieu. As Burke argued:

The state of civil society which necessarily generates this aristocracy is a state of Nature--and much more truly so than a savage and incoherent mode of life. For man is by nature reasonable; and he is never perfectly in his natural state, but when he is placed where reason may be best cultivated and most predominates.³¹

The natural (metaphysical) rights which individuals may have possessed within the state of nature cease to have absolute dominion once civil society becomes a reality. These rights can only have meaning insofar as they are adapted by social conventions and buttressed by positive

³⁰Canavan, pp. 660-664. Burke did believe in a natural law doctrine, but treated the application of its principles in a very pragmatic fashion. Burke realized that "our moral instincts" are only the beginning of virtue and must be developed into "firm habits of right behaviour" through the existing social and political institutions. It is through these institutions that the dictates of the natural law are given substance and in conjunction with the wisdom of the ages inherent in them that the dictates are applied. See Bluhm, pp. 432-438. Also, Burke, "Speech on Impeachment of Warren Hastings, February 16, 1788", in Bredvold and Ross, p. 17-20.

³¹Burke, "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents (1770)", in Bredvold and Ross, p. 61.

law. And although society may be founded upon a notion of contract, this contract is for all time and is not to be viewed as a mere convenience or vehicle for the pursuit of self-interest.

These metaphysic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line. Indeed in the gross and complicated mass of human passions and concerns, the primitive rights of men undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes absurd to talk to them **as if they continued** in the simplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity; and therefore, no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs.³²

And further:

Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure-- but the state ought not to be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee... to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence... It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection.³³

If society is necessarily more than a convenience for the pursuit of private interest then so is parliament. The true purpose of the representative is to represent the interests of the nation at large. Though he should be

³²Burke, Reflections On The Revolution In France, p. 91.

³³Ibid., p. 143.

"encouraged" by his constituents to act on their behalf and though he "must be kept in awe of them"³⁴, the representative should ultimately be guided by the interest of the "general good". Once elected, the member becomes a member of Parliament and is therefore more than a mere representative of a particular locality with its peculiar interests.

Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against the agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly on one nation, with one interest, that of the whole--where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament. If the local constituent should have an interest or should form a hasty opinion evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far as any other from any endeavour to give it effect.³⁵

If our examination of Burke does him justice it would indeed be difficult to argue that there is anything of the "corporate-organic-collectivist" to be found in his philosophy. We would, therefore, be in general agreement with Preece when he argues that in the "English-speaking world the conservative differs from the liberal philosophically only by degree". As he goes on to note:

³⁴Burke, "Letter to a Member of the Bell-Club, Bristol" (1777), in Bredvold and Ross, p. 148.

³⁵Burke, "Speech to Electors of Bristol" (1774), in Bredvold and Ross, pp. 147-148.

The abstracted classical liberal philosophy of limited government and economic individualism is restricted by law, order, pragmatism and common sense in the writings of John Locke. Burke recognizes the validity of the same abstractions but restricts them further by prudence, sterner virtues, and, above all, by a critical approach to rationalism--that philosophy whose proponent is described by Michael Oakeshott as standing for "independence of mind on all occasions, for thought free from obligation to any authority save the authority of reason...he is the enemy of authority, of prejudice, of the merely traditional, customary or habitual". And if John Locke was himself sufficiently prudent to avoid most of these errors many of his avowed followers, especially the representatives of the French and American Enlightenment, inherited only a rationalist version of Locke's studiously complex philosophy.³⁶

III: The Self-Dependent Man of John Stuart Mill

While Burke can be seen as representing one aspect of the "liberal" tradition, J. S. Mill emerges as an exponent of the other. For Mill, a truly human existence is one where the individual has control over his own affairs and where he is not subject to the "despotism of custom and opinion."³⁷ The individual is primary and should be given as much scope as possible to develop his potential as he sees fit and not as society or custom may have decided for him. Freedom is found in experimentation rather than in "order" and custom itself is no longer left to the development of slow and imperceptible growth but is now also subject to rational evaluation and choice. As Mill argued

³⁶R. Preece, "The Anglo-Saxon Conservative Tradition," Canadian Journal of Political Science (March, 1980), p. 19.

³⁷Robson, pp. 184-186.

in his essay On Liberty:

...it is important to give the freest scope possible to uncustomary things, in order that it may in time appear which of these are fit to be converted into customs...If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his existence is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode. Human beings are not like sheep; and even sheep are not undistinguishably alike.³⁸

Time honoured custom is not, as it was for Burke, the guarantor of that which is prudent and beneficial. Custom stifles individuality and with the stifling of individuality progress is no longer possible. It is the struggle between custom and individuality that is the driving force of cultural development and once a culture ceases to "possess individuality" it inevitably declines. Whereas the conservative considers custom to be the embodiment of those elements of socio-cultural evolution which are most worth retaining and nurturing, Mill considers custom to be the dominant "hindrance to human advancement". The rule of custom is not something which should be accepted complacently and in opposition to the conservative preference for prudence and tradition Mill poses progress and improvement. According to Mill it was the unquestioned rule of custom which had eventually brought about the downfall of the East. Whereas these nations had at one time flourished their power

³⁸J. S. Mill, Utilitarianism, Liberty, Representative Government (New York: Everyman's Library, 1968), p. 125.

began to decline with the suppression of originality and individuality. The result of the tyranny of custom was that these once powerful states became subjugated by those nations (i.e. the West) over whom "custom exercised only a divided rule with liberty and progress".³⁹

While conservatives like Burke and Hayek recognize the desirability of permitting men to "develop their own individual gifts and talents" they would never place the amount of faith in individual reason and ability that Mill does. Societal achievements are not the result of slow half-conscious growth, as the conservative would have us believe, but are rather the result of individual effort, particularly of the efforts of exceptional individuals. Mill is a firm believer in, and advocate of, the superiority of individual intelligence over society's commonly accepted norms.

No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity...The initiation of all wise or noble things comes and must come from individuals; generally at first from some one individual.⁴⁰

The best thing for the man of average ability to then do, argues Mill, is to follow the initiative of those who are intellectually superior; but to do so with his eyes open.

³⁹Ibid., p. 128.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 124.

This is not to suggest that the man of genius has the right to usurp government and rule according to his own whim, it is only to argue that he has the right "to point out the way". Forcefully compelling others to follow him would be inconsistent "with the freedom and development of the rest" and also corrupting to himself. Yet, exceptional individuals should always be encouraged in acting differently from the general population. The opinions of the masses only exhibit and further mediocrity and without some counterpoise societal development would quickly cease. As the opinions of the masses increasingly become "the dominant power" it is imperative that those of exceptional talent stand in opposition to them.

It is in these circumstances most especially, that exceptional individuals, instead of being deterred, should be encouraged in acting differently from the mass...In this age, the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service.⁴¹

There is no particular value to eccentricity in and of itself. Its value derives from the fact that it inevitably stands in opposition to the tyranny of opinion and whatever can be done to reduce that tyranny should be encouraged. Furthermore, eccentricity has generally been a spur to creativity.

⁴¹Ibid.

Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric. Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.⁴²

Thus, the freedom of expression and the ability to act upon one's beliefs are a necessary ingredient for human development. This judgement is not based on any notion of inherent right but on that of utility. As Mill again argues:

...the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.⁴³

The "ultimate appeal on all ethical questions" is that of utility. However, utility should not be confused with expediency for Mill is quick to point out that this standard of utility "must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of a man as a progressive being".⁴⁴

⁴²Ibid., pp. 124-125.

⁴³Ibid., p. 79.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 74.

On the whole liberty emerges as a "greater utility than either justice or equality". This is, once more, a consequence of the fact that freedom from custom and from majority opinion are necessary prerequisites for progress and for a truly human existence. Any significant development of the human condition will depend "on the intellectual apprehension and application of truth--in other words, on the ever closer approximation of belief to experience". A given form of social organization can have only a "partial glimpse of truth" and the danger inherent in egalitarian democracy is that it tends, "through its deification of public opinion, to perpetuate the error which is mingled with its partial truths".⁴⁵ The rule of all emerges not as the rule of each man by himself, but rather as the rule of each man by others. According to Mill, wherever there is an ascendant class--whether that class consists of a select few or of the middle class majority--"a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feelings of class superiority". Historically it has then been the likings and dislikings of "society or of some powerful portion of it" which has "practically determined the rules laid down for general observance, under the penalties of law or opinion". This problem is compounded by the fact that most intellectuals and progressives have never really challenged this situation.

⁴⁵Robson, p. 184.

They have traditionally been more interested in trying to decide what things society ought to like or dislike rather than in questioning whether "its likings or dislikings should be a law to individuals". Thus, rather than defend freedom as such and make common cause with other "heretics" having the same fundamental interest these individuals merely content themselves with trying to persuade mankind over to their own peculiar likings and beliefs.⁴⁶

The freedom of the individual is all important to Mill and it is in line with this that he offers up the major maxim of his essay On Liberty, namely:

...that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant.⁴⁷

The only part of his conduct for which the individual should be responsible to society is that which affects others. As regards those matters which only concern himself the decisions of the individual are absolute. "Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign".⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Mill, pp. 70-72.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 82-73.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 73.

Despite the intended universality of Mill's maxim, he is quick to point out that it can only be held to apply to those individuals who are capable of sufficient reason. That is, it does not apply to individuals who are not of age nor to those who may be considered mentally deficient. Similarly the principle of liberty cannot be said to apply to societies which are not sufficiently civilized. In fact, in this latter instance Mill considers it quite legitimate for a despot to assume the reigns of power in order to move society forward. For Mill, "despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end". Liberty, as a principle, can only make sense in those instances where men are capable of improving their lot through reason and by "free and equal discussion". However, once such a situation is reached then coercion in the name of progress or human betterment can no longer be justified. It can then only be applied in those instances where one individual infringes upon the rights of another.

...as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion (a period long since reached in all nations with whom we need here concern ourselves), compulsion, either in the direct form, or in that of pains and penalties for non-compliance, is no longer admissable as a means to their own good, and justifiable only for the security of others.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 73-74.

In his argument Mill goes beyond the utilitarianism of Bentham. For Bentham it was only important that men be happy whereas Mill was concerned with the fact that men should be able to fulfill their individual potential. According to Mill, a sophisticated individual is of more benefit to society than one concerned only with immediate pleasures. It is the culturally sophisticated individual who best approximates Mill's idea of the self-dependent man. "It really is of importance", Mill argues, "not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it". The self-dependent man is he who sets his own course and employs his own faculties in pursuing it. Again, he is subject neither to the dictates of popular opinion or custom. If he were to permit himself to be ruled or persuaded by either of these he would have "no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation". His course of action should rather be the following:

He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision.⁵⁰

Although Mill here offers us what he considers to be the preferred way of living one's life he also realizes that such a course is not an easy one. The man who chooses to

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 117.

be self-dependent will always run into conflict with the general herd from whom he will receive little, if any, sympathy. The reason given for the hostility of the general population to demonstrations of individuality is their own mediocrity.

The general average of mankind are not only moderate in intellect, but also moderate in inclinations: they have no tastes or wishes strong enough to incline them to do anything unusual, and they consequently do not understand those who have, and class all such with the wild and intemperate whom they are accustomed to look down upon.⁵¹

In Mill's scheme of things it is important that there always be a degree of antagonism. His "support of antagonism is an outgrowth of his demand for truth and bears an intimate relation to his belief in the individual origin of new ideas". Absolute knowledge is impossible and the best that one can hope for is an ever closer approximation to truth. Truth resides in a "correspondence between opinion and fact" and while an individual's opinions are based upon experience any one particular experience will, more likely than not, be insufficient for a correct generalization. In order to arrive at a legitimate approximation of truth one must then "combine the inductive generalizations on which partial views are founded, thus permitting a more complete induction and a closer approximation". Opinions may be erroneous and

⁵¹Ibid., p. 127.

a healthy society is one "in which provision is made for the correction of errors". As a consequence antagonism emerges as a necessary ingredient of such a society for it is only through the differences of opinion that "ignored and wrongly interpreted" experiences can be brought to light.⁵²

Conflicting opinions are then necessary for a healthy society and for human development in general. In line with this Mill suggests a variety of measures to ensure that the antagonism of opinion not be subverted by the drift toward uniformity. Among the suggestions is a call for the retention of both public and private education as well as the encouragement of debate as a part of formal schooling. With respect to the former Mill believed that divergences "both of method and material are essential to the preservation and advancement of the social union", while the latter would "aid the detection and discrimination of truth and falsehood" by stimulating mental activity and ensuring that "difficulties on both sides of questions are studied". While the encouragement of debate is a necessary element of a proper classroom education it is no less an important aspect of parliamentary government. "One of the main functions of a representative body is the free presentation of opposing opinions". Parliament is the common forum where

⁵²Robson, p. 191.

conflicting interests and opinions come together and as long as the representation of such diversity and antagonism is encouraged there exists at "least a chance that truth will be aired".⁵³

Along with the encouragement of intellectual antagonisms Mill also argues for the necessity of social antagonism. In the political as in the intellectual arena it is always important to have counterweights in order that the general "utility" be properly served. Party conflict helps to promote the greatest happiness "by keeping all necessary considerations alive and in public view". Sectional interests function in a similar manner. As long as all have a voice it is unlikely that any one group will come to dominate. In a competitive setting the success of an interest will depend upon the strength of its case, that is, by its ability to persuade others to its cause and thereby influence parliament.⁵⁴

In the final analysis the most important function of antagonism in politics is to preserve democratic rule once a democratic form of government has been established. Every polity has a dominant power, but when that power becomes the numerical majority of a democratic regime "the tendency to eliminate all other forces will be more pronounced than ever".⁵⁵ As long as government rests in the hands of a

⁵³Ibid., pp. 196-198.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 198.

⁵⁵Ibid.

single tyrant or in those of a small oligarchy there still remain the many to act, if not as a political, at least as a moral check on the ruling authority. However, when the numerical majority rules there is no single individual or group strong enough to challenge it. In either case, absolute rule will inevitably lead to stagnation and decay.

When the victory on either side was so complete as to put an end to the strife, and no other conflict took its place, first stagnation followed, and then decay. The ascendancy of the numeric majority is less unjust, and on the whole less mischievous, than many others, but it is attended with the very same kind of dangers, and even more certainly; for when the government is in the hands of One or a Few, the Many are always existent as a rival power, which may not be strong enough ever to control the other, but whose opinion and sentiment are a moral, and even a social, support to all who, either from conviction or contrariety of interest, are opposed to any of the tendencies of the ruling authority. But when the Democracy is supreme, there is no One or Few strong enough for dissentient opinions and injured or menaced interests to lean upon.⁵⁶

According to Robson, Mill's sympathies ultimately lie with the least government theory. At the same time, however, Mill does recognize the fact that from time to time and depending upon circumstance government involvement in certain areas may be necessary. The "business of government is to promote the good life, but not to encompass or contain it" and the question to be always kept in mind is "how can

⁵⁶ Mill, p. 268.

government promote utility?" "The correct area of government action will depend upon time and circumstance and as a consequence there is no simple, or single, answer to the problem.⁵⁷ As Mill argues:

The degree in which political authority can justly and expediently interfere, either to control individuals and voluntary associations, to supersede them by doing their work for them, to guide and assist, or to invoke and draw forth their agency, varies not only with the wants of every country and age, and the capabilities of every people, but with the special requirements of every kind of work to be done.⁵⁸

One of the reasons for limiting government activity is that those individuals who are closely connected "with activities are best able to perform the functions associated with those activities". It therefore makes more sense to have the owner of an enterprise making decisions as opposed to a civil servant; the owner's interest in the success or failure of his enterprise would be far greater than that of the civil servant. An extension of this argument is that although government has access to, and commands, a considerable amount of talent it "cannot command all the talent of the community". The amount of intelligence being exercised in the government's service can never equal the total intelligence of society. "Therefore, government should allow a great freedom to individual enterprise". A further

⁵⁷ Robson, pp. 203-205.

⁵⁸ J. S. Mill, "Centralisation", Edinburgh Review, 1862, p. 355. Quoted in Robson, p. 205.

reason for setting limits to government is that individual participation in business has an important educative value. The individual's "intellectual and moral horizons are extended" by his engaging in a variety of activities and taking a careful interest in their outcome. If one's interests are taken care of by the state one stands in relation to it as a child to a parent and one would have neither the right nor the ability to decide upon one's own best interests. Along with these objections one must also pay due heed to the increase in expense and taxation as governments attempt to do more and more. Finally, as governments increase their operations there is the tendency for them to become ever larger and increasingly inefficient machines, which only end up stifling individual initiative.⁵⁹

Despite Mill's reservations concerning government activity he recognizes that there are instances when it is appropriate and even desirable. With this question, as with others, "practical considerations and utility must be consulted".⁶⁰ If utility can better be furthered by government action then such action should be permitted. The government should promote progress and given its size and resources there are things which it is capable of doing that individuals would not be able to attempt nor contemplate. At the same time, government activity should be of such a

⁵⁹Robson, pp. 205-207,

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 208.

nature as not to stifle the creative potential of the individual.

Beyond suppressing force and fraud, governments can seldom, without doing more harm than good, attempt to chain up the free agency of individuals. But does it follow from this that government cannot exercise a free agency of its own?--that it cannot beneficially employ its powers, its means of information, and its pecuniary resources...in promoting the public welfare by a thousand means which individuals would never think of, would have no sufficient motives to attempt, or no sufficient power to accomplish? ... (For example,) a State ought to be considered as a great benefit society or mutual insurance company, for helping...that large proportion of its members who cannot help themselves. ⁶¹

One of the areas where government activity is quite acceptable is that of education. Insofar as it is important for man not only to live but to live well the furtherance of education becomes a necessity. Governments should establish state schools to provide education for the general population and to offer a counter to the private schools. However, the day to day running of these schools should not be in the hands of the state lest it impose a condition of homogeneity or cultivate majority opinion. Furthermore, the state schools must look "beyond the generally limited attitudes of parents, who seldom are concerned with genuine progress".

⁶¹J. S. Mill, "Coleridge", in Dissertations and Discussions (New York: Henry Holt, 1874), p. 454. Quoted in Robson, p. 209.

Along with providing an adequate system of formal education the government should also concern itself with the overall cultural advancement of the people; this can be done through a variety of ways including popular writing, galleries, theatres, etc.⁶²

Apart from education Mill offers a variety of other areas where government activity is desirable and sometimes even necessary. The government can legitimately concern itself with the regulation of contracts; particularly those entered into by persons who cannot be considered fully rational and contracts of perpetuity, such as marriage, where the state can make provisions for termination should such contracts not be properly fulfilled.⁶³

A more interesting area of government concern and, as Robson notes, one particularly relevant today is that where the authority for running an enterprise has been delegated by the owners to a group of managers. Managers, Mill argues, do not necessarily have a real interest in the success of joint-stock companies and while the stock owners theoretically have control over the directors and through them over the managers this control is very difficult to carry out effectively. While government management is certainly no panacea, in democratic societies it at least

⁶²Robson, pp. 210-212.

⁶³Ibid., p. 213.

has the advantage of being more open to public scrutiny and criticism "then when private interests are in control".

Although Mill is hesitant about government activity and its potential efficiency he does not believe that business should simply be given a "free hand". Large companies may engage in price fixing "to the detriment of the public interest" and in certain areas of public service it may be prudent for the state to take complete charge. There may also be those enterprises of public interest, such as transportation, where the government might best assume only a regulatory function thereby ensuring good performance standards and seeing to it that it is the interest of the public and not that of the managers which is being served.⁶⁴

...businesses which require to be carried on by great joint-stock enterprises cannot be trusted to competition, but, when not reserved by the State to itself, ought to be carried on under conditions prescribed, and, from time to time varied by the State, for the purpose of insuring to the public a cheaper supply of its wants than would be afforded by private interest in the absence of sufficient competition.⁶⁵

The state may also wish to concern itself in those matters where collective action is required to achieve certain legitimate ends. One such instance would be the legalization of trade unions. Here the consideration must

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 214.

⁶⁵ J. S. Mill, Collected Works, edit. by F. E. Mineka (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), V, p. 730. Quoted in Robson, p. 214.

again be that of utility. By offering a counter weight to the status quo, unions aid in the pursuit of truth and help further the intellectual and moral development of their members.⁶⁶ Economic experimentation is as important as any other.

Independently of all considerations of constitutional liberty, the best interests of the human race imperatively require that all economical experiments, voluntarily undertaken, should have the fullest licence, and that force and fraud should be the only means of attempting to benefit themselves, which are interdicted to the less fortunate classes of the community.⁶⁷

Two remaining areas of state intervention, condoned by Mill, are those of charity and the support and encouragement of scientific investigation--particularly with respect to those projects that are very expensive and would otherwise not be attempted. However, when granting charity the government "should so act as to make the aid it gives less attractive than the gain which persons obtain when not receiving aid".⁶⁸ Charity should be meted out in such a manner so as not to stunt initiative but in sufficient quantities so as not to produce despair. For Mill, the preferred situation is always one in which people have an interest in progress.

⁶⁶Robson, p. 215.

⁶⁷J. S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy. Collected Works, III, p. 934. Quoted in Robson, p. 215.

⁶⁸Robson, p. 216.

Mill extended the modification of his "least government principle" to include the approval of certain aspects of socialism.. Although he repudiates state socialism-- "the arrogation by the state of private property"--he does approve the establishment of cooperatively organized communities along socialist principles. He was neither sympathetic to the idea of a violent revolution nor to the notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The kind of revolution in which Mill was interested was "a moral and intellectual one" and despite the economic injustices of the time he could not see any evidence of, or need for, a class war. According to Mill the working class simply did not yet possess the necessary intellectual acumen for ruling.⁶⁹

Despite Mill's reservations concerning the intellectual abilities of the working class he sympathized with their plight and did not consider their subordinate status a necessarily perpetual condition nor one that was primarily of their own doing. Mill comes to accept a good deal of the socialist critique concerning private property.

It appears to us that nothing valid can be said against socialism in principle; and that **the attempts to assail it, or to defend private property, on the ground of justice, must inevitably fail.** The distinction between rich and poor, so slightly connected as it is with merit and demerit, or even with exertion and want of exertion in the

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 246, 276.

individual, is obviously unjust; such a feature could not be put into the rudest imaginings of a perfectly just state of society; the present capricious distribution of the means of life and enjoyment, could only be defended as an admitted imperfection, submitted to as an effect of causes in other respects beneficial. Again, the moral objection to competition, as arming one human being against another, making the good of each depend upon evil to others, making all who have anything to gain or lose, live as in the midst of enemies, by no means deserves the disdain with which it is treated by some of the adversaries of socialism.⁷⁰

The distribution of property, like other questions of importance, is to be judged on the basis of utility. "The end of property as of all other human institutions is, or ought to be, no other than the general good".⁷¹ Socialist programmes are to be tested as to their practicability and on whether or not they help further individual freedom and development. For Mill socialist organization is not to be equated with a form of monolithic state control but rather with "any system which requires that the land and the instruments of production should be the property not of individuals, but of communities or associations, or of the government".⁷²

⁷⁰J. S. Mill, "Newman's Political Economy", in Collected Works, V, p. 444. Quoted in Robson, p. 247.

⁷¹J. S. Mill, "The Game Laws", Westminster Review, 5 (1826), p. 9. Quoted in Robson, p. 246.

⁷²Mill, Principles of Political Economy, II, p. 203. Quoted in Robson, p. 246.

While the attempt to control a national economy on a centralized basis was something Mill considered undesirable, and as probably unworkable, lesser experiments were to be encouraged and to be eligible for public funding. The main attraction of socialism seemed to have been that with the abolition of economic strife happiness would "no longer depend on economic status" and individuals would be able to "concentrate on worthier ends". Despite this Mill was not overly anxious to abandon the capitalist system. This system was still in a state of development and thus there existed the possibility that it might indeed emerge as more "conducive than socialism to the greatest good of the greatest number". The issue would be settled by experience-- by trial and error.⁷³ One thing, however, was certain and that was that the "capitalist ideal" of economic competition held out by some was not a particularly worthy end to be striven for. As Mill argued:

I confess I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing, and treading on each other's heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of human kind, or anything but the disagreeable symptoms of one of the phases of industrial progress.⁷⁴

⁷³Robson, pp. 250-254.

⁷⁴Mill, Principles of Political Economy, IV, p. 754.

In his particular brand of liberalism Mill shows us an optimism that we never find in Burke. Rather than call for a preservation of the "tried and true" Mill urges progress and experimentation. His politics is one of confrontation and not one of consensus. The aim of this politics is to move society forward as quickly as possible and in so doing it shows little concern for traditional hierarchies and values. Progress is a result of rational choice and planning and the worth of institutions and programmes is to be judged on the basis of their contribution to the general good--on the basis of utility. Mill shows little hesitancy in the challenge of authority and public debate of conflicting ideas. The challenge and critique of existing norms and ideas is a matter for public debate and not, as conservatives are wont to argue, a matter only for those who are knowledgeable and one to be primarily carried on in "private". Mill has no qualms about raising issues before their time. In Mill we also find a pronounced concern for the individual and he firmly believes that it is individuals who best know and who can best achieve their own ends. Here the individual, along with his rights and freedoms, emerges as more important than tradition and it is desirable for him to be as much involved as possible in political matters. It is through participation that man not only helps to guarantee his rights but also comes to improve himself both as citizen and human being.

IV Hayek and the Two Strands of Liberalism

The difficulty in distinguishing the "conservative" from the "liberal" is then confounded by the fact that they are part and parcel of the same tradition. The difficulty is well illustrated when examining some of the pronouncements of Friedrich Hayek. Hayek, described as a conservative by commentators,⁷⁵ ironically wrote a postscript to his The Constitution of Liberty entitled "Why I Am Not A Conservative". In fact, upon brief examination, and by the author's own admission, Hayek emerges as what we would refer to as a Burkean conservative,⁷⁶ which for Hayek is the same as being "liberal" in a given sense of the term. That is, what Hayek hopes to "conserve" are the "liberal" values of the revolution of 1688 and the 1689 Declaration of Rights.⁷⁷ And what Hayek is arguing against when he decries conservatism is, in fact, what we would refer to as toryism.

⁷⁵E. M. Burns, Ideas In Conflict (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1963), pp. 304-310.

⁷⁶F. S. Hayek, The Constitution of Liberty (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 401.

⁷⁷Among the declarations were the following: (1) that the making or suspending of law without consent of parliament is illegal; (2) that the exercise of the dispensation of power is illegal; (3) that levying money without consent of parliament is illegal; (4) that it is lawful to petition the sovereign; (5) that elections of members of parliament must be free; (6) that there must be freedom of debate in parliament; (7) that parliament should be held frequently; (8) that the maintenance of a standing army without the consent of parliament is illegal; (9) that juries should be empaneled and returned in every trial. See W. L. Langer, An Encyclopedia of World History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1968), p. 465.

Hayek sees two distinct, yet related and intertwined, developments emerging from what is commonly referred to as the liberal tradition. The first strand is an "empirical and unsystematic" one while the second is "speculative and rationalistic". The former is based upon the notion that traditions and institutions develop spontaneously and can never be fully understood in their complexity. The latter, on the other hand, puts considerable faith in the abilities of human reason and often aims at the construction of a utopia. The empirical tradition comes to be identified with such English philosophers as Hume, Smith, and especially Burke; whereas the rationalist tradition is seen as essentially French though also having English precursors and adherents. According to Hayek, the two traditions became increasingly confused as continental thinkers came to study British institutions and practices via French writers. In the nineteenth century the problem continued to be compounded by the increasing influence of French thinkers in Britain and by the victory of the Benthamite Philosophical Radicals over the Whigs. It was the French tradition with its emphasis on rationalism that prompted the ever increasing trend toward social planning--to what Hayek refers to as social or totalitarian democracy. This tradition, imbued with Cartesian rationalism, received its impetus from such luminaries as Rousseau, the Physiocrats and Condorcet,⁷⁸ and

⁷⁸ Hayek, The Constitution of Liberty, pp. 54-56.

it was also this tradition which came to influence the early socialists.⁷⁹ Although these two groups are commonly considered as the "ancestors of modern liberalism" their conceptions of societal development, and of the role of liberty within a social order, differ appreciably. Today, the two traditions have essentially become one and in the hope of drawing a clear distinction between them, Hayek finds himself compelled to retreat to the work of Francis Lieber who in 1848 wrote that:

Gallican Liberty, is sought in the government, and according to an Anglican point of view, it is looked for in a wrong place, where it cannot be found. Necessary consequences of the Gallican view are, that the French look for the highest degree of political civilization in organization, that is, in the highest degree of interference by public power. The question whether this interference be despotism or liberty is decided solely by the fact who interferes, and for the benefit of which class the interference takes place, while according to the Anglican view this interference would always be either absolutism or aristocracy, and the present dictatorship of the ouvriers would appear to us an uncompromising aristocracy of the ouvriers.⁸⁰

Thus, in his conception of how best to preserve liberty, Hayek comes to side with Burke against the rationalists. For the "empiricists" liberty is found in the absence of coercion and in spontaneity while for the

⁷⁹J. Plamenatz, Man And Society Vol. II (London: Longmans Green and Co. Ltd., 1963), pp. 37-128.

⁸⁰F. Lieber, "Anglican and Gallican Liberty", in Miscellaneous Writings (Philadelphia, 1881), p. 282. Quoted in Hayek, p. 55.

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 rationalist it can only be properly realized in the attainment of "an absolute collective purpose". So that whereas the former sees sound social development as the result of a "slow half-conscious growth" and in trial and error, the latter find the fruition of liberty in the deliberate application of a specific plan. These different conceptions of how society works then necessarily come to influence the political conclusions drawn by the two schools.⁸¹

It has been our inability to clearly maintain certain fundamental distinctions between the two schools which has led to their being muddled together; and it is the increasing appeal of the rationalist assumptions which Hayek feels could very well lead to an end of "liberty" as such--the ultimate threat to liberty being found in the rationalist belief in, and preference for, social planning on a grand scale. This faith in planning is based on the conviction that man "was originally endowed with both the intellectual and the moral attributes that enabled him to fashion civilization deliberately". In contradistinction to this it is argued that civilization is the result of an evolutionary process consisting of the "accumulated hard-earned result of trial and error". This is not to deny that the evolutionary process involves the handing down of explicit knowledge from generation to generation but it is rather to assert

⁸¹ Hayek, The Constitution of Liberty, p. 56.

that, along with this, much of what has emerged, and come to function effectively, has been the result of an unconscious development. Thus, there have emerged "institutions whose significance we might discover by analysis but which will also serve men's ends without men's understanding them". For Hayek, as for Burke, the notion of natural liberty as such makes little sense. Liberty can only find meaning in, and be realized through, certain institutions.

It was not "natural liberty" in any literal sense, but the institutions evolved to secure "life, liberty, and property", which made those individual efforts beneficial. Not Locke, nor Hume, nor Smith, nor Burke, could ever have argued, as Bentham did, that "every law is an evil for every law is an infraction of liberty".⁸²

A second difference between the schools concerns their view of human nature. The "design theories" of the rationalists were necessarily based on their assumptions concerning man's innate ability for rational action and on their assumptions concerning man's "natural intelligence and goodness". By contrast, the evolutionists contend that man's intelligence can only be put to good use when so induced by certain institutional arrangements. Here man is seen as inherently fallible and it is only "by the force of circumstances" that he can be made to behave economically or can "learn carefully to adjust his means to his ends". The idea of "economic man" was not, according to Hayek, an

⁸²Ibid., pp. 59-60.

original part of the British evolutionary tradition. It is with the younger Mill, that we find the explicit introduction of homo oeconomicus along "with much else that belongs to the rationalist rather than to the evolutionary tradition".⁸³

Hayek finds the greatest difference between the two schools expressed in their attitude towards the role of traditions and time honoured institutions; that is, those institutions which are not necessarily the product of reasoned construct. Here we again find the Burkean faith in the accumulated wisdom of generations as over against that of any one individual. It is this faith in the undesigned and in convention that is rejected by the rationalist.

It is this submission to undesigned rules and conventions whose significance and importance we largely do not understand, this reverence for the traditional, that the rationalistic type of mind finds so uncongenial, though it is indispensable for the working of a free society.⁸⁴

For the rationalist, when it comes to moral behaviour, it is never enough to be merely guided by traditional rules but one must also pay due consideration to the consequences of the particular action. The implication here is that our actions should be carried out in conjunction with a "complete understanding of the functioning of the social process" and

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 60-61.

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 61-63.

with a view to the conscious improvement of the social situation. The overriding concern is the achievement of the "social good", however that may be defined. What we have here is an appeal for the superiority of individual intelligence over the rules evolved by society.⁸⁵

Insofar as Hayek places a great deal of emphasis on the importance of tradition and the limits of individual reason, this is not to suggest that individual reason has no effective role to play in the progress and amelioration of the human condition. What concerns Hayek is that by placing too much faith in its capabilities we may in fact be destroying the very conditions which make for its productive application and development.

...we have certainly not meant to imply ...that reason has no important positive task. Reason undoubtedly is man's most precious possession. Our argument is intended to show merely that it is not all powerful and that the belief that it can become its own master and control its own development may yet destroy it. What we have attempted is a defense of reason against its abuse by those who do not understand the conditions of its effective functioning and continuous growth. It is an appeal to men to see that we must use our reason intelligently and that, in order to do so, we must preserve that indispensable matrix of the uncontrolled and non-rational which is the only environment wherein reason can grow and operate effectively.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 64. Of particular relevance here are J. S. Mill's views concerning the appropriateness and desirability of certain socialist notions. See J. M. Robson, The Improvement of Mankind: The Social and Political Thought Of John Stuart Mill (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1968), pp. 245-271.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 69.

In Hayek's opinion, it is the acceptance of rationalist assumptions, on the part of western ~~democracies~~, that has led to the increasing trend of state interference and collectivism. It is precisely this trend which he sees as detrimental to the continuance of democracy. What is of particular interest here is that Hayek sees this challenge to democracy as not only coming from the more radical Marxist and socialist groups but also from within the "liberal" tradition itself. As we continue to accept the virtues of "reason" and social planning the trend toward collectivism increases--here the assumptions of the rationalist liberals and the socialists have much in common. The incompatibility of democracy and collectivism stems from the fact that collectivism cannot effectively operate "under a regime of law and within a sphere of respect for the rights of the individual". Democracy is here not to be equated with any simplistic notion of the sovereignty of the majority--a sovereignty which itself may be as tyrannical as any authoritarian or oligarchical system--but rather implies the notion of a Rechtsstaat. What this means is that the laws of the state are supreme and that they "will always be applied without exceptions". However, in the case of collectivism, the governing authority will find it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to adhere to such formal rule. Once government begins to take an active planning role in economic matters and must begin to

decide matters of price and distribution, formal principles inevitably give way to decisions guided by circumstances and the balancing of interests. In the final analysis, it will be bureaucracy which decides what is and is not important and "deserving of the government's favour" and society will find itself in a situation in which "not legal principle but personal views will be the determining factor".⁸⁷

One of the particular dangers inherent in this trend is its effect on democratic procedures. In Hayek's opinion "parliamentary action is too slow and cumbersome to meet the needs of a planning society". Eventually there emerges the feeling that in order to function effectively "administrators must be freed from legislative fetters".⁸⁸ What Hayek sees this as inevitably leading to is rule by experts rather than rule by law.

It may be the unanimously expressed will of the people that its parliament should prepare a comprehensive economic plan, yet neither the people nor its representatives need therefore be able to agree on any particular plan. The inability of democratic assemblies to carry out what seems to be a clear mandate of the people will inevitably cause dissatisfaction with democratic institutions. Parliaments come to be regarded as ineffective "talking shops", unable or incompetent to carry out the tasks for which they have been chosen. The conviction grows that if effective

⁸⁷Burns, pp. 306-307.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 307.

planning is to be done, the direction must be "taken out of politics" and placed in the hands of experts-- permanent officials or independent autonomous bodies.⁸⁹

It is quite obvious that Hayek believes in the virtues of a "free-market economy" but for him this is not to be confused with any simplistic notion of laissez-faire nor with the reduction of the role of the state to that of a coercive agent concerned only with the maintenance of law and order. According to Hayek, "nothing has done so much harm to the liberal cause as the wooden insistence of some liberals on certain rough rules of thumb, above all the principle of laissez-faire". The "crude rules" of nineteenth century liberal economics are to be viewed properly as a beginning and not as sacred script. It was inevitable that over time these principles ~~would~~ become increasingly sophisticated as would our understanding of economics itself and that along with this, one would come to the recognition that government indeed does have a positive role to play-- particularly with respect to such matters as "our handling of the monetary system, the prevention of control of monopoly" and the performance of certain welfare functions.⁹⁰ One of the legitimate aims of state activity, therefore, is to "plan for competition".⁹¹ However, it is important never

⁸⁹ Hayek, The Road to Serfdom, p. 62.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁹¹ Burns, p. 308.

to lose sight of the fact that development and progress are best ensured by the unfettered growth of society. It is here where the "means" employed by government to achieve certain social goods are important and these "means" must always be held in critical perspective. Failing this, central planning may come about by default rather than by design.

The reformers who confine themselves to whatever methods appear to be the most effective for their particular purposes and pay no attention to what is necessary to preserve an effective market mechanism are likely to be led to impose more and more central control over economic decisions...until we get that very system of central planning which few now consciously wish to see established.⁹²

In Hayek's opinion there is no reason as to why the service activities of government should not expand as we witness an increase in the overall social product. These activities can be performed without restricting individual liberty. Yet, at the same time, one must be careful not to permit the service activities of the state--largely performed outside the purview of the competitive market--to enhance the coercive power of the state.

Though the position that the state should have nothing to do with matters not related to the maintenance of law and order may seem logical so long as we think of the state solely as a coercive apparatus, we must recognize

⁹²Hayek, The Constitution of Liberty, p. 256.

that, as a service agency, it may assist without harm in the achievement of desirable aims which perhaps could not be achieved otherwise. The reason why many of the new welfare activities of government are a threat to freedom, then, is that, though they are presented as mere service activities, they really constitute an exercise of the coercive powers of government and rest on its claiming exclusive rights in certain fields.⁹³

Thus, for Hayek, it is important that we not lose sight of the distinction between legislation and government. In order for a free society to function effectively, one must ensure that government be subservient to law--law (i.e. legislation) here entailing "the laying down of general rules equally applicable to all citizens and intended to be applied in an unknown number of future instances". Government, on the other hand, properly "consists of the activity of telling those people who are members of the governmental organization what particular things they must do in order to provide specified services to the Government and the people". These functions, the separation of which is essential in a free society, have become "hopelessly mixed up in modern developments".⁹⁴

In having permitted the fusion of these two functions and by having laid them in the hands of a single, albeit

⁹³ Ibid., p. 258.

⁹⁴ K. R. Leube, "Hayek's Perception of the Rule of Law", in The Intercollegiate Review, Winter, 1976-77, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 105.

democratic, assembly our Parliaments or Congresses have ceased to be the "purely legislative" assemblies that they were originally intended to be. This collapse of the legislative and executive function into one has been furthered by our rather indiscriminate use of the term "law". The term is often used in two "entirely different senses". Whereas a law, at one time, referred to "a general rule equally applicable to all" it is now often used with reference to whatever parliament may resolve "irrespective of whether it has the inner character of the law or whether it is a specific order to execute such and such a thing". Thus, the traditional notion of "government under the law" has not been adequately realized and what we are in fact confronted with is a situation in which those who govern are also those who "lay down laws". Once such a situation arises it is difficult to ensure the principle of government under the law. The result, according to Laube and Hayek, is that "we create an ultimate holder of power, who is bound by no rules whatever, but who can make whatever rules he needs in order to achieve those aims he has to achieve to retain power and to unite a majority in its support".⁹⁵

Hayek's solution for ensuring democratic rule is to put the functions of government and legislation in the

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 105-106.

hands of two separate democratic bodies. One of these would be concerned with "law-giving in the old sense", that is, with the initiation and agreement upon those general rules which are equally applicable to all and which "provide the only excuse for applying coercion to the private citizen". The other would be invested with the power of "directing the use of the governmental apparatus, partly for the purpose of rendering to the citizens the great variety of services which we want government to render". In order to work in the interests of liberty, government must be bound by a set of general laws that cannot be adjusted to the "specific purposes of current government". It has been the inability of "democratic" societies to ensure such limitations that has helped promote the ever increasing trend toward social planning. As Leube concludes:

The evil of the so-called democratic system under which we are now living, is precisely that law has become subservient to government rather than the other way round. What we now call law are rules which can be adjusted from day to day in whatever manner the ruling majority thinks required to achieve the particular results which it wants. It is exactly this which Professor Hayek had in mind in arguing that government in the present system no longer is in any sense under the law. ⁹⁶

The similarities between Burke and Hayek are too obvious to require elaboration and as with all ideologies,

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 106.

there emerges a definite notion of what a healthy society should entail. What Hayek expresses is a definite "intellectual commitment to a type of order".⁹⁷ Though Hayek may not believe in planning according to rationalist preconceptions, his liberalism, or more properly his "conservatism" as we have come to view the term, does offer definite alternatives. Perhaps the most appropriate label to attach to Hayek is that of a conservative-liberal; a term also appropriate for Burke. Thus, when expressing his antipathy toward "conservatism" what Hayek is in fact arguing against are the static notions of toryism.

One of the main areas of contention is that concerning the prospect of social change and development. Whereas the conservative-liberal is rightly suspicious of too rapid a change and places a good deal of worth in "spontaneously developed" traditional institutions, he does not share with the tory the tory's "timid distrust of the new as such". The tory lacks "faith in the spontaneous forces of adjustment"--an important foundation for the conservative belief in the competitive market as well as for the conservative critique of overall social planning--and is therefore often inclined to use the powers of "government to prevent change or to limit its rate to whatever appeals to the more timid mind". The danger, especially as regards the preservation of liberty, is that the tory becomes concerned not with

⁹⁷ Hayek, The Constitution of Liberty, p. 402.

keeping the action of established authority within certain bounds but rather with the maintenance of the power of said authority. As a consequence the right to rule becomes the preserve of a select few; the premise being that "in any society there are recognizably superior persons whose inherited standards and values and position ought to be protected and who should have a greater influence on public affairs than others". Thus, for the tory, the primary consideration is not that of "what government is entitled to do", as it is for the conservative, but rather that of "who rules". Although the conservative is by no means an egalitarian, and clearly realizes that there are "some superior people", he is not willing to permit the use of privilege or the coercive power of the state "to shelter such people against the forces of economic change".⁹⁸ People should be treated according to their deeds and not according to inherited privilege.

It is diversity rather than static hierarchy which is to be encouraged. The individualism for which the conservative argues is that which recognizes "respect for the individual man qua man, that is, the recognition of his own views and tastes as supreme in his own sphere, however narrowly that may be circumscribed and the belief that it is desirable that men should develop their own individual gifts and bents".⁹⁹ While the conservative accepts the

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 402-403.

⁹⁹ Hayek, The Road to Serfdom, p. 14.

values of hierarchy and structure and while he recognizes the need for deference and leadership he does not side with the tory in the latter's attempt to "artificially" maintain an antiquated social hierarchy. Nor would he ever side with the socialist or rationalist liberal in their endeavour to impose upon the world a preconceived rational pattern.

It may do well to here note that the question of "who rules" is an important and primary one for both the tory and the socialist. In the case of the former it is the landed aristocracy which is considered to possess this right; a right ultimately deemed justifiable in order to maintain a given status quo and a particular form of social organization defined as superior to all others. For the socialist it is a question of ensuring that those with the proper preconceptions and vision of a particular future good should rule in order that its fulfillment not be thwarted. Whereas the one is concerned with either keeping the hands of historical time static or with reversing them, the other is concerned with pushing them forward. For one it is a question of retention and maintenance, for the other it is a question of transcendence and radical change. Although the two schools begin with different ideological assumptions they here come to the same conclusion. Thus, it is always important not only to look at the outcome, or end result, of action programmes but it is also important to look at the assumptions upon which they were built and the motives

which gave rise to them. By merely looking at the outcome, or the deed as such, it is all too easy to infer the wrong motives or ideological foundations involved. It is ~~here~~ where our previous distinction between the deed and the character of the deed should be borne in mind.¹⁰⁰ For example, Horowitz, in his discussion of Canadian ideology, offers the following as evidence for the presence of the Tory influence in Canada:

...such well known features of Canadian history as the absence of a lawless, individualistic-egalitarian American frontier, the preference for Britain rather than the United States as a societal model, and generally, the weaker emphasis on social equality, the greater acceptance by individuals of the facts of economic inequality, social stratification, and hierarchy.¹⁰¹

Along a similar vein, Christian and Campbell have argued that:

...tory ideas have also contributed to the long-standing Canadian tendency to use the power of government to effect certain common goals or objects; and moreover to use it with equanimity, and often with enthusiasm. This can be seen in a multitude of instances from the railway and canal building of the last century to the initiation of public enterprises such as the CBC, Air Canada, Ontario Hydro and the prairie telephone systems in more recent times...This is underlined by George Grant's observation that a good deal of such government intervention has been set in train by Conservative governments: (Ontario Hydro,

¹⁰⁰ See page 154 above.

¹⁰¹ Horowitz, p. 10.

the CNR, the Bank of Canada, and the CBC for instance); for the Conservative Party is the resting place for tory influences, and such action on its part is proof of their existence.¹⁰²

A brief glance at the pronouncements of these authors should suffice in establishing that such matters can be better explained by the conservative concept of order. There is no need for Horowitz and others to import any notion of toryism in order to deal with the phenomena under consideration. As we have also shown, government intervention and planning can just as easily be due to the presence of liberal-rationalist values as it can to the presence of tory values. One might indeed, albeit facetiously, suggest that the problem is one of a "rationalist" rather than one of a tory touch. Even an avowed exponent of free-enterprise such as Hayek recognizes the necessity for government to play a positive role--particularly with respect to the problem of planning for competition and that of providing for certain social services. In their attempt to give the tory phantom substance, our authors have imposed him on a reality of which he was never a part.

In making their argument for the influence of tory ideas, Horowitz and Christian and Campbell point to a variety of so-called collectivist policies and programmes

¹⁰²W. Christian and C. Campbell, Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1974), p. 24.

which are considered to provide the necessary evidence. It is from these that the influence of tory values and ideas are inferred to the relevant political actors. However, these inferences are drawn in an overly simplistic manner. What is lacking in their analysis is a careful consideration of the intentions and motives behind the action programmes pointed to. What we need to know are the reasons the actors had for pursuing a particular course of action. For instance, did the creation or support of certain programmes constitute a conscious and deliberate denial of free-market economic principles? Were the actors motivated by a desire to help further the establishment of a state based upon tory collectivist principles? Was the matter simply one of exigency in which the actors had little, if any, choice or were the decisions furthered by the consideration of an overriding motive such as national independence or survival? To come to terms with such matters is no small task and requires more than the drawing of inferences from certain deeds. Thus, on the basis of a more careful analysis--one taking due account of intentions and motives--we are forced to question the "character" assigned to various deeds by Horowitz and others presenting the tory argument.

V Tory Myth and Bennett's New Deal

One of the favourite examples given as evidence for the presence of a tory-collectivist strain within the

Conservative party is that of Bennett's New Deal legislation. According to Horowitz, Bennett's proposed legislation was not a matter of mere opportunism or of a momentary ideological aberration. In his opinion, it can best be understood as "a sudden activation under pressure of a latent 'tory-democratic' or 'tory-radical' streak".¹⁰³ Christian and Campbell on the other hand, do not agree with Horowitz's claim that Bennett was a red tory but nevertheless argue that "the strains of the party's past on which he tried to build the new Conservatism were its collectivism, especially the belief in the value of political action to control economic forces". Along with this they also point to what they consider to be Bennett's repudiation of laissez-faire.

As evidence for their claim they quote Bennett:

Reform heralds certain recovery. There can be no permanent recovery without reform. Reform or no reform! I raise that issue squarely. I raise the flag of progress to the masthead. I summon the power of the State to its support.¹⁰⁴

What is here offered as evidence for the influence of tory collectivism is not particularly convincing. At first

¹⁰³Horowitz, p. 22.

¹⁰⁴Christian and Campbell, pp. 95-96. The argument presented by Christian and Campbell for establishing that Bennett was not a red-tory is as weak as Horowitz's argument for claiming that he was. Their claim rests on the simple contention (p. 94) that because Herridge leaned toward the fascist model, and because Bennett listened, that the spirit of Bennett's New Deal had to be closer to that of fascism than of tory democracy. The question of how closely and seriously Bennett may have listened is not broached. Their conclusion is asserted and not demonstrated.

glance it is difficult to decide how to treat Horowitz's claim. Is Horowitz saying that Bennett was motivated by an inner "radical" disposition which had for the first time come to the fore? Employing the term radical as motive is the same as citing such expressions as "love for" or "devotion to" as motive. If this is what Horowitz is saying then the arguments presented in the previous chapter against the notion that a motive is properly construed as an "internal condition of operative agitation" apply equally to him.

However, if Horowitz is arguing, as Christian and Campbell seem to be, that Bennett was prompted to act as he did because of the conditions with which he was confronted and that his analysis of the situation brought about a change in intellectual conviction then we are confronted with a different matter. By motive is now meant a "circumstance because of which one may take certain action" and the question of whether Bennett did undergo a change in ideological conviction will need to be determined by an examination of his intention, his purpose and his motive. Of particular importance will be the character which we assign the deed under question. It is only by treating the problem in its analytic complexity that we can hope to establish Bennett's ideological makeup. As a consequence we need to know not only what he did but also his reasons for so doing. We cannot simply argue that because Bennett

was willing to use the power of the state to deal with the depression that he was necessarily working from collectivist premises. As we have shown, such action can just as easily be justified according to traditional conservative or rationalist-liberal principles as it can according to collectivist ones.

Bennett's enthusiasm for free-market economics is well known and in 1931 he could still argue that:

The difficulty...is that too much reliance is being placed upon the Government. The people are not bearing their share of the load. Half a century ago people would work their way out of their difficulties rather than look to a government to take care of them. The fibre of some of our people has grown softer and they are not willing to turn in and save themselves. They now complain because they have no money. When they were earning money many of them spent it in speculation and in luxury. "Luxury" means anything a man has not an immediate need for, having regard to his financial position...I do not know what the present movement may be, but unless it induces men and women to think in terms of bewilderment because of conditions which they helped to create, the end of organized society is not far distant.¹⁰⁵

There is little of the tory radical to be found in these statements--no sentimental or genuine concern for the hardships of the working class. It is difficult to fathom how the victims of the depression helped to bring it about; nor

¹⁰⁵Public Archives of Canada., R. B. Bennett Papers, Bennett to J. G. Bennett, Oct. 21, 1931.

did the twelve man delegation affair in March 1932 bespeak of any overwhelming concern on the part of Bennett for the working man. It was not government intervention or planning which was initially seen as the appropriate remedy but the more traditional one of individual initiative. As Bennett argued:

I have not yet seen any suggested changes that could replace our existing system without entirely eliminating one of the factors in our civilization that has contributed greatly to the progress of the world--that is, individual initiative, coupled with the desire to achieve and succeed. Competition may have had ruinous effects upon the world at large, but the incentive to succeed which makes the struggle endurable cannot be removed by placing all responsibility upon governments without doing great injury to mankind.¹⁰⁶

Individual initiative coupled with the desire to achieve can only find real expression--productive expression--within a given socio-economic structure and under the right conditions. It would make little sense to speak of and promote such virtues within a feudal society; at least from the perspective of the ruling class. At the beginning of the depression this was a point which Bennett had perhaps not yet fully realized. As we have shown the free-market is a good which can be sought like any other. It is because of this that the idea of planning for competition is no contradiction for a consistent conservative like Hayek. However,

¹⁰⁶Quoted in MacLean, R. B. Bennett (Toronto: Excelsior, 1934), p. 28.

to speak of individual-initiative when it can find no possible avenue for expression makes little sense.

Those who initially thought that the depression would soon work itself out were to be sorely disappointed. By 1933 the depression was at its worst. The problems of drought, unemployment, loss of provincial revenue and the depressed price of wheat were changing the very structure of the economy itself. The free-market was not working. As W. L. Morton has graphically argued:

Doctors worked without fee, and school-teachers took their pay in kind. Society was reverting to barter and to personal exchange of service. One by one the units of local government, the school districts and municipalities, broke down and were kept functioning only by support from the province. Stage by stage the strain of a dis-integrating society was working up to the last remaining fabric of strength in the nation, the national government itself which remained powerless to remedy the situation except by repeated grants and by further public works. Indeed, the dispersal at Regina by the Mounted Police, on orders from Ottawa, of a march of unemployed from the west to the capital suggested to the embittered unemployed that the national government had no remedy but repression for the evils of the times.¹⁰⁷

The Liberals sitting in opposition could restrict their suggested solutions to the traditional palliatives of minimum intervention and the freeing of international trade.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷W. L. Morton, The Kingdom of Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1968), p. 460.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 462.

The Conservatives in government were called upon to act. Numerous programmes were initiated and the New Deal legislation was merely the culmination of a lengthy list. The measures tried included "debt-reduction legislation-- loans to farmers, small businessmen, big businessmen, and homeowners; seed and fodder programs; job restraining schemes; subsidies to doctors and teachers to keep them on their jobs; the construction of the Trans-Canada Highway", etc.¹⁰⁹ The ill-fated New Deal was embodied in six acts: "the Trade and Industry Commission Act, based on the findings of the Price Spreads Commission; the Minimum Wages Act; the Limitation of Hours of Work Act; the Weekly Rest in Industrial Workings Act; the Unemployment Insurance Act; and the National Products Marketing Act."¹¹⁰ At first glance these six measures of the New Deal may seem as a rather radical step but as Morton notes, "by the standards of the times it was a modest enough program and it did no more than bring Canada into line with the English-speaking world".¹¹¹ In a similar vein Grayson and Bliss offer the following evaluation of the New Deal:

...Bennett's "New Deal" legislation of 1935 had neither the sudden virgin birth nor the radical overtones commentators

¹⁰⁹ L. Grayson and M. Bliss, The Wretched of Canada: Letters to R. B. Bennett, 1930-35 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. XVI.

¹¹⁰ Morton, p. 464.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 464.

then and since have assigned it. What Bennett gave the nation in 1935, along with his agricultural program of 1934, was a package deal of regulations and controls designed to give each major economic interest group the kind of government support it had long been demanding.¹¹²

Given the prevailing conditions Bennett had good reason to try and bring about his New Deal. However, its radicalism lay more in the rhetoric employed by Bennett to introduce it than in the actual measures proposed.

I am against the dole...The dole is a condemnation, final and complete of our economic system. If we cannot abolish the dole, we must abolish the system.¹¹³

Bennett was not interested in transcending the capitalist system, he was interested in making it work.

When capitalism is freed at last from its harmful imperfections, when government exercises the intended measure of regulation over capitalist groups, capitalism will be in fact your servant and not your master.¹¹⁴

Bennett did not survive the 1935 general election, nor did the New Deal package survive the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The argument is often made that the New Deal was proposed because of the upcoming election and perhaps also because of the mounting challenge from the

¹¹²Grayson and Bliss, p. XVIII.

¹¹³"The Premiere Speaks to the People", Ottawa: Dominion Conservative Headquarters, 1935. Reprinted in J.H.R. Wilbur, The Bennett New Deal: Fraud or Portent (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1968), p. 81

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 82.

left. However, the analysis of the matter by Grayson and Bliss does not support such a contention and they properly view the New Deal as another in a long line of attempted solutions. Given the problems confronting Bennett the need to act was pressing and the measures proposed were reasonable from a capitalist perspective. Even during the 1935 election campaign Bennett had not lost his faith in the capitalist system.

We will get nowhere recklessly and stupidly clouting capitalism into a paralysis of ineffectiveness. Treat capitalism decently, not for its own sake but for your own sake. For it can serve you well.¹¹⁵

The depression clearly represented an instance where the "wooden rule of thumb of laissez-faire" was utterly inappropriate. In its application to Canada it is also inappropriate in a much wider sense. As Van Loon and Whittington have cogently argued:

...we should re-emphasize that in a very large and very sparsely settled territory like Canada, solutions which may be appropriate elsewhere do not always fit. For example, the methods of transportation development which were successful in the United States could not be applied in Canada. Because transportation links to remote areas of low population density do not pay, most major developments in Canada have been carried out by government alone or by private enterprise with huge government subsidies. Examples include the national railways and more recently the Trans-Canada Pipeline.

¹¹⁵Quoted in, D.O. Carrigan, Canadian Party Platforms 1867-1968 (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1968), p. 119.

Later, when the links themselves create a market for their own use it may be possible to make a profit, and in that situation private business can be induced to invest capital; but for many such projects, private enterprise is simply not appropriate...The Canadian situation in this respect can be contrasted with the American one where there are no publicly owned railways (although the U.S. Federal government has recently moved into the operation of rail passenger services) and where public broadcasting is still a fledgling. Higher population density, a richer environment and, occasionally, a lower level of service can make such enterprises profitable in the United States, so private industry operates them.¹¹⁶

It was an understanding of such difficulties that enabled Bennett in 1930 to argue against the amalgamation of the C.N.R. with the private sector. What is more, he was able to do so without contradicting his free enterprise principles. It would have been impossible for the private sector alone to provide the necessary services throughout the nation and Bennett could thus claim, without contradiction, "Amalgamation? Never! Competition? Ever! That is the policy for which I stand".¹¹⁷

In light of our analysis it becomes quite clear that Bennett's New Deal had nothing to do with collectivism. In the final analysis it proved to be little more than a cautious response to economic exigencies and the principles

¹¹⁶R. Van Loon and M. Whittington, The Canadian Political System (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1976), p. 50.

¹¹⁷Quoted in Carrigan, p. 111.

upon which Bennett acted were well within the bounds of free-market ideology. Bennett had no intention of moving Canada toward a more collectivist or corporate form and there is nothing in either his policies or pronouncements which suggest that he did. If he had been influenced by any form of collectivist ideology then this influence would have been born out in his actions (policies) and from what we have been able to determine this was certainly not the case. We all function within a certain ideological frame of reference and have ideas of what a good society should entail. When social forces come to challenge these views and the structures which represent them we act in response. That is, we are motivated to act and our ideological convictions can be known from the manner in which we respond to these motivating factors. Bennett's purpose--the desired condition seen as achievable--was that of ameliorating the present crisis and thereby to preserve the capitalist system.¹¹⁸

In order to understand the nature of Canadian ideology we do not need to revert to any pre-liberal tory concepts.

¹¹⁸ There was certainly no intention on the part of Bennett to move the Canadian state toward corporatism. Corporatism as defined by Panitch is "a political structure within advanced capitalism that integrates organized socio-economic producer groups through a system of representation and co-operative mutual interaction at the leadership level and mobilization and social control at the mass level". As we have argued, there is nothing in either Bennett's actions or pronouncements that could suggest his wanting to have brought about such a system. See L. Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada" in R. Schultz, O. M. Kruhlak, and C. Terry, The Canadian Political Process (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979), p. 53.

Canada is indeed a liberal fragment, albeit one influenced by the anti-rationalist Burkean notions of prudence, order and tradition.¹¹⁹ By denying the influence of tory organic-corporate-collectivism we are not suggesting that Canada is a mere "constituent element of the American culture" for, as Preece has argued, "prudence, pragmatism and caution lead to a significantly different political life".¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ See Preece, "The Anglo-Saxon Conservative Tradition", pp. 23 and 35. Preece concludes his analysis by arguing that "Britain and English Canada represent the cautious, complex, pragmatic Lockean society reinforced, in different degrees in each, by Burkean prudence and order. The United States represents the unqualified, abstracted Lockean society reinforced only by Burkean sterner virtues".

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

CHAPTER VII

SOME REFLECTIONS ON CANADIAN FEDERALISM

I The Intent of Confederation

Having dealt with some of the misconceptions concerning the nature of Canadian ideology we can now turn our theoretical insights to a consideration of Canadian federalism. The ultimate success or failure of federalism, like that of any action programme, will largely depend on the soundness of its foundation. It is the original intent that goes a long way in "determining the unfolding of the political process" and in setting the parameters in which subsequent debates take place. As some recent analysts of the Confederation Debates have argued:

...Confederation not only represented the compromises arrived at by a political elite in such areas as culture, politics, economics, and external relations, but these initial founding decisions largely set the parameters in which these problem areas have continued to be debated.¹

The importance of the role of intent in the development of Canadian federalism was clearly seen by Donald Creighton in a piece entitled "The Use and Abuse of History".²

¹R. Nelson, R. Wagenberg, W. Sederland, "The Political Thought of the Fathers of Confederation", Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, University of New Brunswick, June 1977.

²D. Creighton, "The Use and Abuse of History" in Towards The Discovery of Canada (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972), pp. 65-84.

According to Creighton much of the contemporary malaise concerning federalism is due to our ignorance and distortion of the original intentions of the founding fathers. This repudiation and distortion of the past has put the very future of federalism into jeopardy for Canadians no longer have a sound basis from which to take action. As Creighton argues:

They are confused and uncertain about the direction they should be taking, partly because they do not know whence they have ~~come~~³, or by what route, or with what aims and ideals as guides for the journey. Ignorance readily accepts myth and is vulnerable before propaganda.³

However, despite challenges and reinterpretations the original intentions remain with us and continue to play an important role.

The past is not dead. It stands at bay, confronting the revolution with its legal barriers, historical memories, and inherited convictions; and if the revolutionaries are to succeed they must overcome these obstacles, silence these fears, eradicate these inhibitions.⁴

For a conservative like Creighton federalism can only survive if it remains true to its founding principles. Once the original intentions are abandoned and wholesale change is attempted destabilization will set in. In the case of Canadian federalism, as with any political system or action programme, it is important that one not permit

³Ibid., p. 69.

⁴Ibid., p. 69.

sub-organizational components to pursue ends which are contrary to the original intent. If the programme is to be a successful one its original intention needs to be clearly understood and continually recaptured. According to Creighton there is nothing inevitable about the increasing decentralization of the federal system except insofar as certain agencies have consciously pursued this end in the fulfillment of their own interests.

History must be defended against attempts to abuse it in the cause of change; we should constantly be on our guard against theories which either dismiss the past or give it a drastically new interpretation. Such theories are likely to abound in an age of doubt and uncertainty about the future; and most of them, whether consciously or unconsciously, have been developed to serve the radical programs of the moment. From this the path to historical propaganda is short and easy... A nation that repudiates or distorts its past runs a grave danger of forfeiting its future.⁵

It is the response of political actors to these problems that will give us an indication of their intentions and the ideas which guide their action.

The distortions concerning the original intentions of the architects of Confederation cannot be ascribed to any lack of historical evidence. Their intentions were clearly stated in a variety of speeches prior to Confederation and even a casual reading of these should suffice to establish the original purpose of Confederation. The ultimate aim

⁵Ibid., p. 83.

was to found a transcontinental nation "in the form of a constitutional monarchy under the British Crown".⁶ The monarchical principle was never seriously challenged and a model based upon the American precedent was not to be considered. A strong central government was what was desired and if a legislative union was impossible because of the peculiarities of Quebec and its desire to retain these then a strong and highly centralized federal union would be the answer. As Macdonald argued:

The fratricidal conflict now unhappily raging in the United States shows us the superiority of our institutions, and of the principle on which they are based. Long may that principle--the Monarchical principle--prevail in this land. Let there be no looking to Washington...but let the cry, with the moderate party, be "Canada United as One Province, and under One Sovereign".⁷

The Americans had made the mistake of investing the states with too much power. This was an error that Macdonald was not about to make and in 1861, while discussing the American problem, we can already find enunciated the principles that would be applied in 1867.

...let it be a warning to ourselves that we do not split on the same rock which they had done. The fatal error which they had committed--and it was perhaps unavoidable from the state of the colonies at the time of the revolution, was in making each state a distinct

⁶Ibid., p. 69.

⁷Macdonald Papers, Public Archives of Canada, Vol. 158, pp. 64011-64012. (Speech delivered at Kingston, 1861).

sovereignty and giving to each a distinct sovereign power, except in those instances where they were specially reserved by the Constitution and conferred upon the general government. The true principle of a confederation lay in giving to the general government all the principles and powers of sovereignty and that the subordinate or individual States should have no powers but those expressly bestowed on them. We should thus have a powerful Central Government--a powerful Central Legislature, and a powerful decentralized system or minor Legislatures for local purposes.⁸

One might here note that Macdonald's attachment to the monarchy was not the result of any tory sentiment. Macdonald characterized himself as a "Conservative Liberal"⁹ and he certainly had no use for the corporate-organic-collectivism of the seignorial system in Lower Canada. The seignorial system was considered to be economically stifling and what Macdonald wanted was to have it opened up to British capital and initiative. No right thinking Englishman could possibly consider living under the strictures of such a form of social organization. This was, in the words of Macdonald, the "system of the dark ages" and neither it nor its values were appropriate for the social experiment contemplated by him and his colleagues. Economic progress depended upon a man having the exclusive right to the fruits of his labour and upon his being able to dispose of them as

⁸Ibid., p. 64121. (Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, 1861).

⁹Ibid., pp. 64021-64022. (Speech at St. Thomas, 1854).

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he saw fit. Macdonald's conception of property was a thoroughly "liberal" one.

Here (Upper Canada) a man gets his estate in free and common soccage, he is lord of the soil, and if his farm is paid for, he has the free and exclusive right to it, for himself, his family and friends while he lives, and for his heirs when he dies. In the seignories the case was very different...the seigneur was lord of the soil, while the habitant or farmer did not own the land, and paid 3d or 6d or in some cases more per acre as a yearly rent. In addition, he was obliged to perform a great many other duties to the landlord, degrading to himself, which left him a mere lessee, instead of being a freeholder. This retarded the whole material progress of the country...¹⁰

The importance of the British connection was also stressed by the French Canadian delegates. It was the British crown and British parliamentary institutions that would continue to afford French Canadians those rights necessary for their cultural survival. Of paramount importance to their cultural survival was the continuance of the catholic clergy in Lower Canada and this was something Britain had permitted. There was also no desire on the part of the French Canadian elite to further the cause of "republican democracy" and an adherence to monarchical principles was one way of staving off any such trend.

According to Cartier the French Canadians understood that:

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 64067-64070. (Speeches delivered at Brantford and St. Thomas, 1854).

If they had their institutions, their language and their religion intact today, it was precisely because of their adherence to the British Crown.¹¹

Whereas the Americans had sought purely democratic institutions the principle behind the federal programme, according to Cartier, was that of perpetuating the "monarchical element". It was only by ensuring the continuance of this institution and its principles that one could prevent the unfortunate train of events that overtook the American experiment. Though Cartier offered an overly simplistic analysis of the American situation the basic elements of the theme were reiterated by others.

They had founded Federation for the purpose of carrying out and perpetuating democracy on this continent; but we who had the benefit of being able to contemplate republicanism in action during a period of eighty years, saw its defects, and felt convinced that purely democratic institutions could not be conducive to the peace and prosperity of nations... Our attempt was for the purpose of forming a Federation with a view of perpetuating the monarchical element. The distinction, therefore, between ourselves and our neighbours was just this: In our Federation the monarchical principle would form the leading feature, while on the other side of the lines, judging by the past history and present condition of the country, the ruling power was the will of the mob, the rule of the populace.¹²

¹¹Parliamentary Debates on The Subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces (Quebec: Hunter and Rose and Co., 1865), pp. 59, 838.

¹²Ibid., p. 838.

More often than not the notion of the monarchical principle comes to entail the idea of a limited franchise exclusive to the property holding elite. By legitimate authority was not only to be understood Parliamentary rule but also limiting participation in government to those deemed worthy. As Cartier went on to argue:

Every person who had conversed with the most intelligent American statesmen and writers must have learned that they all admitted that the governmental process had become too extended, owing to the introduction of universal suffrage, and mob rule had consequently supplanted legitimate authority; and we now saw the sad spectacle of a country torn by civil war...¹³

Similar sentiments were to be found in Macdonald's attitude toward the franchise. Despite the fact that the eventual legislation (1885) helped to widen the franchise considerably the property qualification remained an important aspect thereof. The main principles underlying the act were "a uniformity of the suffrage, and the recognition of a property qualification as determining the right to vote". According to Pope, the property qualification was "intended to be a barrier against the domination of a mere mechanical majority". Macdonald, he goes on to note, was of the definite opinion that "no man who advocated universal suffrage had any right to call himself a Conservative".¹⁴

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Sir J. Pope, Memoirs of the Right Honourable Sir John Alexander Macdonald (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 616.

Macdonald's opinion on the matter had remained consistent from as far back as 1861.

Experience has shown that (universal suffrage) leaves a nation weak and leads it towards anarchy and despotism. Unless there is a middle power, unless property is protected and made one of the principles on which representation is based, they might perhaps have a people altogether equal, but they will soon cease to have a people altogether free.¹⁵

Despite Cartier's optimism regarding the practicability of the federation scheme and its appropriateness for ensuring French Canadian cultural survival there were those who disagreed. Joly, for example, felt that the establishment of a strong central government would do little save sound the death knell for French Canadians. The very principle of "Confederation" would be contradicted by such a provision. Under such a condition the provinces would be able to do little else except the bidding of the central authorities. Federalism, he goes on to argue, is a principle properly suited for strong independent states that find it necessary to come together to meet certain exigencies that they could not otherwise deal with--defense being the obvious example. For Joly, the Confederation proposal is little more than a disguised attempt at legislative union and such a union cannot be in the interests of Lower Canada. A strong central government means that the arrangement

¹⁵P.A.C. Macdonald Papers Vol. 158, p. 64123.
(Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, 1861).

...will no longer be a Confederation; it will be a legislative union--a union which the most zealous advocates of Confederation reject as incompatible with the various interests of the different provinces...the latter will, no longer have an exclusive existence; they will become the authorized delegates of the central power, their offices and every vestige of confederation will disappear from your constitution...The weakness of the central power is not the fruit of the Federal system; it is its root, it is itself. This is the reason why states which are perfectly independent of each other, adopt the Federal principle solely as a means of defence against foreigners, because the central power in a confederation cannot be other than weak.¹⁶

In the case of Canada there already exists an authority which can deal with the problem of defence and that is Great Britain. By retaining close ties with Britain, Canada's sovereignty would be guaranteed and the question of Confederation, at least for Joly, becomes redundant.

We already possess, under our present Constitution, and without confederation, a central power stronger than any power which you can create, and to which we submit without complaint, because it is perfectly compatible with the exercise of our local powers--I mean the power of England.¹⁷

Among the French Canadians there were then two schools of thought concerning the benefits of Confederation. Those who sided with Cartier were convinced that the pluralism of a federal system could best serve the interests of the

¹⁶Confederation Debates, p. 350

¹⁷Ibid.

French Canadians in the long run. It was generally agreed that the basic rights of minorities had been well protected by the English and that by maintaining the British tradition in Canada and by maintaining close links with Britain these rights would continue to be respected. Federalism would further provide the appropriate amount of local power in order to ensure that French Canadian culture continued to thrive.¹⁸

The other group, largely arguing for the maintenance of the status quo, were not so trusting when it came to British and Upper Canadian motives. According to these delegates the rights enjoyed by the French Canadians had not been easily won and needed to be jealously guarded. Rather than viewing Britain as the magnanimous guarantor of minority rights these rights they felt "had to be extracted from the British, and then only when there were threatening outside forces or internal rebellion". Federalism, in turn, was seen as little more than a veiled attempt to eventually bring about a legislative union and representation by population.¹⁹ As Dorion argued:

The British Government is ready to grant a Federal union at once, and when that is accomplished the French element will be completely overwhelmed by the majority of British representatives. What then would prevent the Federal Government from passing a set of resolutions in a similar way to those

¹⁸ Nelson, Wagenberg, and Soderland, pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. See also Confederation Debates, pp. 585-626.

we are called upon to pass, without submitting them to the people, calling upon the Imperial Government to set aside the Federal form of government and give a Legislative union instead of it.²⁰

In a similar vein Perrault argued that:

...the scheme of Confederation is not expedient. But even if the scheme of Confederation was expedient, I maintain that the object of it is hostile. I gave an historical sketch of the encroaching spirit of the English race on the two continents. I pointed out the incessant antagonism existing between it and the French race. Our past recalled to us the constant struggle which we had to keep up in order to resist the aggression and the exclusiveness of the English element in Canada. It was only through heroic resistance and a happy combination of circumstances that we succeeded in obtaining the political rights which are secured to us by the present Constitution. The scheme of Confederation has no other object than to deprive us of the most precious of those rights, by substituting for them a political organization which is eminently hostile to us.²¹

II Macdonald and the Confederation Proposal

Perhaps the most eloquent statement on behalf of Confederation was that made by its chief architect John A. Macdonald. If there has been one term consistently used to describe Macdonald's approach to politics it is pragmatic. Indeed this is not an unfair characterization for in

²⁰ P. B. Waite (edit.), The Confederation Debates in the Province of Canada 1865 (Toronto: Carleton Library Series No. 2, McLelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963), p. 95.

²¹ Ibid., p. 128.

political matters his tendency was to proceed cautiously; always paying due heed to circumstance. However, to suggest from this, as MacDermott and Waite do, that Macdonald "was not a man of ideas at all" is going somewhat too far.²²

It may be, as MacDermott charges, that Macdonald was not overly reflective but then he was a political practitioner and not a political philosopher. Macdonald accepted the dominant ideological principles of the system in which he was working and never felt any need to transcend them. This unquestioning acceptance no doubt helped in establishing his reputation as a pragmatic political actor and may also have been one of the reasons why Macdonald never felt it necessary to go out of his way to purposefully enunciate a "systematic corpus of political principles". We must be careful not to equate his acceptance of the dominant ideology and existing social structure with a lack of "ideas". Macdonald was a conservative-liberal, that is, a "conservative" as we have come to understand the term. He fits quite neatly into that empirical liberal tradition referred to by Hayek and his political practice came to reflect the principles of that tradition. Macdonald summarized his approach to politics rather well in 1865:

²²See P. B. Waite, "The Political Ideas of John A. Macdonald", in M. Hamelin (edit.), The Political Ideas of the Prime Ministers of Canada (Ottawa: Les Editions De L'Universite D'Ottawa, 1969). Also, T. W. L. MacDermott, "The Political Ideas of John A. Macdonald", Canadian Historical Review, No. XIV, 1933.

...I am satisfied to confine myself to practical things--to the securing of such practical measures as the country really wants. I am satisfied not to have a reputation for indulging in imaginary schemes and harboring visionary ideas that may end sometimes in an annexation movement, sometimes in Federation and sometimes in a legislative union, but always utopian and never practical. I am satisfied to leave the imaginary to the hon. member for Chateauguay.²³

Macdonald is here not objecting to the adherence of a set of political principles or ideas but rather to the pursuit of goals set in an a priori manner. The opposition is not to political philosophy but to visionary schemes. Solutions to political problems were to have the same basis for Macdonald as they did for Burke. The best or most appropriate solution would be one based upon the traditions of the polity and not on rational precept. Macdonald was not one to raise issues before their time. However, once public opinion was of such a mood that reform became desirable or necessary he would be more than willing to proceed. A change of stance on a particular matter can be other than the result of mere opportunism. In typically Burkean fashion Macdonald recognized the dangers inherent in raising fundamental and quarrelsome issues before their time. In 1853 he argued that:

If there is one thing to be avoided it is meddling with the constitution of the country, which should not be altered till it is evident that the people are

²³Confederation Debates, p. 1002.

suffering from the effects of that constitution as it actually exists.²⁴

A rather overly sympathetic and adoring biographer of Macdonald's made a similar observation pertaining to his willingness to change position on a given issue. In discussing Macdonald's attitude towards the question of vote by ballot Biggar notes that:

The question of vote by ballot was now coming and it is worthy of remark that John A. Macdonald is found opposing it, as in after years we will find that he opposed more than one reform, which, however, he would subsequently help to shape and carry out when he found that public opinion demanded it. The reason he gave against vote by ballot now was, that "the people in Canada had no one exercising an illegitimate influence over them as in England and European countries".²⁵

Unless circumstance required it there was no reason for bringing about reform. In this instance the situation, in Macdonald's eyes at least, had not reached a point where reform was necessary. To bring in vote by ballot because it was intellectually appealing, because some thought it was a good idea, or because it was being carried out elsewhere was not sufficient ground for issuing it in here. If reform is in fact required then it is best that it be moderate and well thought out for it is moderate reform that has lasting value. As Pope noted of Macdonald:

²⁴Globe, April 12, 1853.

²⁵E. B. Biggar, Anecdotal Life of Sir John Macdonald (Montreal: John Lovell and Son, 1891), p. 64.

He preferred, as a general rule, to "hasten slowly", to weigh well all the circumstances, to keep his hand free as long as possible, and to act only in the light of the fullest knowledge he could gather. Such a course, he has observed, often saved him from the disastrous consequences of hasty and ill-considered action. He was a firm believer in the efficacy of time as a solvent of many difficulties which beset his path, and his wisdom in this regard has time and again been exemplified.²⁶

Thus, when Waite approvingly quotes MacDermott's characterization of Macdonald as "an empiricist through and through" he is not doing him an injustice. He is also quite right in pointing to the fact that Macdonald "would adjust his views and policies to the temper of the time, abandoning cheerfully, though cautiously, any policy that seemed outdated or impossible to work".²⁷ This is not to suggest, though Waite might be inclined to do so, that Macdonald changed his fundamental principles the way a chameleon changes colours but only that he was well aware of the fact that one cannot begin with a set of a priori principles and mould one's environment according to their dictates. Like Burke he was not in favour of rationalist-deductive models. Again Waite goes on to note that Macdonald distrusted the "reforming temperament; he distrusted that view of society which sees in changes of institutions or of laws the panacea for the problems of

²⁶Pope, p. 653.

²⁷Waite, p. 52.

human society".²⁸ Once more Macdonald is here being quite consistent with respect to conservative principle. As we noted earlier, in the case of conservative doctrine "the statesman is properly concerned with situations and objectives in regard to which he can act. His good is a concrete good and not the abstract good of the philosopher".²⁹

Waite attributes Macdonald's rather cynical approach to politics to his equally cynical view of human nature. Macdonald had no illusion concerning the innate virtue of the human animal; "he never shared that sublime belief in the perfectability of man which was the great inheritance of the dissenting churches".³⁰ Macdonald's attitude should come as no surprise. A fundamental belief in the perfectability of man has never been a part of conservative teaching. Whereas the "revolutionists" of the eighteenth century may have "expressed confidence in the moral goodness of men in general, and in their intellectual competence to select measures dictated by science and reason" Burke continued to remain skeptical. According to him our "naked and shivering human nature" would always need the support of the "established traditions of an old society".³¹ Faith in the virtues and benefits of "progressive" reform is often accompanied by a belief in the essential goodness and

²⁸ Ibid., p. 53.

²⁹ See above, pp. 260-261.

³⁰ Waite, p. 54.

³¹ Bredvold and Ross, p. 156.

perfectability of man. Many a reformer has been disillusioned on this score as have those who have been subject to the so-called altruism of revolutionary practitioners.

What is disturbing about Waite's analysis is that once having discerned the foregoing characteristics of Macdonald's approach to politics he still goes on to conclude that Macdonald was a man devoid of ideas. In fact on the basis of Waite's own analysis it becomes quite clear that Macdonald fits well within the conservative tradition. It is difficult to know what Waite would consider as evidence for the influence of ideas or what, according to him, a man of ideas is. He addresses neither of these questions directly and simply concludes that because Macdonald was pragmatic and paid due attention to circumstance his thought and action could not possibly have had a consistent philosophical or ideological basis. What Waite seems to imply is that to act on the basis of ideological conviction necessarily entails an attempt to reshape or transcend one's immediate environment. However, this is not something that one should expect from a conservative and Macdonald did not exhibit any such tendency in either his thinking or in his political behaviour.

If there was one area in which Macdonald expressed himself in typically conservative fashion it was on the question of representation. The role of the representative must never be reduced to that of a mere delegate. Nor did

Macdonald ever entertain the notion that the general population might from time to time be invited to directly participate in matters of legislation. Democracy according to plebiscite or referendum was completely anathema to British constitutional practice as understood by Macdonald. When the question of putting the matter of Confederation to the people came up Macdonald responded in character:

By what contrivance known to our Constitution could we take such a vote? There is none such. There is no means, no system, by which we could make an appeal of that kind, and in order to do it we should have to subvert the principles of the British Constitution...we in this House are representatives of the people, and not mere delegates...³²

Although Macdonald's position is quite consistent with conservative doctrine we must also recognize that like most successful politicians he was not about to allow his political fortunes to suffer too dearly at the hands of principle. Had the question been put to a public vote there existed the distinct possibility that it would have been defeated and along with it Macdonald's vision of a united Canada. Despite this qualification it would nevertheless be unfair to suggest that Macdonald's stand was one of mere opportunism. The independence of the representative was an essential ingredient of the democratic process.

Popular despotism--the tyranny of the majority--was as undesirable as the despotism of the tyrant. The former may

³²Confederation Debates, p. 1004.

in fact, lead to or at least help in the maintenance and legitimation of the latter. By putting major issues of legislation to the consideration of the general population one may only be providing or sanctioning "the means by which a despot...may get that popular confirmation and approval which he desires for the laws necessary to the support and continuation of his usurpation".³³ There is little doubt that Macdonald overstated his case and that a responsible use of the plebiscite can indeed be an effective aspect of democratic government; but not for someone with the conservative's suspicion of popular rule. One might also note that at various points throughout the debate Macdonald uses the term "conservative principles" and comes to equate it with traditional British constitutional practice.

The principle of "representation" was an important ingredient of constitutional practice and it was believed that propertied men of "good character" could be relied upon to make sober political judgements. While Macdonald believed this to be true he also recognized that principle and good conscience were in themselves not enough. Like any good conservative he was no democrat and felt that the principle of representation also required its checks. Representation needed to be balanced by hierarchy and structure. In support of this argument Macdonald approvingly

³³Ibid., pp. 1004-1005.

quoted a speech by the British parliamentarian Leatham.

It is...the essence of representative government that the electing class, which is analogous to the class paying rates, shall possess no direct legislative power; and the principle of parliamentary representation is that not even the representative principle shall alone legislate. We have taken the caution to ~~protect~~ the rights and property of Englishmen by the prerogatives of the Crown, the privileges of the Lords, and the authority of a representative assembly. All these constitute the threefold and invaluable shelter which we have raised over the rights and property of the meanest subject of the realm.³⁴

Macdonald summed up the importance of Leatham's argument with a typically Burkean aphorism: "The...speech contains very shortly the wisdom of ages".³⁵

For Macdonald the rights and property of Canadian constituents were to be protected by essentially the same measures that Leatham had considered so important for Britain, albeit with certain unavoidable modifications. As we have already noted the monarchical principle was to be retained as were the closest possible ties with Britain. The new union was one which was to ensure "British laws, British connection, and British freedom".³⁶

The monarchy was an important part of tradition and beyond partisan politics. In light of the latter consideration

³⁴Ibid., p. 1005.

³⁵Ibid., p. 1006.

³⁶Ibid., p. 31.

it would be able to provide the appropriate symbolic vehicle behind which disparate elements could unite. Macdonald considered the absence of such a non-partisan unifying symbol to be a serious drawback of the American system. The president, although being both the symbolic and political head of state, could really never be more than the "successful leader of a party". He could never be looked up to by all as "the head and front of the nation" because partisan politics dictated that in reality he was only the representative of a part of the nation. The monarchical principle, Macdonald believed, provided for a different set of circumstances. Here one had a Sovereign

who is placed above the region of party
 --to whom all parties look up--who is
 not elevated by the action of one party
 nor depressed by the action of another,
 who is the common head and sovereign
 of all.³⁷

With modifications and due consideration to local circumstance the "privileges of the Lords" could also be transplanted. A replica of the British Upper House was not possible for here there was no landed aristocracy, there were no "men of large territorial positions--no class separated from the mass of the people". The best practical solution and the one most "in accordance with the British system" that circumstance would permit was to confer the power of appointment on the Crown and to make appointments

³⁷Ibid., p. 33.

tenable for life. The Senate was to provide for an effective check on the Lower House, particularly in those instances where the latter might exhibit too much democratic or egalitarian exuberance. In the words of Macdonald:

It would be of no value whatever were it a mere chamber for registering the decrees of the Lower House. It must be an independent House, having a free action of its own, for it is only valuable as being a regulatory body, calmly considering the legislation initiated by the popular branch, and preventing any hasty or ill considered legislation which may come from that body...³⁸

The principle of a representative assembly based upon British precedent would also require some adjustment. Although Macdonald preferred the British model of a legislative union the necessity of appeasing provincial demands precluded such a move and the best that could be hoped for was a federal union. Macdonald clearly realized that he would have to assuage Upper Canada's desire for representation by population, provide for Quebec's demands of cultural autonomy and permit the Maritime provinces to retain a certain level of political identity. A federal union emerged as the logical choice. Such an arrangement would provide for equitable representation in the national parliament, allow Quebec to see to its cultural matters and grant the Maritimes enough local power to retain their political identity. While certain concessions may have

³⁸Ibid., pp. 35-36.

been made there was little doubt that the central authority was to be the dominant one. As Macdonald was quick to point out:

In the proposed Constitution all matters of general interest are to be dealt with by the General Legislature; while the local legislatures will deal with matters of local interest, which do not affect the Confederation as a whole, but are of the greatest importance to their particular sections.³⁹

The overriding interest was to be the national interest. Here Macdonald's thinking is once more quite consistent with that of Burke.

Our examination of Macdonald, albeit brief, should suffice in establishing that he was indeed a man of ideas. Macdonald may not have written a treatise, nor even a series of pamphlets, but there can be little doubt that his political actions were guided by a set of consistent principles of which he had a good understanding. Macdonald was conscious of the ideas upon which he based his actions and therefore his pragmatism was a philosophical pragmatism and not merely the kind of pragmatism that is founded upon opportunism--though this is not to suggest that opportunism did not enter the picture. It would be difficult to find an example of active politics where self-interest and opportunism did not play a significant role. However, to reduce the motivation of political actors to these would

³⁹Ibid., p. 30.

give us only a jaded picture at best. In Macdonald's thought and approach to politics we find those concerns and principles which are part of the conservative tradition. He was suspicious of democracy, in favour of a strong central authority and felt that hierarchy and structure were essential ingredients of any stable form of social organization. The guiding principle for political actors as well as the polity should be tradition--the wisdom of the ages.

III Christopher Dunkin and the Critique of the Confederation Proposal

Macdonald's vision for the proposed federation held the day, although this is not to say that it did so without opposition and scrutiny. The most eloquent attack against the proposed plan came from the Conservative Christopher Dunkin of Lower Canada. Dunkin may not have shared Macdonald's enthusiasm for the proposals under consideration but he did share Macdonald's reverence for tradition and distrust of democracy.

I have no fancy for democratic or republican forms or institutions, or indeed for revolutionary or political novelties of any sort. The phrase of "political creation" is no phrase of mine...All we can do is to attend to and develop the ordinary growth of our institutions; and this growth, if it is to be healthy at all, must be slow...I do not believe in any of those violent and sudden changes which have for their object the creation of something entirely new.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 483-484.

His general criticism of the proposed constitution was that it had been hastily constructed. Rather than paying due deference to traditional practices it was in fact a new and previously untried form of government. Dunkin gave no credence to the claim that the new constitution was equal to, if not better than, either that of Britain or the United States.⁴¹ Not enough attention had been paid to detail and the fundamental impossibility of the scheme lay in its attempt to combine a "federal" form of government with the British cabinet system.⁴² Despite the fact that Dunkin was in favour of a legislative union and no friend of republican institutions his admiration of the American founders was genuine. They had been men confronted with major issues and had taken great care in considering the best possible alternatives. Whereas the Canadian experiment had "a character of hurry"⁴³ about it the American had been carefully and judiciously considered. As Dunkin argued:

The framers of the Constitution of the United States were, indeed, great men --living in, and the product of a great age, who had passed through a great ordeal and been brought up to the level of their work by great events in which they had been leading actors; and their work was a great work, which cost much time and much discussion, and underwent long and painstaking revision of all sorts, in all quarters, before it was

⁴¹Ibid., p. 487.

⁴²Ibid., p. 497.

⁴³Ibid., p. 482.

finally adopted. Yet we are called upon to admit now, and to admit it without examination, that this work of thirty-three gentlemen, done in seventeen days, is a much better work than that; and not only so, but that it is even better for our people and situation than the time-honoured Constitution of our Mother Land; that it combines essentially the advantages of both, with the disadvantages of neither.⁴⁴

In certain respects Dunkin's criticisms were not only valid but turned out to have somewhat of a prophetic content. By trying to arrive at an expedient compromise the framers had granted the provinces certain prerogatives but had at the same time left the overall "style and rank" of the state that was to be created in "most delightful ambiguity".⁴⁵ "The game of all things to all men", Dunkin observed, "is a game that cannot be played with success in the long run".⁴⁶ Dunkin's prediction has been all too frequently witnessed in the continuing rounds of federal-provincial bickering. One of the more important sources of ambiguity was the central government's power of disallowance. Dunkin argued that on the one hand the provision was presented as a real power with which to control local legislatures, thereby satisfying those who preferred a legislative union, while on the other hand it was presented as a provision which, although helping to enhance the central

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 490-491.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 488.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 489.

authority, would never be used, thereby satisfying those who preferred a federal union. When it came to the protection of minority rights Dunkin was again not impressed. For example, the general nature of educational guarantees for minorities in Upper and Lower Canada would only lead to future misinterpretations, ambiguities and the potential denial of those very rights.⁴⁷

Dunkin's reservations were not with the expressed intentions and general principles of the constitutional proposals. The intention of providing for a strong central government was one which he supported wholeheartedly. His grievance was with the provisions that were to ensure that the intention behind the programme would be carried out-- i.e. with the design phase. There was no disagreement with the "ideological" principles that provided the overall justification of the plan; but Dunkin realized that principle was not enough. Careful attention would also have to be paid to detail--design and implementation--or the whole exercise might well prove to be for naught in the long run.

We have to deal with no mere question of a nationality, or of union or dis-union, or of a Federal as opposed to a Legislative union. It is idle to talk vaguely about the maintenance of British connection, or to go into magnificent speculations about the probable results of independence, or blindly to urge this scheme as a sure preventative of annexation to the United States. These cheap

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 490.

and easy generalities are thoroughly unreliable. The only question is, how is this plan, in its entirety, going to work? And this question is one which is not easy to answer; and is one requiring much patience, and a close examination of details.⁴⁸

This is not to suggest that Dunkin was not concerned about maintaining close ties with Britain or with preventing annexation to the United States. These were matters of great concern to him but he believed that the proposals presented could not ensure the former nor prevent the latter. Dunkin's call for a consideration of detail did not stem from any rationalist premise but rather from the belief that by merely debating vague generalities and hastily considering a series of hastily drawn up proposals those traditions upon which the constitution was to be based and which it was to maintain would be lost. According to him, the framers of the constitutional proposals had not even had the foresight to provide for a clear distinction between the functions of the central and provincial governments-- something which would no doubt create problems in the future.

We have not even an intelligible statement as to what powers are to be exercised by the general, and what by the local legislatures and governments. Several subjects are specifically given to both; many others are confusedly left in doubt between them; and there is the strange and anomolous provision that not only can the general government disallow the acts of the provincial legislatures, and control and hamper and fetter provincial action in more ways

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 483.

than one, but that wherever any federal legislation contravenes or in any way clashes with provincial legislation, as to any matter at all common between them, such federal legislation shall override it, and take its place.⁴⁹

If the division of powers was deserving of criticism then so were the other major features of the new constitution. The House of Commons which was presented as a model faithful to the British Commons was, Dunkin argued, nothing of the kind. It's representative function was more akin to that of the American House of Representatives. Dunkin's main objection was with the shifting nature of the electoral districts that was guaranteed to occur after each decennial census. For representation to be effective it needed a continuing and steady influence. The provision suggested would bring together "electors who have not been in the habit of acting with each other".⁵⁰ The prospect of frequently redrawing electoral boundaries would do little save tempt the party in power to use the provision to its advantage. Whereas the British system ensured, at least so Dunkin argued, that all representatives be considered "members of the one House of Commons" with a view to the national interest, the Canadian system with its shifting electoral boundaries, and with those boundaries lying exclusively within provincial borders, ran the risk of

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 514.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 492.

becoming little more than a forum for provincial grievances. The Canadian situation is here more akin to the American than the British and could very well prove to be detrimental to the future prospects of union.

The House of Representatives is an aggregate of state delegations, and our mock House of Commons is to be an aggregate of provincial delegations. Each man is to come ticketed as an Upper or Lower Canadian, a New Brunswicker, a Nova Scotian, a Newfoundlander, a Prince Edward Islander, or what not. These distinctions, which, if we are to be a united people, we had better try to sink, we are to keep up and exaggerate.⁵¹

Dunkin also had little hope for the effectiveness of the Senate. In response to the claim that the Senate was to represent the Federal element of the constitution he retorted that "there is not a particle of the Federal principle about it".⁵² Nor did he feel that it in any way approximated the virtues of the House of Lords but rather regarded it as a pale copy of the United States Senate, with none of that body's more important powers. The American Senate had the "important judicial function of impeachment" whereby even the actions of the President came under its scrutiny. Along with this it was given the executive power to examine and disallow treaties and certain presidential appointments. With the House of Representatives

⁵¹Ibid., p. 493.

⁵²Ibid.

the Senate also exercised "coordinate legislative functions, as to expenditure and taxation".⁵³ Compared to this the role of the Canadian Senate was indeed small. Canadian Senators were to be chosen neither by the legislatures of the provinces nor by the people in general. As a result Dunkin argued that it could not be regarded as representing a federal element in any true sense of the term. The Canadian Senate, he commented:

...constituted so differently from the Senate of the United States, presided over by a functionary to be nominated by the General Government; having no such functions of a judicial or executive character as attached to that body, and cut off from that minute oversight of the finances which attaches to the Senate of the United States; although it may be a first-rate deadlock; although it may be able to interpose an absolute veto, for no one can say how long, on all legislation, would be no Federal check at all.⁵⁴

In Dunkin's opinion the Canadian Senate was nothing else than "a very near approach to the worst system which could be devised in legislation".⁵⁵

The cabinet, in Dunkin's evaluation, fared no better than the Senate as a bastardization of British constitutional practice. Insofar as the provinces were not "really represented to any Federal intent" in the Senate they would have to be so represented elsewhere. The Federal check which was provided by the Senate, in the United States, "as

⁵³Ibid., p. 494.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 495.

⁵⁵Ibid.

an integral part of the Executive Government" would have to be performed in Canada by the Cabinet; the Cabinet would have to take on the character of "federal composition" and be made the "representative of the provinces". Dunkin considered such a prospect completely contradictory to British practice.

...I must say that this sort of thing is utterly variant from, and inconsistent with British practice and British principle; with the constitutional system which makes the whole Cabinet responsible for every act of government. The British Cabinet is no Cabinet of sections, but a unit.⁵⁶

Dunkin was then primarily concerned with the structural aspects of the constitution and not with its intention. It was the structural defects that would, however, not permit for the realization of the intention of bringing in a highly centralized form of government. In trying to accommodate various federal elements, so his argument goes, the framers of the constitutional package had in fact woven in the seeds of its future destruction. When compared to either the avowedly federal constitution of the United States or the centralized constitution of Great Britain the Canadian constitution emerges as a deficient compromise between the two. Dunkin's response to the constitutional question was a consistently conservative one. Whereas Macdonald had been willing to compromise on certain aspects in order to deal with local circumstances, Dunkin was not.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 497.

Yet, both were ideologically conservative and used precepts derived from that tradition to justify their positions.

Both recognized the importance of tradition, were anti-democratic, favoured slow imperceptible growth in a society's development and both believed that the rights of the individual could best be guaranteed by inherited tradition and practice. At no point during the Confederation Debates was there a call for the protection of the "abstract" rights of the individual, nor was it ever suggested that they be enshrined in a bill of rights. On this question the approach was once more empirical and characteristically conservative.

As Creighton notes:

In general, the liberties of the subject are assumed as part of the unwritten constitution inherited from Great Britain; and it is only in a few particular cases that the act concerns itself with rights or liberties, and then in a characteristically practical and empirical fashion. It provides safeguards for the distinctive Civil Code of the Province of Quebec, for the already established sectarian schools of religious minorities, and for the use of the English and French languages in the Parliament and courts of Canada, and in the legislature and courts of the Province of Quebec.⁵⁷

There was no notion whatsoever of making Canada a bilingual or bicultural nation; in fact, the "modern use of the latter term was unknown in 1867". The use of the French language was granted only in those parts of Canada in which it "had

⁵⁷Creighton, p. 72.

already been established by law of convention".⁵⁸ Had anyone at the time thought that the provinces were to achieve their present status they might well have heeded Dunkin's warnings and proceeded more cautiously.

Thus the intention of the framers of the constitution was to provide for a strong central government where the provinces would play only a minor role, and their purpose was to provide for those conditions in which the "inherited" social and constitutional (political) practices of the British tradition could flourish.

IV Motives for Confederation

In determining the motives behind Confederation we can delineate three major areas of concern. First, there were those internal difficulties stemming from the 1841 Act of Union and Quebec's desire to preserve its French culture. Secondly, there was the problem of defense arising from the perceived threat of American aggression. Added to these were a variety of economic considerations.

With respect to the first it quickly became apparent that the effort to govern both ethnic groups under the purview of a unitary, "or at least quasi-unitary, state" would prove to be difficult at best. A variety of solutions were tried in the attempt to stave off disintegration. Quebec was permitted to retain its civil law, the status of

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 72-73.

the French language was eventually recognized despite initial attempts--based on Durham's recommendations--to make unilingualism the order of the day, and cabinets were constructed so as to include representation from both cultural groups. In addition governments were headed by two party leaders, one from each section, rather than by a single Prime Minister and separate attorneys-general were also provided. In order to permit "matters such as education and municipal affairs" to be dealt with differently in the two sections "some of the legislation adopted by the provincial Parliament applied only to one of the sections, with parallel but distinct legislation applying to the other".⁵⁹ Despite these provisions the solution did not work. As Stevenson has argued:

Each section of the province harboured the belief that it was being constrained and dictated to by the other. Since they were of roughly equal size and had equal representation in the Parliament, such a belief was equally plausible on both sides. Legislation could be adopted pertaining to either section without the support of a majority of its representatives. The equal representation of the two sections was discovered by residents of the western half to be an intolerable affront to liberal principles once the western half became the more populous, although the injustice of it had somehow managed to escape their notice when they were a minority of the total population. Ethnic and religious antagonisms were exacerbated by many of the

⁵⁹G. Stevenson, Unfulfilled Union (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), pp. 28-29.

issues which came before the legislature, and were reinforced by divergencies of economic interest between the sections. Farmers and manufacturers in the western part of the province, like their counterparts in the larger western hinterland of a larger date, resented the commercial hegemony of Montreal and the measures that were taken with the aim of funneling their commerce through that city.⁶⁰

It is small wonder that the status quo could not continue long. A variety of solutions were proposed but each suffered from major defects. Representation by population would have left the Lower Canada minority in a subordinate position to Upper Canada. The provision for double majority would have made it virtually impossible to form a government at all while a federation between the two major provinces meant that each of the parts could very well have emerged as more powerful than the central authority. The option of granting the sections independence would have ensured the destruction of the "economic and commercial unity of the St. Lawrence system".⁶¹ These internal difficulties then provided strong motive for finding some workable solution.

As already noted the problem of defence also occupied the attentions of many of the delegates. Thus, "the perceived hostility of the United States as exemplified by the Trent affair, the Alabama claims, border incidents, and

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 40.

New York editorialists promoting northern expansion, formed the backdrop for speeches which concentrated on defence policy, possible annexation to the United States, need for Canadian western development and Canada's place within the British Imperial defence system".⁶²

With the expectation that the United States would abrogate its reciprocal trade agreement with the colonies, as it actually did in 1866, the provinces were presented with a strong economic motive for Confederation. Trade would not have to be re-oriented on an east-west basis and the Maritimes were confronted with the added burden of defending their coast-line and fishing rights.⁶³ The various economic benefits were stressed by Alexander Galt, the then Minister of Finance. Galt argued that one of the chief benefits of Confederation would be an economy that did not have to rely on any one industry alone. With the addition of the Maritimes Canada had the potential of becoming a seafaring power and with the removal of tariff barriers provinces would benefit from the resulting increase in trade and would no longer be dependent on the threatened U.S. market.⁶⁴

There were, of course, also those who considered the economic benefits of Confederation as less than certain.

⁶²Nelson, Wagenberg and Soderland, p. 37.

⁶³Stevenson, p. 34.

⁶⁴Nelson, Wagenberg and Soderland, p. 26.

J.B.E. Dorion could not see any particular advantage in having the Maritimes as a trading partner in that their products were similar to those of central Canada. As he argued, "What trade could there be between two farmers who produce nothing but oats?...They might stand and stare at each other with their oats before them, without ever being able to trade together; they would require a third person--a purchaser".⁶⁵ According to Dorion any trading advantages could just as well be obtained without union. For some the entire Confederation scheme was "nothing more than a machination to further the interest of the Grand Trunk Railway".⁶⁶

However, despite criticisms and reservations, it was the recommendations of the "chief architect" Macdonald and his supporters that prevailed. In view of the motivating factors and the response to these given by Macdonald and others there can be little doubt that there was an important ideological element to the debate. Macdonald's liberalism was not, as Christian and Campbell suggest, limited by his toryism.⁶⁷ Rather, his ideology emerges as a consistently conservative-liberal one and there is no reason whatsoever to import any tory notions in order to understand his politics. Other solutions to the constitutional problem

⁶⁵Confederation Debates, p. 862. Quoted in Nelson, Wagenberg, and Soderland, p. 27.

⁶⁶Nelson, Wagenberg, and Soderland, pp. 29-30.

⁶⁷Christian and Campbell, p. 84.

could have been entertained and provided. A more "republican" form of government would just as well have provided for an effective union and could just as easily have enjoyed the protection of Britain in matters of defence. The rights of citizens and minorities could have been enshrined in a bill of rights. Neither of the foregoing came to pass.

Macdonald did not approach the question of constitutional reform in a merely reactive or incrementalist manner; nor were the ideas upon which he based his actions mere rationalizations of what had been brought about by independent forces. The confederation proposal shows a definite connection to a set of ideas and values. There is no doubt that in both tone and content the "formal" constitution emerged as a very "practical" document⁶⁸ but to infer from this that it did little save formalize an expedient political compromise is to do it an injustice. The B.N.A. Act did not seek to advance any new principles or rights but it did seek to consciously preserve the inherited rights and freedoms of a particular tradition; and Macdonald showed a good understanding of the philosophical ideas which underlay that tradition.

V Revisionism

The present condition of the Canadian nation is certainly not that envisioned by the founding Fathers.

⁶⁸Morton, p. 320.

Their intention of providing for a strong central authority where the provinces would be subordinate to the national interest has not been realized. During the most recent round of federal-provincial constitutional wrangling the Premier of Newfoundland, Mr. Peckford, went so far as to suggest that the real purpose of Confederation had been to set up a central government whose function was to provide for the interests of the provinces and to act at their bequest. The Newfoundland mists seem to have somewhat beclouded Mr. Peckford's historical vision. Quebec has ceased to be a province with a few peculiarities and has come to define itself as a completely distinct entity deserving of special status. The contemporary situation is one in which "the balance of power between federal and provincial governments, which the Fathers believed should incline decisively toward the Dominion, has now fallen sharply towards the provinces".⁶⁹ The federal authority is not the only one to have suffered a decline. The role of Parliament as a legislative decision and law-making body has also suffered shrinkage and come to be assumed by the executive, bureaucracy and federal-provincial bargaining units.

The devolution of the central authority is now often attributed to the economic and social developments which took place subsequent to Confederation. As a result of

⁶⁹Creighton, p. 74.

these developments, it is argued, the intentions of the Fathers of Confederation have become largely irrelevant and their plan obsolete. Those who support this argument contend that the founders did not foresee the inevitable growth of the state with its attendant responsibilities. Thus, they did not envision "the tremendous expansion of education, or the coming of the welfare state, with its pensions, family allowances, medical care, and various forms of insurance". Compounding this lack of foresight was the equally shortsighted assignment of natural resources to the provinces thereby depriving the federal government of a potentially important source of revenue. The Fathers were further remiss in their "expectation that the great public improvements of the future would be federal enterprises such as transcontinental railways" rather than those areas of contemporary public enterprise such as schools, universities, roads and hospitals which were assigned to the provinces. As a result, "the whole trend of modern development has placed more power and responsibility in the hands of the provinces; and this inevitably means such a large degree of decentralization as to make the centralist scheme of the Fathers seem obsolete".⁷⁰

The second line of revisionism deals with the cultural aspect of the Confederation agreement. Here it is argued

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 77.

that Confederation was in fact a union, or agreement, "between two cultures or nations" rather than a union of provinces. Even though there is no substantial evidence to support this thesis in the pre-Confederation conferences and debates, so the argument goes, the agreement was of an extra-legal nature, "an unspoken moral commitment, which was meant to inform the whole union with its spirit". As evidence the "historical revisionists" point to the fact that the first "Conservative government gave legal status to the French language in Manitoba and the first Liberal government after Confederation did the same for the Northwest Territories". The argument goes on to conclude that this unwritten agreement between the two cultures has not been adequately lived up to and that therefore "substantial amends must now be made".⁷¹

Creighton quarrels with these arguments not simply because he considers them historically inaccurate, but also because of the subtle attempt on the part of their protagonists to rewrite history to suit their particular objectives. As noted earlier, both history and the intentions of the founding Fathers stand as limitations in any attempt to fundamentally alter the provisions of Canadian federalism. Thus, any attempt to bring about significant changes can more easily succeed if it is accompanied by an interpretation of history which favours it. The argument

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 77-78.

presented for the natural devolution of the central authority claims that the founders had been shortsighted in their provision for future contingencies and had not invested the federal government with enough authority to prevent decentralization. At the same time too much responsibility was given to the provinces. As a consequence the centralist thesis no longer holds and the provinces should therefore be granted those powers necessary to effectively carry out their responsibilities. The cultural argument calls for a fundamental reconsideration and re-interpretation of the assumptions upon which Confederation had been based. If the argument that union was indeed a cultural compact instead of merely the coming together of provinces then the claims for special status--more representation of the French fact in federal institutions, the right to negotiate international treaties, etc.--take on a new light. Indeed the argument can be taken so far as to claim that Quebec should be treated as an equal partner vis à vis the rest of Canada; despite its numerical inferiority.

According to Creighton, the argument of inevitable decentralization is not one that bears up well under scrutiny. Decentralization was not due to any lack of foresight on the part of the founding Fathers, nor was it the inevitable consequence of socio-economic evolution and change. The major factor which furthered and initiated the trend towards decentralization was that of human intervention.

...the Fathers did make ample provision by founding a strong central government which could have coped very effectively with modern social and economic problems. And the fact that it is not now capable of playing the role which the Fathers intended it to play is not the result simply of natural social evolution and economic change, but also, and more importantly, of the decisions of the courts and the arrangements of politicians. The British North America Act...has not often been formally amended; but its whole character has been drastically changed, and, indeed, almost exactly reversed, by the decisions of the courts, and particularly of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which in effect has transferred residuary authority from the central government, where it was intended to lie, to the provinces, which were never meant to have it. There was nothing natural or inevitable about this at all; it might, it ought, to have happened the other way.⁷²

Although the courts were responsible for initiating and furthering the process of decentralization this is not to say that the politicians were blameless. Whereas the courts transferred "powers and responsibilities" to the provinces the politicians "continued and hastened" the process by transferring large sums of money. As Creighton again argues:

During the depression of the 1930s and 1940s, the Dominion government still maintained its dominating economic and financial control; but since then provincial pressures and federal concessions have altered this state of affairs, and with accelerating rapidity...financial agreements between the provinces and the Dominion have steadily increased the

⁷²Ibid., p. 79.

provincial share of the Canadian tax dollar.⁷³

When confronted by historical fact the assumptions of the two-nation theory emerge as failing no better than the theory of inevitable decentralization. According to Creighton "the Manitoba Act of 1870, which gave provincial status, the French language, and sectarian schools to the first prairie province of Canada, was not at all the original intention of the Fathers of Confederation". Rather, their intentions had been expressed in an act passed the previous year and little remembered by historians--the Act for the Provisional Government of Ruperts Land. This act "gave the northwest the government of a territory, not of a province, and made no mention of language or schools". The original plan had to be abandoned with the advent of the Riel Rebellion of 1869-70. As a result of the rebellion and its attendant problems the institutions of Manitoba were set prematurely.

It was Louis Riel, backed by five thousand Métis, the partial support of the Red River community, together with British pressure and Anglo-Canadian fears of American intervention in the north-west, which compelled the Fathers of Confederation to fix the institutions of Manitoba prematurely, before the true character of the province had declared itself.⁷⁴

⁷³Ibid., p. 80.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 80-81.

The actions of the legislators were here motivated by considerations other than the desire to fulfill a bicultural agreement or understanding. Despite the provisions of the Manitoba Act there was no subsequent concerted effort on the part of either party to provide for a bicultural West. The North-West Territories Act of 1875 "which first set up a territorial government for the prairies beyond Manitoba, made no mention whatever of language rights". The 1877 amendment to the act "which gave the French language legal status in the territories was proposed, not by the Liberal government of the day, but by a private member in the Senate". The amendment was not welcomed by the then Minister of the Interior David Mills and was only grudgingly conceded to by the government in order that the revised bill be gotten through before the end of the session.⁷⁵

The problematic character of Canadian federalism is one that will likely remain with us for some time. Even given patriation, provincial and federal claims will continue to clash and competing social and political groups will attempt to rewrite history to suit their purpose. It is during times of such fundamental questioning as we are now experiencing that Creighton's warning becomes particularly important. The hermeneutic understanding of history is no simple task. One must always try to ensure that the interpretive understanding of history, which is essential in

⁷⁵Ibid.

dealing with the problem of meaning, not be confused with conscious distortion. Creighton rightly recognizes that if solutions to political problems are to be effective then they must be arrived at with a view to, and an understanding of, history. It is in the responses of major federal actors to the varied problems of federalism that we should then be able to determine the role of ideology and whether or not there are any significant ideological differences among the parties. Insofar as space does not permit us to treat the entire history of federalism we will limit our discussion to the Trudeau era.

VI The Contemporary Conservative Argument: Stanfield and Clark

In Robert Stanfield the Progressive Conservative Party had one of its more eloquent spokesmen. While still leader of the party Stanfield tried to consciously elucidate the principles upon which the party should base its programmes. Whereas most leaders leave their philosophical ruminations for the days of retirement and the writing of their memoirs, Stanfield considered it important that a party have a consistent "philosophical" base which transcended platform posturing. These fundamental principles are those for which the party should stand over the years and which should inform policy choices. The question of principle is a primary one and must not be confused with party platforms or tactics; these latter are designed to meet the

✓ requirements of the moment and to garner electoral success. Principles, on the other hand, cannot be permitted to change with the relativistic requirements of electoral politics. Matters of principle are not reducible to party platforms and party platforms, if they are to be electorally successful, cannot be completely subject to the stringency of principle. As Stanfield argued in a party memorandum entitled Some Comments on Conservative Principles and Philosophy:

We are not now discussing the platform of the party. This program should be consistent with our principles, but it is a set of proposals, designed to deal with the problems and issues of the moment, rather than a statement of principles. And of course, it is also intended to gain support in a given situation. I must emphasize, too, that we are not now discussing the extent to which we in our party should be positive with regard to issues and problems of the day, as opposed to being critical of government policies on these issues and problems. This question is an important question but it is a matter of tactics, rather than a matter of party principles.⁷⁶

While party principle is important this does not mean that parties should be doctrinaire. In order to ensure what Stanfield refers to as an "effective and stable democracy" there must exist some common ground among the major parties. As a minimum, parties must at least agree on such matters as parliamentary responsible government

⁷⁶R. Stanfield, "Some Comments on Conservative Principles and Philosophy", Memorandum, Office of the Leader of the Opposition, No. 14, 1974, p. 1.

and on major aspects of the constitution. An overly doctrinaire form of partisan politics can only lead to unstable government. The major function of a national party is to provide for consensus. This does not mean abandoning principle but it rather means that the overriding concern of government be the good of the whole. Confrontation politics is not something to be pursued by Conservatives and, preferably, not by any major party. On this point, Stanfield's notion of Parliamentary government is quite consistent with Burke's conception of the deliberative nature of Parliament. As Stanfield argued:

I do not favour the...thesis which urges the polarization of political view points in this country. In Canada a party such as ours has a harmonizing role to play, both horizontally in terms of resolving conflicts between regions, and vertically in terms of resolving conflicts between Canadians in all walks of life. It is not a matter of a national party being all things to all people--this would never work. But a national party should appeal to all parts of the country and to Canadians in all walks of life, if it is to serve this essential role, and if it is to remain strong.⁷⁷

The desire for consensus is a natural one given the traditional conservative notion of order. For Stanfield the conservative notion of order is that of a social order and therefore is more comprehensive than the mere maintenance of "law and order". A "decent civilized life requires a

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 3-4.

framework of order" and to speak of man's rights and liberties independent of such an order makes as little sense for Stanfield as it would have for Burke. This concept of order, Stanfield continues, naturally inclined Conservatives to favour strong and effective government and also enabled them to argue in favour of government intervention to curb the excesses of the marketplace without contradicting their free enterprise principles.

The conservative concept of order encouraged conservative governments to impose restrictions on private enterprise where this was considered desirable. We all studied William Wilberforce and his factory legislation when we were in school. These were logical measures for Conservatives to adopt; to protect the weak against the excesses of private enterprise and greed. That is good traditional conservatism, fully consistent with traditional conservative principles. It is also good Conservatism not to push regulation too far--to undermine self-reliance.⁷⁸

Despite his belief in the need for effective government and for a certain amount of social welfare, Stanfield does not confuse, nor equate, effective government with big government. A healthy social order requires that government be kept within certain bounds and that it never become all pervasive. One of the reasons put forth for limiting the size and authority of government is that a highly centralized government is more "susceptible to the

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

arbitrary exercise of power" as well as to "attack and revolution" than a decentralized form of government. Thus, although a national government has to be able to act in the national interest it is also important that there be certain "countervailing centres of power and influence". Secondly, conservatives argue in favour of limited government because of their less than utopian view of the human condition. The world is an imperfect place and it is destined to remain so. Man is an imperfect creature, his world is no Garden of Eden and both he and his environment are capable of only limited improvement. A third argument, presented by Stanfield, for "taking a limited view of the role of government" is that the conservative considers man's intelligence as limited. As a consequence the solutions to problems, or the potential thereof, are also rather limited.

...Conservatives have traditionally recognized how limited human intelligence really is, and consequently have recognized that success in planning the lives of other people or the life of the nation is likely to be limited. Neither government nor its bureaucracy are as wise as they are apt to believe. Humility is a valuable strain in Conservatism, provided it does not become an excuse for restricting change, accepting injustice or supporting vested interests.⁷⁹

Despite the preference for a certain degree of decentralization and countervailing powers the scope and

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 6-8.

purpose of Conservative politics should always be national. Its function should be to serve the nation as a whole and this concern can never be reduced to the economic criterion of increasing the gross national product. Economic progress is important but in its pursuit due attention must also be paid to the effects of that growth on society. As Stanfield again argues:

A Conservative naturally regards a healthy economy as of great importance, but increasing the size of the Gross National Product is not in itself a sufficient goal for a civilized nation, according to a Conservative. A healthy economy is obviously important, but a Conservative will be concerned about the effects of economic growth--what this does to our environment, what kind of living conditions it creates, what is its effect on the countryside, what is its effect on our cities; whether all parts of the nation benefit or only some parts of the nation, and whether a greater feeling of justice and fairness and self-fulfillment results from this growth, thereby strengthening the social order and improving the quality of national life.⁸⁰

For Stanfield, as for Burke, the best kind of social progress is that which takes place slowly and which provides for the least amount of social disruption. The concern which Stanfield expresses for the disadvantaged stems neither from moral indignation nor from any concern with abstract individual rights. It stems from the belief that if one is to have any kind of civilized life then one must

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 9-10.

assure social order and stability. The solution to inequality is not to be found in increased governmental activity but rather in the provision of incentive. "The Conservative tradition has been to interfere only where necessary" and the final responsibility for success or failure is the individual's. While the state should provide sufficient benefits for the unfortunate it can never realistically provide all with a "preferred" standard of living. Government intervention is always a question of judgement and when applied its premise should be to "regulate individual conduct in the interests of society" and not, as the "progressive liberals" suggest, to "enlarge the protection and the freedom of the ordinary citizen" through the use of the state. The latter approach can only lead to more and bigger government and, in the long run, may very well jeopardize the freedom of the citizen himself.⁸¹

According to Stanfield it is the ever increasing size of government with its attendant responsibilities for Ministers and ordinary Members of Parliament that has helped further the current strains within federalism. Parliamentary responsible government is not suited for the "kind of all-pervasive government" we now have. With increase in the size of government we are facing a decline in the deliberative and supervisory roles of Parliament.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 12.

...the current demands on our national government, and the consequential current scope of its deliberations, decisions and activities are far greater than the ministers can competently cope with, and far beyond the supervision of our parliament, to which the government is supposedly responsible.⁸²

For Stanfield, as for Hayek, it is impossible to balance the needs of a "planning society" with the requirements of effective parliamentary government. Although "ministers can and do organize themselves into committees and thus divide or share their work to some extent", they are still collectively responsible and although much of their work may be delegated to cabinet committees they do not have the time to be "constituency representatives, active politicians, overseers of their departments and intelligent policy makers on the scale being undertaken".⁸³ As the scope of governmental decision making increases so does the tendency to bypass the "fetters" of parliamentary procedure. The trend is toward increased executive decision making with parliament becoming little more than an afternoon debating club and rubber stamp for the policies of the party in power. The increased scope of government activity also means that the role of "experts" and the bureaucracy become more and more important so that even the cabinet cannot effectively control the many functions of government.

⁸²R. L. Stanfield, Notes For The Fifth Lecture In The George Nowlan Lectureship Series, Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia. February 7th and 8th, 1977. #1, p. 4.

⁸³Ibid., p. 5.

Parliament is not fitted for controlling the kind of all-pervasive government we have today. It cannot cope with it effectively. This would be so even if the House of Commons had not lost financial control of government back in 1965 when it accepted a time limitation on the consideration of Estimates...But even if--and this is a basic point--parliament somehow regained its old power to control the purse, it could not effectively control the manifold operations of the contemporary government in Ottawa.⁸⁴

According to Stanfield the only realistic solution to the problem of all pervasive government and the declining role of parliamentary authority is to drastically limit the role of government and to provide more decentralization in decision making. Failure to ensure such limitations can only lead to a situation in which we have "bureaucracy running just about everything, with ministers floundering more and more, losing more and more public respect and becoming steadily less able to exercise control".⁸⁵

By proposing more decentralization in decision making Stanfield is not seeking more power for the provinces and municipalities for their decision makers may soon face problems similar to those at the federal level. He is rather arguing that "we must be content to let people run their own affairs to a greater extent than we are today".⁸⁶

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 607.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 12-13.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 13. ●

This is not to imply that one return to the simplistic "rules of thumb" of laissez-faire but involves the recognition that government cannot possibly serve all needs and wants. There are certain matters which are best left in the hands of the private domain and subject to the vagaries of the free-market. In presenting his argument Stanfield would have little trouble gaining favour with the likes of Burke and Hayek.

I am not arguing for a return to laissez-faire and the abandonment of all government regulation of the economy. I am arguing that the Government of Canada cannot do well all it is trying to do and that we would be wise to get the federal government out of areas of responsibility which are reasonably self-regulating or can be made so. That is the point, of course, about the so-called free market. It is frequently not really free, it is certainly imperfect, but it does permit firms and people to make decisions. It's a form of decentralized decision-making. The question to be asked is not whether it is working perfectly but whether something else works better, enables people to have more control over their own affairs, makes our society more democratic. In my judgement, there is no such thing as democratic socialism as we have understood democracy. There is only bureaucratic socialism.⁸⁷

Along with the problem of increasing government involvement in all aspects of life Canadians also lack a conception of the national interest. Increasingly, so Stanfield argues, Canadians are giving their loyalties to organizations whose

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 14.

main purpose is to further the peculiar interests of the individual. The intransigence of the federal government on constitutional decentralization--whatever that may mean for Stanfield never defines nor deals with it in detail--has led Quebecers to look inward and adopt an attitude of confrontation rather than of conciliation. There is nothing new about the fact that individuals pursue their own interests but what is new is the extent "to which groups are now highly organized to push their interests". This phenomenon, coupled with regional tensions and the penchant of provinces to put their interests before the national interest, has made it increasingly difficult "to achieve a consensus on which the country can be governed". The pursuit of individual interest is an acceptable and quite ordinary phenomenon for Stanfield. However, the matter is quite different and "provides for a qualitatively different kind of society when individuals organize to pursue their individual interests collectively". Rather than being a pursuit for the common good, national life now becomes "a struggle for advantage among large and powerful organizations--not simply corporations and trade unions". Confrontation politics has become the accepted norm for achieving both individual and social goals. As a consequence it has become accepted procedure in the political arena and has made the prospect of achieving "some regard for the public interest" increasingly difficult.⁸⁸

⁸⁸Ibid., #2, pp. 3-7.

The only organizations that can effectively counter this trend are the national political parties, although even in their case the situation is problematic.

The only organizations whose nature forces them to work towards a national consensus are the national political parties. Whatever their faults, weaknesses and shortcomings, whatever their stumbling, political parties must try to put together and keep together by adjustment, a consensus which is acceptable to enough Canadians to get elected. That consensus may sometimes be shortsighted, it may sometimes not serve the long-term interests of the country, but it reconciles for the time being enough of the conflicting interests to serve as a basis of government, and permit an adjustment of the consensus. A national political party has to put the whole thing together to that extent if it is to have any hope of success.⁸⁹

If the approach we take to the pursuit of our interests and to the resolution of political matters has proven problematic it is not the only matter making for instability. A good part of what Stanfield considers to be the contemporary crisis is due to the values we have come to consider as important--particularly the importance we attach to affluence. There is nothing wrong with affluence as such, so long "as it is not associated with great poverty", but there is danger in elevating it to the highest good worth pursuing. Society needs incentive but at the same time the drive for affluence "creates tension

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 7-8.

and distrust when the belief is general that we could become more affluent immediately were it not that some powerful organization or group is keeping us down". All this feeling does is to reinforce the belief that joining a powerful organization is the best way to further one's well being. Again, the danger is that the general good or the public interest is relegated to secondary status. Coupled with the drive for affluence we have also witnessed a decline in the influence of tradition and religion which had generally operated as moderating influences. In the final analysis, Stanfield argues, "we have to choose between pursuing our own interests without restraint and respecting the common good. We have to choose between seeing the country from our own, sometimes narrow point of view, and doing what is necessary to accommodate the other fellow".⁹⁰

Stanfield's bromide for these problems is to try and bring about a sense of participation and responsibility among those who feel alienated or who consider themselves to have been badly done by. A good part of the solution would be to effectively deal with the problems of regional disparity and economic development and in doing so governments and organizations should pursue a course of reconciliation rather than one of confrontation. However, the ultimate foundation for any successful solution will lie more in the affective aspects of human nature than in

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 9-10.

rational precept. Like Burke, Stanfield places a good deal of faith in sentiment and man's loyalty to a given order emerges as much a matter of cultivation as of the demonstration of abstract principles.

...there is a strong national feeling, sentiment and pride which can be used as a foundation for uniting the country or which can be exploited and wasted. The sentiment is strong although often well below the surface and hidden by rational or other disputes...The question is whether we will build on this sentiment in a positive way, which would include dealing summarily with those who try to exploit it by the demagogic use of emotive slogans or by the exploitation of national crises for their own purposes.⁹¹

As a consequence, Stanfield concludes, it is important that Canadians be prepared to treat each other's aspirations with respect. However, Stanfield's argument on the importance of sentiment comes dangerously close to being little more than sentimentality.

They are proud of Quebec. We are proud of Nova Scotia. Pride is easily hurt... But are we prepared to treat the aspirations of Quebecers, other than independence, with respect? This does not mean giving that province everything it demands. It does mean respecting their aspirations. Mr. Trudeau has said Quebecers can achieve these within confederation, but this is true only if those of us who are not Quebecers, not French-speaking, respect their aspirations and their pride--and do so in our hearts, not merely with our tongues.⁹²

⁹¹Ibid., p. 15.

⁹²Ibid., p. 16.

Canadian unity will then depend upon our exercise of "moderation and good will" rather than on any one particular formula. Stanfield, like any good conservative, places his faith in the tried and true. There are, in his words, "no pat answers"⁹³ and a reliance upon tradition is therefore very important. What Stanfield would like to see is to have Parliament return to being the legislative-deliberative institution it once was; on this count his laments are very similar to those of Hayek. In terms of his overall approach to politics Stanfield quite easily falls into what we have come to define as the conservative tradition. He is no rationalist; nor is he a corporate-organic-collectivist of any kind. His notions concerning economics and the role of government are quite consistent with the Burkean tradition. Stanfield is content to work for a solution to the problem of federalism within the existing constitutional and traditional frameworks of Canadian society. According to him it is the increased scope of government activity which has served to undermine these institutions and practices and which has moved us from a politics of moderation and conciliation to one of confrontation.

Whereas Robert Stanfield tried to specifically elucidate the "philosophical" principles upon which the

⁹³Ibid., p. 18.

Progressive Conservative Party should be based one finds no such attempt on the part of Joe Clark. Philosophical rumination is not something that comes easily to Clark nor is it something for which he has an apparent interest. As one political pundit put the matter:

Mr. Clark is impatient with theorizing and academic exercises. He's a pragmatic politician and has been since he did staff work at the age of 21. Politics to him, is an all-consuming obsession based on what he sees as its practicalities, ranging from the detailed reorganization of his party's policy structure to the assiduous applications of the arts of getting elected.⁹⁴

However, this is not to say that there is no ideology to Clark's politics. He shares the conservative belief in tradition and caution, although this is not to suggest that he came to this conviction via study and reflection. As Marshall goes on to note:

There is, in the non-vituperative sense, an old fashioned aspect to the man from High River. Rules and regulations are something to respect. There is a sense of what's proper.⁹⁵

On the whole Clark's ideology is quite similar to that of Stanfield's. In a speech given just after the election of the Parti Québécois Clark offered similar solutions to the problems of federalism as had Stanfield before him. According to Clark any realistic solution would have to

⁹⁴J. Marshall, "P.M.-elect Clark: The Practical Optimist", The Montreal Star, May 23, 1979, p. A-13.

⁹⁵Ibid.

include both political and economic considerations. Although "countries consist of more than their gross national products", argued Clark, people who are "uncertain about their futures are more likely to question their political institutions" than are those who have a sense of security. "The best guarantee of Canadian national unity", he continued, "is a sense of shared economic progress". This could best be achieved not through government intervention but rather by restricting government activity and reducing the government's share of economic output. Government has become too large and in abrogating more and more power and in unilaterally setting goals it has paid less and less attention to the expressed needs of the provinces. The result has been a politics of confrontation rather than one of cooperation. While a strong national government is a necessity there is also a need for restricting the ever increasing role of the central authority.

We have a special kind of country. It was formed because the regions wanted to come together. And it has been successful--not just as a country, but as a place to live--because we have given room to individual people, and different levels of government, to make their own decisions. Of course we need a strong national government--but we also need a strong private sector, and strong provinces, and a strong sense of partnership. That is what has broken down in recent years. And that, essentially, is what we must restore. I have confidence that we can, in a way that will not only bring this country together but also move us forward.⁹⁶

⁹⁶The Globe and Mail, November 25, 1976, p. 10.

Private initiative and incentive are to be encouraged. Government cannot do all it has set out for itself and some things are best left to the determination of the market. Yet, while these arguments are quite consistent with conservatism and while Clark does express a belief in, and a need for, tradition he emerges as much more of an optimist than one would expect from a consistent conservative. The central importance of tradition within conservative thought is not something that Clark understands well. While campaigning during the 1979 election Clark criticized Trudeau for asking Canadians to lower their expectations and "to learn to get along with less". Clark said that he absolutely disagreed with the Prime Minister and that Canada was not a nation where people should think small. "It is", he argued, "a nation where people should think big, a nation with unmatched strength and potential". Continuing along a similar vein the next day Clark told his audience, "you have the chance, literally to do what you want to do. There are no limits at all, except the limits you put on yourself".⁹⁷ One cannot expect that campaign speeches ever be well thought out statements of principle; nor is that their purpose. However, even given the euphoria of campaigning Clark has here gone somewhat far in contradicting conservative doctrine. He neither pays heed to the importance of tradition nor to that of moderation; both of which put

⁹⁷The Montreal Star, April 7, 1979, p. A-9.

important limits on the prospect of human endeavour. While Stanfield urged that Canadians be realistic about their expectations and showed a good deal of pessimism about the human condition, Clark comes forth as an exuberant optimist.

If Clark does not have a particularly sophisticated notion of what it means to be a conservative this is not to say that his politics is non-ideological. Indeed, there is a good deal of consistency between his own and Stanfield's understanding of, and suggested solutions to, the problems of federalism. Like Stanfield, Clark feels that the traditional role of parliament has been unduly subverted by the trend toward "executive" government. Responsible parliamentary government can only function properly if there is some control by parliament over the executive. The increasing centralization in decision-making has meant that the views of the various regions are no longer taken into account. The Prime Minister (Trudeau) has surrounded himself with advisors, especially in the P.M.O. and P.C.O., who share his views and it is their vision and not that of parliament which is being imposed on the nation. Decisions are now made by a particular group, many of whose members are not responsible to Parliament in the formal sense. Parliament, according to Clark, has been relegated to the status of little more than a talking shop.

...Parliament was never designed to be simply a talking shop; the assumption was that the Prime Minister and the

Cabinet who came from Parliament would heed the views of the various locales. If they did not, in theory Parliament would bring them down. But Parliament, the forum of diversity, has lost this control over the executive, and the Prime Minister is increasingly able to construct a government which reflects his own views better than it reflects the diversity of the country.⁹⁸

If the weakening of the traditional role of Parliament is allowed to continue and if executive government is permitted to become stronger than those regions which cannot make their views felt, argues Clark, will "seek some other options".⁹⁹

If the country is to remain united it then becomes important that local identity be permitted to continue and that it even be encouraged. Here Clark, like Stanfield, makes an appeal to the affective rather than the rational and also sees no danger in decentralization. It is on the basis of local loyalties that national feeling can best be created. People will more easily grant their loyalty to a national government if they feel secure in their local identities and traditions. The assumption is that loyalty is not only based on a rational choice but also, and perhaps more importantly, on an affective attachment to certain customs and symbols. In Canada these customs and symbols are more likely to be of a local than national

⁹⁸The Globe and Mail, March 2, 1977, p. 7.

⁹⁹Ibid.

character. In line with this argument Clark approvingly quotes from an essay by Northrop Frye:

It is not always realized that unity and identity are quite different things to be promoting, and that in Canada they are perhaps more different than they are anywhere else. Identity is local and regional, rooted in the imagination and in works of culture; unity is national in reference, international in perspective, and rooted in a political feeling.¹⁰⁰

Although Clark and Stanfield both argue in favour of a degree of decentralization they are not proponents of what Creighton called the theory of "inevitable decentralization"; nor has either proposed that the powers of the central government be weakened. What they object to is the tendency of the national government to treat all regions as if they were the same and thereby impose programmes upon them that they do not want and standards that they cannot meet. The introduction of programmes without proper consultation means that provincial priorities are upset and that the degree of alienation felt by many will only increase. This attitude and approach on the part of national governments has also been cited by Eric Kierans as one of the prime reasons for the ever increasing alienation of Québec. For Clark this trend can only mean that the regions will become more inward looking and pay less attention to the requirements of the nation as a whole; again this is best understood as a reaction to federal attitudes.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

...that is a reaction to the trend in recent years where the tendency, fueled by this Government, has been to impose a form of so-called national unity which has threatened local identity. The country was committed to universality in social programming, which suggested that we treat all regions as though they were the same although we knew they were not.¹⁰¹

There is nothing wrong with national standards but the setting of such standards should be flexible and done in conjunction with the provinces so that they do not need to forego programmes which they consider of primary importance. The federal government's attitude of believing that it knows what is best for the provinces, argued Clark, had kept it from moving on such issues as cable, the granting of effective control to the provinces of their off-shore resources and the granting of provincial status to the Yukon. Local governments can better understand their problems and needs than can the national government. For Clark there is nothing to be feared from strong regions.

...it is the unanimous view of the members of this party and of most of the country that we have nothing to fear from strong regions as long as there is a strong national government too.¹⁰²

However, although Clark is all in favour of strong regions the "national interest" must come first. While regions can be permitted to establish and deal with local priorities these can never be of a nature or scope so as to threaten national unity as such. During the 1979 campaign Clark

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

stated that he would never agree to Quebec's voting its way out of confederation. Trudeau, on the other hand, had maintained throughout that he would accept Quebec self-determination if the separatists should ever receive overwhelming popular support.¹⁰³

Clark's solution to the strains of federalism is certainly not radical nor even novel. In the speech from the throne the Conservatives called for an era of "consultation" and "cooperation" in matters of federal provincial relations. Insofar as Parliament is the major arena for the discussion and settling of grievances its powers would have to be increased in order to reestablish the traditional role of that body.

You will be asked to consider reforms to extend the power of Parliament. Proposals will be submitted to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization to strengthen the powers and resources of parliamentary committees, to accord more prominence to private members' initiatives, and to make my Ministers more accountable to you.¹⁰⁴

What was required was a return to cabinet government and ministerial responsibility; hopefully bringing about a change in the "attitude of government itself".

There has to be a change in the attitude of government itself. For the last eight years, ministers have not had to really answer questions in Parliament. I intend to stop that. I intend to make certain that ministers have the opportunity, and

¹⁰³The Montreal Star, April 27, 1979, p. A-7.

¹⁰⁴House of Commons Debates, October 9, 1979.

that they use it, to keep in touch with people, with small-p politics if you will. A Freedom of Information Act and parliamentary reform that will strengthen the ability of committees to keep government accountable for its actions are measures I regard as essential to change the attitude of government itself.¹⁰⁵

Like Stanfield, Clark felt it necessary to try and strengthen parliament and to reduce the scope of government activity. His answer to the latter was to be reduction in the size of the federal service and to "offer for private purchase and ownership Crown corporations operating in areas where direct government intervention" was no longer necessary. The government was also to introduce "sunset" legislation which would have provided "a regular opportunity for Parliament to judge whether Government programmes and agencies" needed to be continued. Economic growth was now to be premised on individual and private initiative rather than on government intervention.¹⁰⁶

Clark's administration did not survive long enough to put any of its remedies into effect and Stanfield was never given the opportunity to legislate. Although Clark never shows the intellectual appreciation of the essentials of conservative doctrine that Stanfield does, both fit well within that tradition. Neither shows any inclination for transcending the traditional status quo, but are rather

¹⁰⁵The Montreal Star, June 1, 1979, p. A-7.

¹⁰⁶House of Commons Debates, October 9, 1979.

more interested in making it work. Both want to restore the traditional powers of Parliament and both espouse the virtues of the free-market. A successful politics, they argue, is one based on the traditional values and institutions of a given society and confrontation is something to be avoided in the name of order.

VII The Political Thought of Pierre Trudeau

In turning our attention to Pierre Elliott Trudeau we are confronted with what many pundits consider to be a thinking man's politician--something of which Joe Clark has never been accused. If there is an irony to Trudeau's long tenure it is that while he avowedly entered federal politics to stem the tide of separatism and to keep Quebec in Confederation the long term status of Quebec, despite the referendum, is still in doubt and separatist sentiment has spread beyond its borders. However, insofar as the practice of politics is often little more than the history of unfulfilled promises, to accuse Trudeau of having been less than successful in his aims is to assert a petty truism which can be levelled at most, if not all, politicians.

In Trudeau we do not find any veneration for tradition or the "collective wisdom" of the ages. In the final analysis, loyalty to a given order should be a matter of rational choice and not merely one of "cultivation". What is most important is the development of an individual's potential, leading to the self-dependent man of John Stuart Mill.

While Burke may have found enthusiastic epigones in the likes of Macdonald and Stanfield, Mill has certainly found no less an enthusiastic progeniture in Trudeau.

According to Radwanski four basic themes have dominated the political thinking of Pierre Trudeau; these are:

"the absolute value of the individual, the supremacy of rationality, the constant struggle between totalitarian and democratic tendencies in society, and the obligation of every individual to involve himself in the political process".¹⁰⁷

These are precepts with which Mill would certainly not be inclined to quarrel. Trudeau has no faith in the virtues of the slow half-conscious growth espoused by the conservative, nor is he overly fond of arguing on behalf of tradition. He shares the same suspicions of these as does Mill and consequently the role of the political actor should not be the preservation of custom but rather "to move the framework of society slightly ahead of the times, so there is no curtailment of intellectual or physical liberty".¹⁰⁸ As with Mill, the individual best knows his interests and how best to achieve them. The individual should be permitted as much scope as possible to develop and pursue his peculiar tastes and talents. "In the last analysis", argues Trudeau, "a human being in the

¹⁰⁷G. Radwanski, Trudeau (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1978), p. 120.

¹⁰⁸P. E. Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968), p. xiii.

privacy of his own mind has the exclusive authority to choose his own scale of values and to ~~decide~~ which forces will take precedence over others".¹⁰⁹

It is the self-dependent man that is the desired end of social organization and not the individual tied to custom. Trudeau has as little respect for majority opinion as does Mill. Again, it becomes important to always have centers of opposition and to test the beliefs of the majority. Progressive political action is a matter of strife and not one of compromise and conciliation. As a consequence Trudeau's approach to politics emerges as having one unvarying premise--antagonism.

My political action, or my theory--insomuch as I can be said to have one--can be expressed very simply: create counterweights. As I have explained, it was because of the federal government's weakness that I allowed myself to be catapulted into it...With these principles, and being a citizen of this country, I would have become a French Canadian by adoption had I not been one by birth.¹¹⁰

- The freedom of the individual needs to be protected not only from the tyrant but also from the "tyranny of the masses". Thus, even those ideologies which have their origin in reform movements, once they have survived "the needs which gave them birth" and have become universally popular, need to be opposed. Universal popularity of

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. xxiii.

doctrine is more likely to lead to repression than it is to liberation.¹¹¹ Here Trudeau shares with Mill the concern that the dialectic of ideas be a continuous one for it is only through the competition and challenge of ideas that freedom can be maintained and furthered.

It was because of the absence of any such dialectic that one had so little intellectual and socio-economic growth in Quebec prior to the "quiet revolution". While the attachment of French Canadians to their traditions and to an anti-industrialist set of values helped to preserve their cultural and linguistic identity their nationalist ideology became such as not to permit any innovative thought. French Canadian society, according to Trudeau remained inward looking and continued to perpetuate a set of values which had little in common with the modern world. Quebec thought and culture became self-contained and closed off to critique. The people of Quebec "devised a system of security, which became overdeveloped; as a result, they sometimes overvalued all those things that set them apart from others, and showed hostility to all change (even progress) coming from without".¹¹² Given Trudeau's intellectual preferences it was only natural that he rejected nationalism and that he came to view it as an essentially

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. xxii.

¹¹² P. E. Trudeau, (edit.) The Asbestos Strike (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1974), p. 7.

reactionary and regressive force. For him Quebec nationalism was little more than an outmoded "unanimous system of thought" which required that individuals adopt its majority opinion.

- Anyone whose thinking went beyond the limits of official nationalism or who tried to reshape it by changing a basic trait was thus automatically suspect: on all sides, he and his ideas were scrutinized. If he renounced nationalism he was discredited and ignored; if he embraced it, his ideas were emasculated, then assimilated.¹¹³

According to Trudeau's liberal premises this brand of nationalism could be nothing other than unacceptable and doomed to failure. It tied the individual to a system of thought and a set of institutions which were outmoded and whose very nature prevented him from examining alternative solutions to his problems. Rather than become self-dependent the Québécois became increasingly tied to the strictures of custom and race.

In a situation where one has such a predominant system of thought it becomes virtually impossible to ensure for the competitive expression of interests and ideas. While the initial solution to the problem of cultural identity was understandable, and perhaps even justified, the subsequent insistence by Quebec's elite on retaining an anti-progressive ideology could not be upheld. "These thinkers were building,

¹¹³Ibid., pp. 9-10.

in the twentieth century, a super-structure which combined, in a logical and homogeneous manner, all the social ideas that had proved useful to the French Canadians at a period in their past history".¹¹⁴ However, concrete reality superseded this antiquated nationalist ideology and French Canadians were left "without any effective intellectual guidelines".¹¹⁵ Trudeau approaches the solutions to socio-political problems in the same empirical-inductive manner that Mill did and similarly realizes that the mass of mankind is too busy with the problems of daily living¹¹⁶ to be able to rule itself. Yet, this is not to suggest that the general population should not be encouraged to engage in political activity. Trudeau's call for "participatory democracy" is a variant of Mill's desire to have the individual participate in political matters because by doing so he improves himself and ultimately also society. Again, it is by having people participate in political debate that tyranny of "majority opinion" is hindered. Participatory democracy is desirable, but at the same time Trudeau would no more suggest than Mill would have that all men are equally capable. Trudeau believes as much in the leading hand of the exceptional individual as did his chief mentor.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 9.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 8.

The iconoclast is important in the world of "intellectual" as well as that of practical politics. In terms of the latter it is the iconoclast who promotes progressive interests while with respect to the former it is he who is able to break through the outmoded concepts and concerns of the past and who attempts to come to grips with present realities. It was the inability of French Canadian intellectuals to play any kind of iconoclastic role that Trudeau particularly laments. As he says, "few were qualified" and none could "free themselves from a social environment that was traditionalist, anti-modern, and imbued with authoritarianism and fuzzy thinking". Their ties to a traditionalist society prevented them from examining new or different systems of thought and kept them from coping with the all important question of the absorption of Quebec society into "the real world of the industrial revolution".¹¹⁷ In light of the foregoing it is then little wonder that Trudeau approvingly quotes Renan to the effect that:

Man...is bound neither to his language nor to his race; he is bound only to himself because he is a free agent, or in other words a moral being.¹¹⁸

Trudeau considers the constant pre-occupation of many French Canadians with "nationalism" as an unfortunate

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

¹¹⁸ Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 159.

consequence of having ignored political realities on the one hand and of a lack of imagination on the other. His opposition is not to the concept of state sovereignty but rather to the idea that the "nation" should be the basis of the state. For obvious reasons state sovereignty is a necessary prerequisite for good government, although Trudeau envisions a day when even it may be done away with, and the important question to be considered is precisely that--good government. Every linguistic minority, living within the boundaries of a given state, cannot expect to have complete sovereignty over itself. To insist upon such a condition would be to do little else than pursue "a self-destructive end". According to Trudeau, "every national minority will find, at the very moment of liberation, a new minority within its bosom which in turn must be allowed the right to demand its freedom."¹¹⁹ So long as the individual is bound to the concepts of "nation" and "race" his potential development is limited as is his potential contribution to the general good. In those instances where civilization has made strides it was because intellectuals and others were able to "put their faith in mankind" rather than in "national prejudice".¹²⁰ Thus, in matters of ethnic pluralism the institution of democratic federalism can go a

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 158.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 159.

long way in helping to bring about good government. Trudeau even goes so far as to suggest that if the day comes when states are willing to abandon the notion of absolute sovereignty, democratic federalism could well serve as a model for general government.¹²¹

By basing political action on the "nation" what one in fact is trying to do is to make the one ethnic element the overall, or dominant, power within the state. As already noted, variety of ideas and socio-political counterweights are as important in the thinking of Trudeau as they are in that of Mill. The ethnic nationalism espoused by Quebec's intellectuals, and the traditional institutions which their ideology supported, predicated against any ideological and political diversity. For a form of political organization to be truly democratic it "must permit the periodic transformation of political minorities into majorities".¹²²

Were Quebec to have separated under the aegis of such a tradition it would have become an isolated homogeneous entity devoid of stimulation either from within or from without. The English minority would have left or simply been subjugated by the majority in such a manner that its voice would have proved ineffectual. Tied to Canada, Quebec would at least be subject to certain outside influences and

¹²¹Ibid., p. 154.

¹²²Ibid., p. 114.

democratic forces and its internal minority would be better able to survive. For Trudeau the modern world is one of increasing interdependence both from a matter of necessity as well as choice. It is the era of increased interaction and cooperation in economic, military and cultural affairs. The ideal to be striven for here is that of "polyethnic diversity"¹²³ and not that of nationalistic ideosyncrasy. This is not to suggest that Canada as a whole does not bare any responsibility for the Quebec problem,¹²⁴ but French Canadians themselves should realize that their best hope for survival and progress is within a Canadian confederation. According to Trudeau French Canada is simply neither politically, culturally nor economically strong enough to survive on its own.

...French Canada is too culturally anaemic, too economically destitute, too intellectually retarded, too spiritually paralysed, to be able to survive more than a couple of decades of stagnation, emptying herself of all her vitality into nothing but a cesspit, the mirror of her nationalistic vanity and 'dignity'.¹²⁵

The end of politics should be the liberation of the individual; not merely that of a particular class or nation. Where established institutions have not guaranteed, or broached the possibility, of providing for individual

¹²³Ibid., p. 165.

¹²⁴Ibid., see pp. 115-123.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 170.

liberty it may be legitimate to pursue a course of "collective freedom as a preliminary to personal freedom". However, in those instances where personal freedom does exist for anyone to propose a collective ideology would be counter-revolutionary.¹²⁶ When Quebec nationalists, or those of any variety, then expound on the virtues and importance of "nation" they are in fact being reactionary.

...the nationalists--even those of the left--are politically reactionary because in attaching such importance to the idea of nation, they are surely led to a definition of the common good as a function of an ethnic group, rather than of all the people, regardless of characteristics. This is why a nationalist government is by nature intolerant, discriminatory, and, when all is said and done, totalitarian. A truly democratic government cannot be 'nationalist', because it must pursue the good of all its citizens, without prejudice to ethnic origin. The democratic government, then, stands for and encourages good citizenship, never nationalism.¹²⁷

For Trudeau, human progress "is the slow journey towards personal freedom".¹²⁸ His conception of democratic government lies well within the liberal bourgeois tradition. To quote him at some length:

Parliamentary democracy I take to be a method of governing free men which operates roughly as follows: organized parties that wish to pursue--by different means--a common end, agree to be bound by certain rules according to which the

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 209.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 209.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 114.

party with the most support governs on condition that leadership will revert to some other party whenever the latter's means became acceptable to the greater part of the electorate. The common end--the general welfare--which is the aim of all parties may be more or less inclusive, and may be defined in different ways by different men. Yet it must in some way include equality of opportunity for everyone in all important fields of endeavour; otherwise 'agreement on fundamentals' would never obtain. For instance, democracy cannot be made to work in a country where a large part of the citizens are by status condemned to a perpetual state of domination, economic or otherwise.¹²⁹

While Trudeau does not feel that this ideal has been as operative in Canada as it should have been, any attempt to subvert it cannot be tolerated. The absolute equality of political rights is something which the English, according to Trudeau, have not been overly wont to guarantee the French Canadians.¹³⁰ Yet, the mechanism by which these rights can be achieved is there and it is up to French Canadians to use it and to become involved in political debate at the national level.

In Trudeau's opinion English Canadians, especially the federal Liberal Party, must bear a good deal of the responsibility for Quebec's lack of a democratic tradition. Rather than having educated French Canadians in the fundamentals of "democratic party politics" the Liberals used

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 115.

the Quebec patronage system to further their own particular interests. In Quebec the English tacitly accepted, and in many ways furthered, the conventionally held belief that politics was a "function of wealth and power rather than of the will of the majority". Given the English numerical minority and economic superiority in Quebec, Trudeau considers the foregoing to have been a natural, though not a moral, tactic. Ultimately, however, the fault lies with the unthinking individual who, under a democratic form of government, refuses to use the powers of the franchise effectively.

...under the democratic form of government all citizens are jointly and severally responsible for the procedures by which they choose their leaders; all men are to blame who fail in their duty of denouncing undemocratic practices and shady politicians.¹³¹

Democracy, in Quebec as well as elsewhere, can only work when people believe in it and it is only once they believe in it that they will be able to accept and practice its ethics. While one may grant the influence of Quebec's "feudal" past in hampering the development of a democratic tradition amongst French Canadians, any such tradition can only take firm root once it becomes a matter of reasoned choice.¹³²

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 120-123.

¹³²Ibid., pp. 109, 123.

If a democratic form of government is to be successful then those supporting it must have an "intellectual" understanding of the principles and functions of such a government. There is no notion, in Trudeau's thinking, of tacit understanding or of putting one's faith in a set of institutions because these institutions have served fairly well over time. Political arrangements must be based on reason and not emotion. Indeed, an active politics based upon liberal principles should be an expression of "reason tempered by compassion." Social and political problems are, more often than not, the product of "some blind tradition or obscure prejudice".¹³³ By overly attaching oneself to the "nation" one is merely limiting one's horizons as well as the possible solutions to political and social problems. If any movement toward a more sophisticated and beneficial form of socio-economic organization is to be successful it will be as a result of the application of the mind and of rational problem solving and not as a result of nationalistic fervour--no matter how well intentioned the latter's pronounced goals.

For men of intellect the talk about energy set in motion by national independence means nothing. Their function, particularly if they come from a milieu where sentiment takes the place of reason and prejudice the place of understanding, is to think, and then think some more.

¹³³Trudeau, "Speech to Liberal Party of Canada", Nov. 7, 1978.

If their intellectual pursuits have led to a dead end, there is only one thing to do: turn around and go back.¹³⁴

While the spirit of nationalism has at times provided the spur for liberation movements and for challenges to despotic authority, the arousal of the nationalist passion has invariably been accompanied by a price. According to Trudeau, a people that wins its freedom with passion rather than with reason generally finds that its real situation has not been profoundly altered. Once the so-called liberation process is complete a strong government will again be required to control the "general unrest"; little if anything of substance will have changed. Territorial independence, especially if it is predicated on ethnic reasons, is no guarantee of better things to come. Cultural and scientific endeavours rarely improve and in most cases all one finds is an increase in the expression of parochialisms.¹³⁵

One of the advantages of separating the concepts of nation and state is that in so doing one is able to encourage and provide for those countervailing powers and elements (uncustomary things) of which Mill spoke. In line with his argument against the parochialism of nationalist sentiment Trudeau approvingly quotes Lord Acton to the effect that:

A great democracy must either sacrifice self-government to unity or preserve it

¹³⁴Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, pp. 174-175.

¹³⁵Ibid.

by federalism...The co-existence of several nations under the same State is a test as well as the best security of its freedom. It is also one of the chief instruments of civilization... The combination of different nations in one State is as necessary a condition of civilized life as the combination of men in society...Where political and national boundaries coincide, society ceases to advance, and nations relapse into a condition corresponding to that of men who renounce intercourse with their fellow men...A State which is incompetent to satisfy different races condemns itself; a State which labours to neutralize, to absorb, or to expel them is destitute of the chief basis of self-government. The theory of nationality, then, is a retrograde step in history.¹³⁶

Neither Acton nor Trudeau are modest about the virtues of federalism and both tend to extol its potential benefits with less than a critical eye. For Trudeau, Canadian federalism emerges as a preferable form of political organization because it allows for and encourages diversity on the one hand and because it is the rational solution to a given set of facts on the other. The first law of politics is "to start from the facts rather than from historical might-have-beens" and it is the recognition of the realistic situation of the two dominant ethnic groups, along with that of the cultural pluralism of Canadian society in general, that makes federalism "imperative".¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 179.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 192.

VIII Trudeau and Federalism

In Trudeau's argument, federalism is not only peculiarly appropriate for Canada but may indeed, à la Acton, prove to be an "experiment of major proportions" and a brilliant prototype for the moulding of tomorrow's civilization".¹³⁸ While such an utterance may be uncharacteristic of the overall rational pragmatism expressed by Trudeau, and while one may be inclined to view it as little more than rhetoric, it is nevertheless based on the conviction that federalism is indeed more efficient, and appropriate for the modern age, than other forms of political organization. Particularly advantageous is the fact that federalism permits for different levels of organization in the handling of different kinds of problems. Thus, in cultural matters where needs and aspirations may vary regionally and where a sense of local identity is important, federalism allows for certain limits to the "territorial jurisdiction of the state". In matters of economics it would be more efficient for the "geographical unit to be considerably extended", thereby ensuring the more efficient use of resources and overall rational planning in matters of acquisition and distribution. When it comes to such issues as peace and trade the trend should be toward "international political groupings". The ideal federal state would then be one "with different sizes

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 179.

The peculiar advantage of a federal form of government is that a complete consensus need not necessarily be reached.

Federalism is by its very essence a compromise and a pact. It is a compromise in the sense that when national consensus on all things is not desirable or cannot readily obtain, the area of consensus is reduced in order that consensus on some things be reached. It is a pact or quasi-treaty in the sense that the terms of that compromise cannot be changed unilaterally. That is not to say that the terms are fixed forever; but only that in changing them, every effort must be made not to destroy the consensus on which the federated nation rests.¹⁴³

As with other matters the problem of consensus needs to be dealt with by appraising the facts of the situation and then coming to the most "rational" solution; which in this case involves the accommodation of as many interests as possible.

However, while Trudeau argues that "the mainspring of federalism cannot be emotion but must be reason" he is not beyond the rational manipulation of emotion in the service of federalism. Thus, "one way of offsetting the appeal of separation is by investing tremendous amounts of time, energy and money in nationalism, at the federal level". Such an enterprise would require the investment of large sums of money into the establishment of such things as national symbols, the furthering of art and culture, the expression of transportation networks and the protection of

¹⁴³Ibid.

artistic, scientific and technical values". It is only once Quebec has produced intellectuals, scientific research and works of art that are on a par with, or better than, those of others that the desire for separation will cease. In the meantime, separatism is only a "crutch" upon which French Canadians rely because of their sense of inferiority. French Canadians are the dominant group in Quebec and it is therefore up to them to ensure the dominance of French cultural values.

...the political culture of French Canadians will be what they decide to make it. As a group, they are free to direct provincial policies as they wish; and those who complain of a colonial mentality need to see to their own political re-education. Naturally, this education will still have to occur in a hostile world; but the world is not likely to be any less hostile simply because Quebec has revised its constitution. In the field of political culture, no less than in other fields, our institutions do not deserve to survive at all unless they can successfully survive external competition.¹⁴⁰

As with other things, the problem of maintaining an overall consensus by which the state can be held together, becomes a matter of reason. The territorial state was able to maintain legitimation by relying on the sway of tradition, force or divine right. With the advent of the nation state things became somewhat more problematic. The new state was

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 34-35.

brought into being by "the process of national self-determination" and this principle could very well provide the seed for its own destruction. That is, now every "sociologically distinct group" within the nation state might claim the right to its own self-determination. For Trudeau, nationhood is "little more than a state of mind" and thereby continually raises the spectre of passionate revival. In order to stave off this spectre the new state required a different consensus from that of its predecessor. While the formation of such a consensus is recognized by Trudeau as a complex process involving "language, communication, history, common interests, etc.", a consensus itself can be said to exist "when no group within the nation feels that its vital interests and particular characteristics could be better preserved by withdrawing from the nation than by remaining within". Maintaining this consensus is the most fundamental problem faced by the modern state and in so doing the state "must continually persuade the generality of the people that it is in their best interest to continue as a state". In appealing to the self-interest of the people one is, of course, appealing to their reason rather than their passion. However, the continued appeal to reason in maintaining a consensus is "physically and intellectually difficult" and states are therefore often inclined to appeal to nationalist passions instead. Trudeau considers any such appeal unfortunate because it means that

the state is legitimized on the basis of "psychological" rather than rational appeal. That is, people here support the constitution of the state not on the basis of an intellectual understanding of its appropriateness and necessity but rather come to support it on the basis of emotive appeal.¹⁴¹

The federal state emerges as the reasonable compromise of peoples who have certain fundamental differences (ethnic, linguistic, cultural, etc.) but who at the same time realize that their long term interests dictate a degree of cooperation. The virtue of federalism is that it recognizes the importance of diversity and is then able to accommodate it in an other than centralized fashion. While some unitary states make concessions to diversity through such things as "language guarantees" or "administrative decentralization" they nevertheless still obtain "a consensus which recognizes the state as the sole source of coercive authority within the national boundaries". The federal state, on the other hand, is able to share its coercive authority in some important ways. As Trudeau goes on to argue:

Coercive authority over the entire territory remains a monopoly of the (central) state, but this authority is limited to certain subjects of jurisdiction; on other subjects, and within well-defined territorial regions, other coercive authorities exist. In other words, the exercise of sovereignty is divided between a central government and regional ones.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹Ibid., pp. 189-191.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 191.

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¹⁴³Ibid.

the national economy so that it may indeed be owned and operated by Canadians. The last of these, especially, must be made a matter of government policy. This momentary appeal to "passion" (i.e. nationalism) is precisely that and Trudeau quickly returns to the predicates of reason and rational persuasion. In the end federalism can only survive if the general population can be made to feel that it is in their best interest to retain this particular form of political organization. In order for federalism to succeed "the whole of the citizenry must be made to feel that it is only within the framework of the federal state that their language, culture, institutions, sacred traditions, and standard of living can be protected from external attack and internal strife".¹⁴⁴ For such an appeal to have any kind of binding and lasting effect it is then best that it be made on the basis of reasoned argument rather than on that of emotive appeal.

Trudeau does not dismiss the importance of nationalism and recognizes that there are moments when the statesman, even though he may prefer "reason", will have to appeal to passion. In a federal state this involves the creation of a "national image which has immensely more appeal than the regional ones".¹⁴⁵ The creation of such an image, of

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 192-193.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

course, involves the arousal of such passions as patriotism. For Trudeau such an arousal is necessary until people can effectively rely on their reason for the settling of issues. What is important is that the statesman himself not succumb to the allure of passion for his task--à la Mill--is to provide the guiding hand. Indeed, the problem, once more, is that of setting countervailing powers.

Federal nationalism is a means for offsetting the nationalisms of the various regions and has no real value independent of that. The task for the man of superior ability is to find solutions to problems and then to persuade others of their efficacy and to try and bring those others along.

It is the intellectually superior who provide the initiative and insofar as reason does not always prevail then the "rational" manipulation of passion in the pursuit of the desired (rationally preferable) end may be a necessary, albeit an undesirable, tactic. Political problem solving, like that in any other field, increases in sophistication as time goes on and as a consequence Trudeau sees nationalism as eventually being rejected "as a principle of sound government". Nationalism is a "tool" used by political practitioners and it will become redundant for the simple reason that "the political tools of the future will be designed and appraised by more-rational standards than anything we are currently using..."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 203.

What Trudeau both hopes and argues is that as reason becomes an increasing element of political problem solving nationalism will become less of an operative aspect of the practice of politics. Problems are the result of irrationality and passion and a successful politics can therefore only be based on reason.

You can't base politics on irrationality. We have to, as Liberals, re-introduce a rule of reason. And that's basic liberalism. It goes back to Mill and Paine and Green... and this is the basis of modern liberalism. We don't guide ourselves by emotions, and talking in politics, we don't guide ourselves by blind prejudice. We look for the balance of reason and try to follow it.¹⁴⁷

As with Mill, rational behaviour in political decision-making must always be cognizant of utility. Government policy should "balance the conveniences to one section of society against the inconvenience to another; and the disadvantage to one part of the country against the advantage to another..."¹⁴⁸ Good government is a question of rational problem solving and aside from the guarantee of certain basic human and individual rights the rest is open to question and subject to adjustment.¹⁴⁹ While both the conservative and the utilitarian are pragmatic, the latter

¹⁴⁷P. E. Trudeau, Speech To The Liberal Party Of Canada, Toronto, Nov. 17, 1978, p. 5.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁴⁹Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 6.

does not consider human progress to be a matter of slow imperceptible growth, nor does he accept the subsequent conservative contention that certain matters should not be subject to question and conscious alteration. Progress is the result of conscious human striving and achievement; indeed, history is what man makes it. This is not to suggest that progress is easy or that it can always be swift, but it is to argue that by taking account of the facts rational solutions for most, if not all, of man's woes are possible.

...an objective appraisal of the basic facts allows one to make the best possible use of these facts and, over a long period, to bring forces of change to bear upon them so that new policies become not only desirable, but possible.¹⁵⁰

While Trudeau is not averse to state intervention in the economy and welcomes its use as a counter-balance to the excesses of the market place the one area where the state should not interfere is that concerning the freedom of the individual and the privacy of his conscience. The right of the individual to freely express himself and to decide matters according to his own conscience, as long as that expression does not interfere with the liberties of others, is a common tenet of utilitarian liberalism. One's initial inclination would be to conclude that Trudeau's concern with the primacy of personal conscience is merely

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

another indication of his affinity for the political philosophy of J. S. Mill. What one finds upon closer examination is that for Trudeau the foundation of this concern does not rest upon utility, as it did for Mill, but rather upon a religious conviction. The foundations for Trudeau's religious precepts are found in the tradition of catholic personalism, as expressed by the likes of Mounier, and in the teachings of Thomas Aquinas.¹⁵¹ With respect to the latter it is the Thomism of the Jesuit tradition, with its Cartesian influence, that Trudeau shows a particular affinity for.

Mounier's concern was with the spontaneous and creative individual whose life process necessarily involves an element of the unpredictable and an understanding of whom was therefore not amenable to any kind of definitive systematization. Personalism was, for him, a reaction against the idealistic systems which found their culmination in Hegel as well as against the excesses of "positivism, materialism and behaviourism". Thus, Mounier is opposed to any understanding which tries to explain events and human actions as either "necessary implications of first principles or as necessary effects of ultimate causes". While personalism has much in

¹⁵¹Radwanski, pp. 36-39. R. Whitaker, "Reason Passion And Interest: Pierre Trudeau's Eternal Liberal Triangle", in Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory (Winter 1980), pp. 7-8. P. Trudeau, Conversations With Canadians (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 106-108.

common with existentialism Mounier also believed it to suffer from certain excesses; particularly its "tendency to solipsism and pessimism". His reaction against philosophical traditions was then twofold. It was first a reaction against the philosophy of ideas by which Mounier understood "the type of philosophizing which concentrates on abstract universal concepts and devotes itself to classification in terms of ever more comprehensive categories to such an extent that particulars are given a subordinate place and are regarded as objects of philosophical reflection only insofar as they can be subsumed under universal ideas and deprived of their singularity and, in the case of man, of freedom". Secondly, it was a reaction against the "philosophy of things" which Mounier equated with the kind of thought "which assimilates itself to natural science and regards man purely 'objectively', as an object among other objects in the physical universe".¹⁵²

Mounier's philosophy was both an attempt to come to terms with the creative individual and a call to action. In his activities as a campaigner Mounier resembled the likes of Bertrand Russell, but whereas the latter was always careful to maintain a distinction "between his activity as a campaigner and his role as a professional philosopher, Mounier regarded his philosophical convictions

¹⁵²F. Copleston, A History of Philosophy Vol. 9 No. 2 (New York: Image Books, 1977), pp. 106-108.

as expressing themselves by their very nature in the sphere of action". For Mounier "man's existence is embodied existence" but is not reducible to the dictates of a completely materialist understanding. While man is very much a part of nature he is necessarily more than a merely "complicated material object". At the same time the individual cannot be comprehended in the idealist sense of a "reflection of spirit" or in any sense of "psycho-physical parallelism". Man is very much a part of nature. Yet, he can also "transcend nature" in ever greater degrees of mastery and subjugation. At the same time the relationship of man to nature involves more than an increasing degree of exploitation for it is this very relationship which "presents man with the opportunity of fulfilling his own moral and spiritual vocation and of humanizing or personalizing the world". The relationship is dialectical leading to higher levels of both physical and moral experience.¹⁵³

Mounier's individualism is not to be confused with the egocentric individualism of Hobbesian man. The concept of an individual abstracted from his social relationships makes no sense in terms of a personalist philosophy. "The person exists only in a social relationship" and it is the humanization of the world in "response to recognized values" which is the peculiar task of the individual. Such a

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 108.

conception of man necessarily "presupposes the world of persons and of interpersonal relations". While Mounier maintained that "no strict definition of personalism" was possible he did offer the following as an approximation.

A person is a spiritual being constituted as such by a manner of subsistence and of independence in being; it maintains this subsistence by its adhesion to a hierarchy of values, freely adopted, assimilated and lived, by a responsible self-commitment and by a constant conversion; it thus unifies all its activity in liberty and develops, moreover, by means of creative acts, its own unique vocation.¹⁵⁴

As already noted, personalism was meant to provide man with not only an intellectual understanding of his being and of his relations to others but was also action oriented. Mounier did not consider capitalism as the final form of socio-economic organization and argued that it contained within itself factors which would necessitate an eventual transition to socialism. The hope was to provide for a form of social organization which could fulfill man's material needs while at the same time recognizing the peculiar nature and needs of the human person; that is, the needs of the "psychological" person as more than an egocentric consumer of material goods. According to Mounier, capitalism is in many ways inhuman, but so are the totalitarian forms of socialist organization while anarchism,

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 109.

albeit idealistic, does not realize that the "links which bind together persons as persons must find expression in political structures and authority". Truly human behaviour must be rule governed in such a way that it allows for the greatest possible development of individual potential. In order to accomplish this societies must remain open and promote the advance and unification of mankind. Mounier was always conscious of the tendency of societies to close themselves off from external influences and to become parochial. Ultimately the advancement of mankind will entail the "rethinking of our social and political structures with a view to the development of personalized socialism". However, this is not to suggest that man's concerns can only be secular or that he can fulfill his destiny solely within a secular society. As Copleston concludes,

His Christian faith is always there,
But he refuses to use it as an excuse
for passivity or for neglect of tasks
in the social-political sphere. And
if he had lived longer, he would most
probably have sympathized with attempts
to develop dialogue between Christians
and Marxists on the themes of man and
humanism.¹⁵⁵

Given Trudeau's penchant for the non-conventional (albeit always within the rules of convention, that is, the safely non-conventional) it is easy to see why he would be drawn to the teachings of Mounier. The importance and

¹⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 110-111.

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to be striven for by all the sciences its requirements would necessarily have to be softened for some fields. That is, the nomological deductive model is very much tied to the methodological canons and mechanistic world view of the physical sciences; its proponents and practitioners are methodological monists and as a consequence the model cannot be imported holo-bolus into the humanities.

Opposed to the methodological monism and ontological reductionism of the general tradition of physical science we offered the precepts of General Systems Theory. This movement was shown to have developed in large part as a result of the recognition that the assumptions, both methodological and ontological, of the natural sciences were not necessarily appropriate for all sciences. In its opposition to any form of rigid reductionism G.S.T. leads one to a different view from that held by the "mechanistic" approach. G.S.T. asserts that it is impossible to state exact laws for certain complex phenomena because of their high complexity and the impossibility of resolving them into physico-chemical events. As a result, it was argued, one must necessarily expand one's conceptual schemes if one wishes to deal with complex realms, and to make it possible for them to be included in the exact sciences. Thus, by rejecting the assumptions of a mechanistic world view systems theorists have been able to maintain important distinctions between inanimate and living systems. While isomorphies

While he may have recognized class interests these could always be accommodated within the structure of the liberal state. It is not class liberation but individual freedom which interests him and if the working class, or some of its members, have grievances these can be remedied through the rational pursuit of their enlightened self-interest in competition with others. The function of the state, then, is to provide those procedures through which these interests can be accommodated and to ensure that economic forces do not destroy those cultural values deemed worth retaining. Insofar as it is legitimate for the state to intervene on behalf of "the weak through social legislation" so it is legitimate for the state to "ensure the survival of cultural values in danger of being swamped by a flood of dollars".¹⁵⁷

Trudeau never suggests that one abandon the market system and the question of government is to be judged, as it was for Mill, on the basis of utility. Even during his early and so-called radical period Trudeau argued that "the true tactical position of the democratic socialist is on the left, but no further."¹⁵⁸ It is therefore no surprise, nor contradiction, when he later argues that "we're not going to nationalize anything, but we are going to use the Government to have certain instruments of public policy and

¹⁵⁷Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 29.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 128.

we make no apologies for it. So therefore, there will be some and there are some joint ventures".¹⁵⁹

When it comes to the question of socialism, Trudeau never really moves beyond the musings of a status quo cocktail party radical. Whatever aspect of radicalism there is in Trudeau's thinking needs to be viewed in light of his experience and critique of Quebec politics which, according to him, had few if any of the virtues of a liberal democratic society. Although his individualism and occasional use of Rousseauian language may have served to upset the clerics this radicalism was in turn largely influenced by a brand of catholic teaching. While Trudeau may have argued that socialist values "consist in so organizing a political community that all its members have the essential before a few are allowed to enjoy the superfluous", what we are left with in the end is little more than reformism.¹⁶⁰ The call for equality ends up as little more than a call for equality of opportunity--a well known, and well worn, liberal precept. His discussion concerning the value of socialism does not include a comprehensive treatment of capitalist dynamics nor does it entail an historical understanding and critique of class relations. In the final

¹⁵⁹P. E. Trudeau, Speech To A Liberal Fund-Raising Dinner in Toronto, Dec. 18, 1978.

¹⁶⁰Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 25.

analysis socialism here involves little more than considerations of tactic and its scope stays well within the liberal welfare tradition. Trudeau's hesitancy to move beyond a procedural notion of justice is due to that suspicion of "systems" which he shares with Mounier. The function of the state is to provide for a series of checks and balances in order to ensure that no single group become dominant and if this entails using the power of government to act as a check against private industry then so be it; but government should never usurp the proper functions of the private sector. Despite much of what has been said about Trudeau's penchant for rational planning and the implementation of modern management techniques we find little of what might be termed a comprehensive strategy to socio-economic matters. This should come as no surprise given his acceptance and continued defence of the argument that a man should be permitted to adopt his own schedule of values and that he be allowed to live his life accordingly. However, such a stand precludes any real notion of a common good except insofar as a general benefit is assumed to emerge or derive from the competitive pursuit of interests. The function of the state is to mediate or manage the competing demands between individuals and groups pursuing their enlightened self-interest. The only ultimate good which emerges is that of the self-dependent man. A comprehensive form of social planning would require the state to define

and actively pursue collective values and this, for Trudeau, would constitute an infringement on individual conscience. Thus, while the state may "compete" with the private sector in its attempt to achieve certain objectives it should never impose a comprehensive set of either goals or values.

According to Trudeau "goals have no more reality than the means that are devised to reach them" and therefore "socialists should feel free to espouse whatever constitutional tools happen to fit each particular problem at each particular time..." Strategically this means that socialists should have no qualms about standing for "different things in different parts of Canada". What becomes possible will largely depend upon the sophistication of the given political culture within which one is working, and this level of sophistication is seen as varying from province to province.¹⁶¹

There is no perceived contradiction in having "socialist" parties in different provinces pursue policies of different scope and content. Indeed, Trudeau sees the confusion which may result from this as a rather healthy state of affairs.

It will be confused and challenging;
and its diversity from province to province will stimulate competition and perhaps even establish a system of checks and balances, while at the

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. 124-128. (

national level the left will adopt strategies and tactics based on possibilities rather than on mere desirabilities.¹⁶²

While Trudeau is able to accept, and even to encourage, the notion of economic planning he is again careful to include the element of antagonism in his argument. Even in a "planning society" a degree of antagonism, or countervailing power, is necessary in order to ensure that progress continue. In Canada such antagonism can be maintained by recognizing and exploiting the regional diversity of the country.

Since regionalisms do exist in Canada, such feelings should be exploited to further the cause of democracy: each community might enter into a state of healthy competition with the others in order to have better 'self-government'; and thus the whole Canadian system of government would be improved by creative tensions between the central, the provincial, and even the municipal administrations.¹⁶³

The foregoing amounts to little more than the traditional pluralist argument of group interest and effective demand. That is, if groups are to have their needs and interests met they must be willing to articulate their demands, in competition with others, in the political arena. As Whitaker has argued,

All that counts is effective demand;
Trudeau can in fact be read as always

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 130.

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 147.

having told groups without real power
to either make their demands effective
or stop complaining.¹⁶⁴

In light of Whitaker's assertion Trudeau's reduction of socialist principles to questions of tactic becomes understandable. The socialist must compete in the political arena as any other and therefore Trudeau comes to view the political theory of socialism as being "largely bound to strategy and tactics". Federalism is to be accepted as a "chose donnée of Canadian politics" and the proper political stance of the socialist is a tactical pragmatism which should extend to even such fundamental considerations as "the debate over public versus private ownership". These latter, after all, are "not ends" but means and "they must be chosen according to their usefulness in each specific case".¹⁶⁵ In the final analysis the "end" of Trudeau's socialism involves little more than a vague humanizing of industrial society.

IX Instrumental Pragmatism and the Influence of Dewey

Trudeau's treatment of the question of socialism is a reflection of that same utilitarian, instrumental pragmatism with which he approaches all socio-political questions. As with Dewey, reason is to be understood as linked to experience

¹⁶⁴Whitaker, p. 26.

¹⁶⁵Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, pp. 146, 148.

and is not to be regarded as "something laid from above experience". Reason and experience go hand in hand and the former can only be developed by actively participating in the world and by experimenting. For Dewey, reason "as a faculty separate from experience" makes no sense, nor can reason introduce us "to a superior region of universal truths". Reason comes to us, and is in turn developed, through concrete experience and can in no sense be understood to stand prior to experience as some "Kantian faculty introducing generality and regularity into experience".

Concrete suggestions arising from past experiences, developed and matured in the light of the needs and deficiencies of the present, employed as aims and methods of specific reconstruction, and tested by success or failure in accomplishing this task of re-adjustment suffice. To such empirical suggestions used in constructive fashion for new ends the name intelligence is given.¹⁶⁶

For the instrumental pragmatist reason becomes "experimental intelligence" and is always empirically oriented. Thus, while reason may suggest alternative future states worth striving for these are never to be considered as final or immutable, nor is their sanction to be derived from an authoritative revelation of reason. It is its empirical orientation which will then also encourage "pragmatic" reason to question a given state of affairs.

¹⁶⁶ J. Dewey, Reconstruction In Philosophy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), p. 95.

Just as the early empiricists had "made it their business to show that some current belief or institution that claimed the sanction of innate ideas or necessary conceptions, or an origin in an authoritative revelation of reason, had in fact proceeded from a lowly origin in experience, and had been confirmed by accident, by class interest or by biased authority" so contemporary pragmatists must remain critical of conventional opinion. Social progress is a result of experimentation and innovation and programmes of action should therefore be considered as hypotheses to be worked out in practice". These programmes, or hypotheses, can then be either accepted, corrected or rejected depending upon how well they serve us in our endeavours. However, as guides of "reconstructive" action these programmes must never be turned into dogmas. Man is ultimately responsible for the state of his world and the evils which he encounters cannot be explained away, nor made understandable, by an appeal to an overriding rationality or purpose which holds out the promise of some future complete understanding. Whereas historic rationalism has often tended toward the apologetic and taught "that the defects and evils of actual experience disappear in the 'rational whole' of things", that is, "that things appear evil merely because of the partial, incomplete nature of experience", utilitarian pragmatism offers no such eschatology or apologetics. Here we find no absolute spirit marching through history nor any

belief in the virtue of an institution or custom because it has existed time immemorial. What we do find is a strong suspicion of the value of "system, order and regularity for their own sakes".¹⁶⁷

It is because of his attachment to utilitarian pragmatism that Trudeau is unwilling to posit any "essential" collective good as the end of society. To argue for the nationalization of the means of production as a matter of fundamental principle and as a necessary prerequisite to a decent life in any capitalist state would be to argue that there are general answers which have "a universal meaning that covers and dominates all particulars". For the pragmatist a search or elucidation of such principles does little to aid the process of inquiry. As Dewey argued,

They are not instrumentalities to be employed and tested in clarifying concrete social difficulties. They are ready-made principles to be imposed upon particulars in order to determine their nature. They tell us about the state when we want to know about some state. But the implication is that what is said about the state applies to any state that we happen to wish to know about.¹⁶⁸

The pragmatist is interested not in "might-have-been's or ought-to-be's"¹⁶⁹ but is rather interested in the analysis of concrete situations and the amelioration of immediate

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 82, 96-98.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁶⁹Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 148.

problems. This cannot be done if the debate and analysis of concrete social situation is relegated to a debate over "definitions and conceptual deductions". In transferring an issue "from concrete situations" to these latter one usually succeeds in doing little more than justifying the status quo. Just as natural scientists suggest and test hypotheses so social scientists should offer "hypotheses to be used and tested in projects of reform". The validity of these social scientific hypotheses will then depend upon how well they work in the real world as opposed to the abstract. Thus, for the social pragmatist, as for the natural scientist, an important aspect of knowledge is the ability to control. The natural scientist investigates concrete reality in order both to understand nature and to control its forces for general benefit. In a similar manner the social scientist should use and develop social theory as a "guiding method of inquiry and planning". Social action becomes a matter of trial and error and the important questions are those of the methods "concerned with reconstruction of special situations" rather than those dealing with "refinements in the general concepts of institution, individuality, state, freedom, law, order, progress, etc."¹⁷⁰

The motive force of social change and development (reconstruction) is the individual in the pursuit of his

¹⁷⁰Dewey, pp. 190-193.

interest. However, individuality is not something given but rather has to be striven for and created. If we view the individual as given, in the manner of early English and French empiricism, then the individual "can only be something to be catered to, something whose pleasures are to be magnified and possessions multiplied". While it is true that "social arrangements" exist for man and not man for social institutions, laws, etc., these arrangements are not to be regarded as "means for obtaining something for individuals", but are rather "means of creating individuals". Thus, man cannot be understood as a mere object among other objects blindly propelled by his passions, external stimuli or what have you. The development of individuality emerges, for Dewey, as a kind of creative process for which the individual bears a good deal of the responsibility himself; although the societal structures and relationships in which the individual finds himself also come very much into play.

Individuality in a social and moral sense is something to be wrought out. It means initiative, inventiveness, varied resourcefulness, assumption of responsibility in choice of belief and conduct. These are not gifts, but achievements. As achievements, they are not absolute but relative to the use that is to be made of them.¹⁷¹ And this use varies with the environment.

The self is here seen as being in a constant state of striving and development. Interests become those things

¹⁷¹Ibid., pp. 193-194.

pursued in the development of the individual and should therefore not be identified with, nor be permitted to succumb to, the petty and selfish. Insofar as "self-hood" is not perceived as something given but rather as an "active process", focus also comes to be placed upon the role of institutions in the furthering of personalities. Thus, "social modifications" become "means for the creation of changed personalities" and institutions are approached with a view to their "educative effect", that is, "with reference to the types of individuals they foster". Such an understanding of the self, Dewey hopes, will keep one from resorting to introspection and quietism in political and moral concerns. Social institutions are to be continually examined and criticized with a view to their potential improvement and with respect to the extent to which they encourage individual fulfillment and development. What Dewey does is to identify the development of the moral individual with the development of socio-economic institutions. "The interest in individual moral improvement and the social interest in objective reform of economic and political conditions are identified". Such an identification is intended to orient one toward the concrete and to encourage an "active concern with detailed economic and political questions". As Dewey goes on to argue, "the question is one of specific causations".

Just what response does this social arrangement, political or economic,

evoked and what effect does it have upon the disposition of those who engage in it? Does it release capacity? If so how widely? ...Are men's senses rendered more delicately sensitive and appreciative, or are they blunted and dulled by this and that form of social organization?...etc.¹⁷²

As with Mill the thrust of Dewey's philosophy is critical. Instrumental pragmatism "subjects every form of organization to continual scrutiny and criticism". Like the utilitarianism of Mill, Dewey's theory is not content with merely asking what a particular social arrangement "does in the way of causing pains and pleasures to individuals" but also asks what this arrangement does to help further the development of individual potential.¹⁷³ The question of utility is to be taken, as it was for Mill, in the widest sense--"grounded on the permanent interests of a man as a progressive being".¹⁷⁴

The state, as with liberal teaching in general, again becomes a mechanism for mediating between the different interests of society. For Dewey, the state is not an end in itself but rather "an instrumentality for promoting and protecting other and more voluntary forms of association". Thus, the preferred role of the state is to "foster and coordinate the activities of voluntary groupings" and it should not be regarded as "the end for the sake of which

¹⁷²Ibid., pp. 195-197.

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁷⁴See above, p. 372.

all the other societies and organizations exist". The ideal becomes that of a pluralist society. As Dewey argues:

Society...is many associations not a single organization. Society means association; coming together in joint intercourse and action for the better realization of any form of experience which is augmented and confirmed by being shared. Hence there are as many associations as there are goods which are enhanced by being mutually communicated and participated in. And these are literally indefinite in number. Indeed, capacity to endure publicity and communication is the test by which it is decided whether a pretended good is genuine or spurious.¹⁷⁵

Society functions best, and is most stable, when it permits for a degree of experimentation "beyond the limits of established and sanctioned custom" and when its members are able to realize themselves to their full potential. The guarantee for "efficiency" and development then becomes not adherence to the precepts of time honoured custom but rather experimentation and competition. The preferred political attitude is one which encourages individuals to participate in the decision making of those social groups to which they belong. Here we find no encouragement of deference and political quietism.¹⁷⁶ Freedom is seen as the result of conscious human striving and choice, as are the institutions which guarantee it, and neither should be left to the

¹⁷⁵Dewey, pp. 202-205.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 208-209.

determination of that nebulous realm called custom. The rules under which individuals carry on their livelihood need to be clearly known and stated.

X Trudeau and the New Constitution

It is on the basis of such precepts that Trudeau has argued for the "urgency in drawing up the rules of the game". The laws and general principles by which one is governed should be clearly stated and defined. Thus, one of the basic tasks of government is to "write in clear terms, the basic law, the constitutional law, whereby we set up our institutions and govern ourselves".¹⁷⁷ Common law principles, as a guarantee of the rights of individuals and minorities, are no longer considered sufficient and, it is argued, need to be replaced by a clear statement of the rights of the citizen. Not only does common law give way to positive law, but, the faith which common law traditionally engenders in the institutions of society as guarantors of liberty is also no longer acceded to. Thus, common law and tradition are to be replaced by a constitutionally entrenched "Charter of Rights and Freedoms" which, it is hoped, will give the democratic rights of Canadians a permanence which they have hitherto never had.

¹⁷⁷Trudeau, Introductory Statement to the Conference of First Ministers On The Constitution of Canada. (October 30-November 1, 1978).

In Canada we have tended to rely mainly upon the common law principles and ordinary legislation for the protection of fundamental rights, but as we know from history this has not always been a sufficient means to ensure that such rights are adequate or beyond arbitrary violation. There are some matters which should be beyond the power of the government of the day, whether federal or provincial, to change by a simple majority vote in the legislature. They should have the protection of being changeable only by a process of constitutional amendment involving both federal and provincial governments.¹⁷⁸

The constitutional entrenchment of political rights is not premised on the belief that it is somehow going to provide an "eternal" solution to the vagaries of political conflict. Parliamentary supremacy still holds and, while the importance and activity of the courts may increase because of the charter, there is, according to Trudeau, nothing to prevent future Parliaments from doing away with it¹⁷⁹--as unlikely as that may be. What it is hoped the Charter will do is to make a "pluralistic" politics more possible. A people secure in its political rights might be more encouraged to actively participate in the political process. A charter of guaranteed rights and freedoms, then, is one more element in the creation of those countervailing powers which

¹⁷⁸ Otto Lang, "Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Opening Statement"; Conference of First Ministers On The Constitution of Canada (October 30-November 1, 1978).

¹⁷⁹ Trudeau, Speech to the Commons, Gazette, March 25, 1981, p. 7.

Trudeau deems necessary for a democratic politics. "A good constitution is one that does not prejudge...but leaves citizens free to orient their human destinies as they see fit".¹⁸⁰ Not only is the charter seen as conducive to the improvement of politics but it also emerges as a necessary element in the survival and improvement of federalism. As Trudeau has long argued, it is only once the basic rights (including linguistic) of the individual are guaranteed that it would become possible for the federal government to reduce its predominance in certain areas.

The protection of basic rights having thus been ensured, there would be no danger in reducing the central government's predominance in certain areas (for example, by abolishing the right of reservation and disallowance); at the same time, this would have the advantage of getting rid of some of the constitution's imperial phraseology.¹⁸¹

Furthermore, constitutional arrangements pertaining to the central government could also be changed in order to provide for a more authentically federal regime. For instance, jurisdictional conflicts between the federal and provincial authorities could be judged "by an independent body deriving its authority directly from the constitution". In conjunction with this one could also provide for a reform of the Senate, thereby enabling it to "represent the provinces more directly". Trudeau feels, that rather than diminish the

¹⁸⁰ Trudeau, Federalism And The French Canadians, p. 11.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 45.

authority of Parliament, such reforms would "increase provincial confidence" in federal legislation.¹⁸²

These reforms have long been on Trudeau's mind and were recently given formal declaration in the Constitutional Amendment Bill (C-60) of June 1978. Today we have a charter of rights and an amending formula and further reforms are, no doubt, around the corner. While there may have been some recent compromises over the patriation issue the singularly most impressive aspect of the whole enterprise has been the consistency of Trudeau's vision throughout. Here it might be instructive to quote from a submission presented by him to the Tremblay Commission in 1955.

The Province (of Quebec) could well declare herself ready to accept the incorporation of a declaration of human rights in the constitution on the condition that the rights of disallowance and reservation be done away with. The province could suggest a precise plan for repatriating the Canadian constitution, including in it a method of amendment, on the condition that the Senate be turned into a body more federalist and less unitary and on condition that the organization of the Supreme Court be made to depend directly on the Canadian constitution rather than solely on federal law.¹⁸³

Thus, under Section 113 of Bill C-60 jurisdictional disputes between the two levels of government could increasingly be settled by the Supreme Court of Canada. This provision

¹⁸²Ibid.

¹⁸³Ibid., p. 53.

would "establish an express constitutional basis for Section 55 of the Supreme Court Act which provides for direct reference to the Court on important questions of law or fact (usually constitutional questions raised by the federal or a provincial government)." The act also provides for measures which would increase the "federal nature" of the court. Matters relating to the civil law of Quebec would be determined by the justices from that province alone and the present informal practice of regional appointments to the Court would be formalized. An expanded court of eleven justices would require that four, as opposed to the now three, come from Quebec, and that the "remaining seven be appointed from the Atlantic provinces, Ontario, the Western provinces other than British Columbia, and British Columbia respectively". Section 106 provides for federal-provincial consultation "respecting the appointment of judges" as well as the provision of a nominating council in the case of deadlock.¹⁸⁴

With the reform of the Senate into the House of the Federation the provinces would also have a say in the composition of the upper chamber. While the new house "would be based on the four traditional Senate regions" those regions other than Ontario and Quebec would gain an addition in the number of seats. Membership in the House from each

¹⁸⁴The Constitutional Amendment Bill, Government of Canada Publication, 1978), pp. 49-54.

province "would be selected, half by the federal House of Commons after each federal general election, and half by the provincial legislative assembly after each provincial general election. Members from the territories would be selected by the Governor General in Council after each election of the territorial councils." Selections at the federal level would be so made as to reflect the strength of the respective parties in the House of Commons and provincial selection would reflect the strength of respective provincial parties.¹⁸⁵

These suggested reforms are then to provide for a more "equitable" or genuine federalism. Regional representation would be guaranteed in the upper House in a more substantive way by incorporating the provinces into the selection process and in an indirect way the process would also be somewhat democratised by ensuring that the political preferences of voters are reflected. However, this is not to suggest that the new chamber would be any less the dust bin of patronage it now is.

Indeed, the suggested reforms do raise certain concerns. Given the limited powers of the proposed upper chamber it is rather unlikely that provincial premiers would leave it to their appointees to settle federal-provincial disputes of any serious nature; thereby negating any good that might

¹⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 21-32.

have been hoped for by encouraging provincial participation in the selection process. Any notion that the proposed structural changes might aid in alleviating regional cleavages is rather far fetched. Federal-provincial conferences have become an on-going fact of political life and few doubt their "political" utility in either the pejorative or non-pejorative sense of the term. As Eugene Forsey aptly phrased it; "prima donnas do not modestly step aside for under studies".¹⁸⁶ Couple this with the fact that a good number of provincial appointees will of necessity be political opponents, then the serious discussion of federal-provincial matters of import becomes a vacuous proposition indeed.

It is unlikely that the stature of the upper house will be enhanced by the new selection process. Most of the appointees will be defeated candidates and while "not necessarily duds", the odds are that they will be "the least able, least experienced, least politically aware members of their parties". Threatened also will be the traditional role of the Senate as an arena for the "sober" review of legislation coming from the Commons. Depending upon elections, appointees will be continuously rotating and while few will come to the job with any relevant experience it is unlikely that a

¹⁸⁶ Eugene Forsey, "Dangers in the Bill to Amend Canada's Constitution", The Globe and Mail, Friday, July 7, 1978, p. 7.

significant number will have the time to gather any. "The only ones likely to get reappointed are the toadies and yesmen; the very ones least likely to be capable, or desirous, of acquiring the relevant experience." The careful revision of bills is considered, by Forsey, to be an important aspect of an effective Parliament.

...in an effective Parliament, careful revision of bills is often essential. The House of Commons is far too busy with highly controversial matters of principle to have time to go into every bill line, by line. Hence, many bills come to the Upper House in such a state that they have to be drastically revised to make them workable, intelligible, and to save the ordinary citizen needless vexations, costly litigation.¹⁸⁷

Forsey has also expressed some serious reservations over the proposals for appointing future judges to the Supreme Court. The scheme grants an initial veto to the provincial attorney-general and if it is exercised the matter goes to a Nominating Council. It is the provincial attorney-general who then decides on the composition of the council from between two alternatives. He can choose "a council made up of the attorney-general of Canada (or his nominee) and the provincial attorneys-general (or their nominees)." Secondly, the provincial attorney-general can "choose a council made up of himself (or his nominee), the attorney-general of Canada (or his nominee) and a chairman

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 7.

chosen by the two (or failing agreement, by the provincial Chief Justice or senior puisne judge)." Once the council has been established it is then incumbent upon the Attorney-General of Canada to submit to it the names of at least three persons about whom he has already consulted the provincial attorney-general. A majority of the council is then expected to recommend one of the individuals within fourteen days. Having accomplished this the process then moves to the House of Federation where the members have fourteen days to debate and vote on the recommendation. If the vote is negative the entire procedure begins anew. If the House votes yes, or fails to vote within the allotted time period the nominee is appointed. In a situation where the House is adjourned or prorogued to a date more than twenty-one days later, of the Speaker having received the nominee's name, there need only be a debate if ten or more members request it in writing.¹⁸⁸

The danger that Forsey sees in these proposals for the staffing of future courts is that prospective judges may become "candidates" seeking the perks of a prestigious office. There exists the real possibility that "anyone who wants the job will have to cadge for votes from the attorneys-general, from the Nominating Council and from the members of

¹⁸⁸Ibid. See also, The Constitutional Amendment Bill, Sections 106-107.

the House of Federation." According to Forsey, it is rather unlikely that any lawyer of exceptional talent would be willing to put up with any such exercise and as a consequence all that these revisions portend is the creation of an inferior court. Candidates who should decide to lobby for a position on the bench would in all likelihood end up being provincial partisans. Thus, insofar as the role of the Supreme Court of Canada is going to expand it is important that the court itself not be inferior. Any constitutional changes will no doubt be subject to judicial interpretation and "the real limits of federal and provincial powers will be what the courts make them". In the long run, "the protection for federal and provincial powers, for individual rights, will be only as good as the court which defines and enforces them".¹⁸⁹

In Forsey's estimation, then, the proposed reforms of the Senate and Supreme court are problematic at best. With respect to the latter, the attempt to more fully provide for provincial participation could weaken both the stature and traditional independence of the court. Yet, lest Senator Forsey's lamentations grow too loud and he prematurely yearn for the way of things gone by one might point out that there is little in the realm of politics that is done without the tinge of patronage and the shrewdness of calculation;

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

past and future appointments to Senate and Supreme Court notwithstanding. While we do not wish to discount the misgivings registered one might note the old addage concerning the "aura" of office. The pressure to perform judiciously as well as judicially, may have a sobering effect on even the most ambitious and obvious of hopefuls. And, given that the Senate has long ceased to be any sort of real check on the "democratic" or other excesses of the Commons the limited check to be exercised by the House of Federation leaves little to lament. Few, if any, Senate appointments have been granted independent of the consideration of services rendered and as regards the Senate's perusal and editing of Commons legislation one might simply suggest that it had never been intended for the Upper House to be reduced to a chamber of scribes.

While the proposed changes may not meet with the approval of all and while they may not be overly imaginative they are consistent with Trudeau's understanding of federalism. According to him there are three basic problems facing contemporary federalism. These are the increasing alienation of the citizen from government, the alienation of the various regions from the central government and finally the problem of having two official languages.¹⁹⁰

The increased alienation of citizens from government is ascribed to the fact that although government is doing

¹⁹⁰Trudeau, House of Commons Debates, June 27, 1978.

more for them, and doing so largely at their request, people are feeling threatened by the intrusion of government into various aspects of their lives. At the same time the different ethnic groups making up the Canadian mosaic are deemed to want some idea of their place in Canadian society. They "have wanted to know the constitutional rank that was given them..." In Trudeau's estimation, the best way to deal with this problem of "citizen alienation" is to provide Canadians with a clear statement of national purpose with which they can identify.¹⁹¹ Thus, Bill C-60 came to include a series of "liberal" bromides concerning respect for individual rights, ethnic diversity, the English and French languages, as well as a commitment to try and bring prosperity to all regions of the country. Whether or not any real sense of alienation, either individual or collective, can be solved by providing individuals with a statement of national aims remains to be seen. One might suspect that alienation is a slightly more complex problem than one that can be solved through the articulation of cosmetic constitutional jargon.

The problem of regional alienation is to be solved by making the regions feel more represented at the center rather than by giving them more power. Regional representation is then to be given a greater voice through the

¹⁹¹Ibid.

reform of the Senate along the lines discussed above. The more logical solution of proportional representation in the Commons is rejected on the grounds of its potentially divisive nature--not to say anything of the potential hazards of such a proposal to Liberal party fortunes.

We fear not so much governments of coalition, although it is certainly very debatable whether that is a very desirable approach, but governments of coalition which would be based on rivalries between regions rather than slight ideological or party differences. To our mind, that would not unite the country, but divide it further. This House, parliament, would become a place where regions would quarrel amongst themselves and seek alliances, not to further the national good of all the country but in order to further their own particular regional or provincial interests.¹⁹²

The solution to the language problem has been to provide certain guarantees in the charter of rights for linguistic minorities. Thus, minority linguistic-educational rights are to be guaranteed where numbers warrant such provision out of public funds. However, freedom of choice between French and English education does not pertain to immigrants coming to Quebec nor to French Canadians themselves. Both these groups are still required to send their children to French schools under the aegis of present Quebec language legislation. One might have expected a somewhat more "liberal" solution to this problem--one that would have

¹⁹²Ibid.

provided for a complete guarantee of freedom of choice where sufficient numbers so warranted. If individuals are to be permitted, and indeed encouraged, to develop their potential in the light of their own reason and if the self-dependent man is the ideal then the function of the state, it would seem, should be to increase rather than restrict avenues of experience. If this is the case then it would be preferable, or at least so one would assume, to allow for the free flow of individuals across linguistic boundaries in educational matters. Failing such an opportunity in the public school system the only other option for broadening the linguistic-cultural horizons of the student becomes that of the private schools--making the matter one of privilege rather than one of right and opportunity. The present law also prevents Quebec immigrants from choosing that segment of Canadian society into which they eventually wish to integrate--not to say anything of the fact that the law goes a long way in preventing these immigrants from trying to adapt to or accommodate both of the dominant groups.

However, in all fairness to Trudeau's liberal sentiments, he has on occasion said that he would have preferred a situation wherein complete freedom of choice prevailed. At the same time he has also argued for the necessity of maintaining a strong French Canadian element within Canada. What needs to be avoided is "any constitutional or legal development which would result in one province speaking only

or mainly French, and all the other provinces speaking only English.¹⁹³ What needs to be done is to create those conditions in which French Canadians can feel equal and in which they can develop their culture. French Canadians need to be convinced that their best chance for survival lies within confederation; and the success of such persuasion will require a certain willingness on the part of other Canadians to accommodate French Canadian interests. As Trudeau told Congress, "we may have to revise some aspects of our constitution so that the Canadian federation can be seen by 6.5 million French-speaking Canadians to be the strongest bulwark against submersion by some 220 million English-speaking North Americans."¹⁹⁴ Thus the likelihood of Quebec becoming solely French speaking is reduced by protecting English minority rights there and by making it feasible for Canadians from other parts of the country to move to Quebec and be guaranteed linguistic educational rights for their children. By guaranteeing French linguistic rights throughout the country and by ensuring that French Canadians can deal with federal institutions in their own language, the rest of Canada, it is argued, will be kept from becoming solely English-speaking.

¹⁹³Trudeau, "Speech To The U.S. Congress, February 22, 1977", The Montreal Star, February 23, 1977, p. A-12.

¹⁹⁴Ibid.

These guarantees then help provide for a degree of mobility and while French Canadians in Quebec may not have freedom of choice with regard to linguistic matters this is not something that they are about to clamour for. Quebec is a Liberal stronghold and with Trudeau, as with most successful politicians, matters of "principle" stop short of political suicide.

Whether or not the constitutional changes, actual and proposed, will make any difference with regard to the nature and status of Canadian federalism still remains to be seen. However, what is apparent is that Trudeau's approach to the problem has been a consistent one and, what is more, it has been a consistently liberal one. Indeed if there is one regret which he has had over the compromises made to get his patriation package approved by the provincial premieres it is that "we have not kept in the amending formula a reference to the ultimate sovereignty of the people as could be tested in a referendum."¹⁹⁵ Such a desire for popular participation in matters of the most fundamental importance is not something one would expect from a conservative. For Trudeau such participation is merely another element in that system of countervailing powers to which he is so fond of referring. The possibility of holding a constitutional referendum on matters of federal-provincial

¹⁹⁵The Globe and Mail, November 6, 1981.

dispute^y would have provided the federal government with a good amount of leverage against the provinces. On a more cynical, and perhaps more realistic, level it is possible that this provision was added at the outset as something to be sacrificed in the bargaining process. It was certainly known to the Liberals that such a provision would not sit well with the provincial premieres who could have been faced with the possibility of having their powers seriously eroded by a "populist" amendment. As Trudeau so eloquently summed up his attitude toward the premieres, "I have a quarrel with them because I don't believe in provincial politics."¹⁹⁶

However, while one may attribute the initial amending proposal to the cynical self-interest of party politics, it is also possible to understand it as having been motivated by other considerations. According to Trudeau one of the dominant threats to federalism is the increasing power of the provinces. There is nothing wrong with provincial premieres standing for provincial rights, indeed this is very much a part of their function and duty. The real danger lies in the concerted and common effort made by the premieres to increase their strength while at the same time weakening that of the federal government.

...if they want to stand for the provincial rights that's fine. But they stand for them, and they stand for them in a way which

¹⁹⁶Trudeau, Speech To The Liberal Party of Canada, Toronto, November 17, 1978, p. 10.

is not only protecting provincial rights but seeking to get more powers from the federal government, you just have to look at the Regina agreement of the ten Premiers, last August. They got together and a whole series of items, fifteen areas, I think it was seven from Regina and eight left over from the Edmonton Conference of two years before. Some fifteen areas where they wanted to take power away from the federal government to give it to themselves, to their provincial governments, provincial levels of authority.¹⁹⁷

Thus, part of the response was to try and provide as flexible an amending formula as possible. Again, such a formula would have enabled the federal government to use the threat of the referendum against the provinces in the case of jurisdictional disputes and would have provided the federal authorities with a "countervailing" force. As Trudeau himself noted, "in a good society there is a series of checks and balances".¹⁹⁸ Federal provincial relations are perceived as essentially competitive and this is considered healthy so long as one part does not come to be overly dominant. It is important that there always be an element of antagonism.

While Stanfield argued on behalf of "countervailing centres of power" he did so from the belief that these would aid in preventing the usurption of authority and help in providing for the kind of order necessary for a

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p. 6.

politics of consensus. Trudeau, on the other hand, considers counterweights necessary in order to promote the conflictual and competitive aspects of politics. There is no desire here for a "general consensus". Agreements must, of course, be reached on specific issues but these will be the result, often as not, of a process of confrontation rather than of a process of consensus.

The constitutional saga has been an important one for Trudeau and will, in all likelihood, continue to be so until the entire re-writing is complete. Patriation has given Canada that complete independence of action with respect to its self-government that Trudeau has always considered so important. Just as the truly "self-dependent" man can, in the final analysis, be bound only by himself, so the "self-dependent" nation cannot permit itself to be subject to any external fetters.

Conclusion

What we have established in our study is that if we are to have a proper understanding of political behaviour (action) we need to take into account the role and influence of ideology and intention. We did not suggest that other factors were not also important but we did argue that if we unduly neglect the influence of the ideational we do so at our peril. By neglecting the role of ideas and intentions we can only provide for a partial understanding of the actions and policies of political practitioners.

During the course of our argument we showed that the influence of the ideational became a matter of minor concern in the social sciences not because of its demonstrated irrelevance but rather because of the attempt to make the study of man scientific. Analysts came to believe that by applying the methods and techniques of the physical sciences to social and political phenomena they would be able to make the same kinds of advances witnessed in the natural sciences. Or, failing similar successes the application of the scientific method would at least ensure, it was hoped, a firmer footing for the findings of social analysts. The importation of scientific methodology was then due to its success in other fields and not because of its appropriateness for social analysis. In the hope of discovering a set

of general laws capable of explaining and predicting human behaviour physics became the paradigm to be emulated and as a consequence much of the social sciences came to suffer from an unfortunate and arbitrary ontological reductionism largely necessitated by the demands of scientific methodological rigour. Thus, it was not only the naive attempt to model the social sciences after the natural sciences but also the concomitant assumption that the methods of the natural sciences "were a criterion for theoretical relevance in general" that proved particularly damaging to the cause of sound socio-political and historical research.

By way of establishing our claim we engaged in a general critique of reductionism and came to the conclusion that no one particular method can be applied successfully to the study of all problems. In the social sciences the ontological reality with which one deals is fundamentally different from that of the physical sciences and therefore, it was argued, no one epistemology can ever claim to be ultimately correct insofar as each "depends upon, and is validated by its own a priori ontology." Thus, it is impossible to validate ultimately any one particular method. As a consequence, methodological monism was shown to be wanting on the grounds that the methods employed by an investigator will necessarily be determined by the nature of his subject matter and by his theoretical interest.

As a case in point we showed how the problems of the historian were different in fundamental respects from those of the natural scientist. While the historian is also engaged in the empirical reconstruction of events he is further confronted with a "symbolic reconstruction" of which an understanding and interpretation is crucial for historical explanation. The historian cannot be satisfied by merely describing the past but must also be able to interpret it in order to uncover its hidden meanings. In the study of human activity the criterion of inter-subjective verification is more than a matter of "objective" validation, it is also a matter concerning the inter-subjectivity of meanings; the latter of which can only properly be grasped through an understanding and study of the symbolic. Therefore, we came to reject both discipline reduction and the increasing trend toward methodological individualism as inappropriate for an understanding of purposive behaviour. We found that if we are to deal with human behaviour in its complex entirety then we require a vocabulary beyond that of individual characteristics and attributes and that we must also allow for the possibility that human dispositions can be the dependent variable in historical and socio-political explanation. If we come to define the individual as a creative social being rather than as an isolated atomistic creature then our manner for coming to understand him must be amended and tailored accordingly. A complete importation

and application of "scientific" methodology is possible only if we accept the ontology that necessarily comes with it; and this, again, is unacceptable.

Once having established our initial theoretical argument we addressed the problem of applying an unduly reductionist analysis to the study of Canadian political parties, on the part of some analysts. What concerned us here was the rather unsophisticated dismissal of the relevance of ideology with respect to party politics as well as the reduction of political practice to the exclusive pursuit of self-interest.

Here we also came to conclude that by unduly focusing on overt behaviour one may easily fail to maintain the important distinction between activity and process. Meaningful human behaviour, we argued, is purposive and critical; it is reasoned behaviour involving judgement with reference to criteria and as a consequence it is subject to education and persuasion. Once this is understood then the claims of the methodological monists as well as those of methodological individualism become difficult to maintain.

Following this, we then turned to a detailed consideration of the problem of taking into account the role of intentions in explanations of political behaviour. Here we found that it was useful to maintain a clear distinction between the notions of behaviour and action. The former was shown to consist of little more than the routinized

performance of certain activities for which the individual is, in a sense, programmed; or it may simply consist of the unreflective response to a host of stimuli. Action, on the other hand, was defined as the active attempt (in terms of the union between conscious design and behaviour) to fulfill certain goals. Thus, meaningful human action cannot be understood as man's adaptation to his environment but rather involves the attempt to mould that environment to his will. Man, it was argued, does not only respond to "perceptions of reality" or to stimuli coming from the environment, but also responds to the "extrapolation of reality into possible future states". As a consequence the "abstract ideology or utopia expressed in concrete terms plays a critical role in defining social purpose and in conditioning social decisions." Therefore, any understanding of human action would necessarily have to take into account the role of symbolic language and this understanding cannot be reduced to the dictates of methodological individualism or discipline reduction.

In establishing the role of intent in action we turned to an examination and re-evaluation of the principles of general systems theory. We found G.S.T. to be particularly useful in our endeavours because it has not subordinated itself to the epistemological dictates of the natural sciences. At the same time we argued that while the nomological-deductive type of explanation has served as a paradigm

to be striven for by all the sciences its requirements would necessarily have to be softened for some fields. That is, the nomological deductive model is very much tied to the methodological canons and mechanistic world view of the physical sciences; its proponents and practitioners are methodological monists and as a consequence the model cannot be imported holo-bolus into the humanities.

Opposed to the methodological monism and ontological reductionism of the general tradition of physical science we offered the precepts of General Systems Theory. This movement was shown to have developed in large part as a result of the recognition that the assumptions, both methodological and ontological, of the natural sciences were not necessarily appropriate for all sciences. In its opposition to any form of rigid reductionism G.S.T. leads one to a different view from that held by the "mechanistic" approach. G.S.T. asserts that it is impossible to state exact laws for certain complex phenomena because of their high complexity and the impossibility of resolving them into physico-chemical events. As a result, it was argued, one must necessarily expand one's conceptual schemes if one wishes to deal with complex realms, and to make it possible for them to be included in the exact sciences. Thus, by rejecting the assumptions of a mechanistic world view systems theorists have been able to maintain important distinctions between inanimate and living systems. While isomorphies

can be said to exist among the two types of systems there are also those principles which are peculiar to each and which require the application of different approaches (methods) if they are to be understood. As a result, systems theory has the added advantage of permitting a degree of epistemological anarchism while at the same time being able to argue that principles discovered in one field may indeed be instructive and applicable in another.

Thus, it again became apparent that once we reject the strictures of methodological monism and its attendant ontology it becomes possible to deal properly with meaningful human behaviour; with action. Furthermore, we argued that statements concerning intentions and actions cannot be reduced without significant loss to statements about observable behaviour. When dealing with statements about intentional action we are referring to a "domain that is already linguistically structured" and such statements belong "to another level or type than first-order statements about physical objects and their behaviour." When dealing with action we must therefore never lose sight of the connection to ideas that is constitutive of such behaviour. Action and ideas do not function as independent variables in that actions come to express intentions that "cannot be comprehended independently of language." The methodological neglect of this connection has often led analysts to view human behaviour as little more than a separate class of

animal behaviour. As a consequence, it was argued, we cannot permit the reduction of action to behaviour and to recognize this is to recognize the necessity of providing access to our data via an understanding of meanings.

Having established the foregoing we then proceeded to distinguish in detail between intention, motive and purpose. Here we argued, along with Lawrence, against some of the conventionally held wisdoms concerning the treatment of these concepts. We rejected the notion that motives were essentially private episodes and came to conclude, on the basis of our definition of a motive as "a circumstance because of which one may take (certain) action," that the attributing of motives to an individual is necessarily the result of reasoned and careful historical research--perhaps more a result of scholarly persuasion than of "absolute" empirical verification. Thus, our ability to attribute motives to agents increases as our knowledge and familiarity with the subject matter increases; that is, our knowledge of the moving social prospects facing the actor. Any explanation which construes motives only in terms of mental states would be inadequate for what ultimately provides understanding concerning motive explanations is an "adequate fund of knowledge concerning the context of the action."

In our analysis of intention we again come to challenge certain cherished beliefs. A person's intention, we argued, is that which he is to do and his purpose that which he is

to achieve by so doing. However, we continued to conclude that an intention does not necessarily entail desirous foreknowledge or expectant desire. Along with this we also came to challenge the notion that an intention necessarily involves, or is related to, some inner state of mind and that it is, therefore, categorically distinguishable from action.

The value of Lawrence's treatment of the problem was that rather than begin with time honoured preconceptions it permitted us to proceed phenomenologically--from the concrete perspective of how these terms actually function in historical explanation and everyday speech. Thus, while we did not wish to deny that social systems are analysable, in part, according to certain "objective" criteria, we did want to emphasize the importance of intentional action with respect to their development.

In the final section of the thesis we then applied our theoretical arguments to a concrete problem situation--Canadian federalism. Here we showed that ideas, even in a relatively homogeneous political culture such as Canada's, can have an important bearing on politics and that fairly significant ideological differences among political parties can be found to exist. During the course of our argument, we were once more forced to confront certain conventional wisdoms. The most important of the "wisdoms" was the notion of the Red Tory, a creature who was found to have considerably

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less substance than the ever elusive Pimpernel--although this is not to say that the former's influence has been any less pernicious.

What we found was that the notion of toryism, or the so-called tory streak, did little to help our understanding of Canadian ideology. Indeed, the persistence of arguments on behalf of a tory influence in Canadian political culture and ideology was shown to be due to a desire to somehow differentiate us from the United States on the one hand and to a misunderstanding of the nature of conservatism on the other. While the former tendency can be excused on the basis of a well-intended nationalistic chauvanism and therefore need not overly concern one the latter is somewhat more problematic for it can lead to serious misunderstandings of our national political culture. One of the problems pointed to was the mistaken emphasis which analysts have traditionally put on the concept of an organic community as being an essential ingredient of conservative doctrine. The dilemma, we argued, stemmed from their failure of not having adequately distinguished between feudal and bourgeois conservatism in their analysis of Canadian ideology. Once having adequately distinguished between these two traditions we were then able to show that the much vaunted tory touch and its queer blending of orthodox elitist-collectivism with tory radicalism had little influence in Canada save in the minds of those pundits who felt it necessary to try and provide toryism with a home.

The conservative influence which we found to be operative in Canadian political history and culture was that of "Burkean Whiggism" and this doctrine was shown to have nothing in common with corporate-organic-collectivism. Differences between liberal and conservative doctrine are matters of degree rather than of kind and Burkean Whiggism, in our analysis, emerged as an "emphasis", albeit an important one, within the general doctrine of classical liberalism.

Having dealt with the essentials of conservative ideology we then proceeded to take to task one of the favourite examples often sighted as evidence for the existence of the tory touch; Bennett's New Deal legislation. Here we showed that when the problem was dealt with in its analytic complexity, that is, from the perspective of what is entailed in a proper application of intention-motive explanations, then the proposition that Bennett was acting from tory premises or principles emerges as vacuous. In coming to our conclusion we paid due attention to the "character" we assigned to the deed under consideration and were careful not to make the error of simply reinforcing preconceptions on the basis of hasty inference. Thus, in coming to understand the nature of Canadian ideology we do not need to revert to any pre-liberal tory concepts. Canada, we concluded, is indeed a liberal fragment; albeit one influenced by the anti-rationalist Burkean notions of prudence, order and tradition.

From here we then proceeded to an examination of the "intentions" and "ideas" upon which the founding of the Canadian state was based. Upon evaluation it again became evident that important programmes of political action cannot be explained solely on the basis of self or party interest. The importance of ideological considerations was particularly evident in our study of Macdonald. Macdonald, it was argued, did not suffer from any tory streak, rather his approach to the problem of federalism was influenced by a consistent conservative-liberal ideology. Furthermore, despite the fact that Macdonald was a pragmatic politician, to suggest that he approached the question of constitutional reform in a merely reactive or incrementalist manner would be to do him an injustice. The ideas upon which he based his actions were not mere rationalizations of what had been brought about by independent forces.

In our examination of contemporary actors we again found the role of ideology to be of significance. Robert Stanfield exhibited the conservative penchant for the tried and true and was more wont to put his faith in tradition than in rationalistic reconstructions. Nor did Stanfield exhibit any of the corporate-organic-collectivist tendencies associated with toryism. His notions concerning economics and the role of government proved to be quite consistent with the Burkean tradition. Stanfield's stand on federalism was not one predicated merely by his role as leader of the

opposition and while he was able to differentiate himself from the government side it would be incorrect to view this as a mere gambit of electoral opportunism. What Stanfield took as motives for action, and his response thereto, showed a consistently conservative approach to politics. His call for a more limited role for modern government, the desire to revitalize Parliament as a deliberative institution, his insistence on avoiding a politics of confrontation and a belief in the value of tradition and custom are all concerns with which Burke and Hayek would stand in comfortable agreement. In Joe Clark we found sentiments similar to those of Stanfield's, though not as eloquently stated nor as well understood.

While Stanfield and Clark were fairly representative of what we came to understand by conservatism, Pierre Trudeau emerged as a spokesman of that other and dominant ideological tradition, liberalism. In Trudeau we did not find any veneration for tradition nor any trust in the collective wisdom of the ages. Here the individual came foremost and his attachment to a community was not one born of cultivation and sentiment but was rather a matter of rational calculation and choice. It is not the man bound to the traditions and security of a community and a given way of living his life that is to be cherished; rather it is the self-dependent man and the fulfillment of his potentialities, unfettered by "time honoured" constraints, that is here

sought. Thus, whereas Burke may have found minor epigones in Stanfield and Clark, though he may not be wont to rush in claiming the latter, Mill found an equally enthusiastic devotee in Trudeau.

Trudeau shares with Mill an optimism for progress and experimentation that we never find in Burke. An effective politics is a politics of confrontation. Trudeau considers democratic principles best preserved by the existence of centres of opposition and by continually testing the beliefs of the majority. Deference to tradition, whether of authority or institutions, was seen as leading to little else save intellectual and cultural lethargy. While arguing against the sway of tradition, Trudeau was no less aware than was Mill of the potential tyranny of the "democratic" masses. The universal popularity of doctrine, it was argued, was more likely to lead to oppression than it was to liberation. Thus, Trudeau shares with Mill the conviction that if freedom is to be guaranteed then one must ensure for the ongoing dialectic of ideas.

It was because of the absence of any such dialectic that, according to Trudeau, one had little intellectual or socio-economic development in Quebec prior to the "quiet revolution." The ideosyncratic nature of Quebec society may have helped the French Canadian retain his identity but it also tied him to a set of values which were out of step with the modern world. Rather than become self-dependent

the Québécois became increasingly tied to the strictures of custom and race. While Trudeau showed no more respect for the mass of mankind than did Mill, he did argue that one way of overcoming an antiquated set of social institutions and relationships is by encouraging political participation. Thus, Trudeau's call for participatory democracy emerged as a variant of Mill's desire to have the individual participate in political matters; for by so doing he improves both himself and society. Of particular importance, then, is the iconoclast for it is he who is able to put behind him the antiquated notions of race and nation and who is able to put his faith in "progressive" ideas. The choices to be made are rational-intellectual ones and the best of these, it is assumed, emerge in an environment of intellectual flux and competition. There is no hesitation here over the virtues of raising questions before their time, nor do we find any deference paid to the inherent wisdom of the ages.

For Trudeau, the end of politics, as understood in its broadest sense, is the liberation of the individual; and the problems of oppression and liberation are, in turn, dealt with from an "individualist" and not a "class" perspective. It is therefore not surprising that while we did find a certain amount of socialist rhetoric and radical posturing in Trudeau's arguments, the socialism which emerged was very much that of the utilitarian-liberal variety. Faith in the collective class struggle would ultimately prove as naive as

putting one's faith in the "nation". If any movement toward a more sophisticated and beneficial form of socio-economic organization is to be successful it will be so as a result of rational problem solving and not as a result of nationalistic fervour or class enthusiasm.

Federalism, for Trudeau, is then simply the most rational solution to a given set of problems. With respect to the Canadian situation federalism was seen as offering the right mix of centralism and flexibility. As regards the aspirations of French Canadians the division of powers was considered to give Quebec control over those matters needed to see to its cultural development and survival. Furthermore, by being a member of the federation Quebec is able to accrue advantages it would otherwise be denied while at the same time leaving itself open to progressive influences from the outside. Thus, the federal state emerges as the reasonable compromise of peoples having certain fundamental differences but who at the same time realize that their long-term interests dictate a degree of cooperation.

While we showed Trudeau's thought to have a close affinity for the teachings of John Stuart Mill his concern with the primacy of personal conscience was found to have a religious grounding; rather than merely resting on utility as it did for Mill. Trudeau's religious precepts, we argued, were largely drawn from the catholic personalism of Mounier; an influence which was easily accounted for given

the action orientation of Mounier's theology. Indeed, many of the concerns of Mounier--the importance of the individual, the desire for an open culture, and the humanization of the world--are easily reconcilable, and indeed very much a part of, utilitarianism. Again, it is because of these factors that Trudeau's "socialism" never moves beyond the horizons or reformism.

Trudeau's long standing desire for constitutional reform, and its concrete manifestation, was then readily understood given his instrumental-pragmatic approach to politics. Little is sacrosanct save the individual and his "rights". Societal institutions, as with Dewey, are to be continually examined and criticized with a view to their contribution toward individual fulfillment and development. Institutional arrangements are "instruments" and have no inherent value of their own. If one type does not work in the pursuit of a given objective or end then another should be adopted; experimentation and efficiency are valued above custom. Here, freedom is not considered to be the result of fortuitous historical development but is rather seen as the result of conscious human striving and choice.

The constitutional reforms, both realized and proposed, were easily seen to embody the ideological concerns of Pierre Trudeau's variant of liberalism. This is not to suggest that the implementation of these reforms was an easy matter, nor is it likely that future efforts will be

fraught with fewer obstacles. Throughout the final stages the Conservatives effectively played the role of the opposition and in good old anti-rationalist sentiment managed to have God entered onto the official scrolls of nationhood-- as to how the Almighty received this accolade one can only surmise.

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