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WESTERN POLITICAL HERITAGE

Colonel Willis M. Smyser, USAF

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Reviewed by: Colonel Tom W. Sills, USA

Date: 3 September 1959

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES
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26 August 1959

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SPEAKER--Colonel Willis M. Smyser, USAF, Member of the Faculty, ICAF.....	1

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Reporter: Grace R. O'Toole

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COLONEL SMYSER: General Houseman, Gentlemen:

Since the beginning of recorded history, man has given a great deal of profound thought to the question of how society should be organized-- the problem of political organization.

Many times he has wondered: What is the purpose of political organization? Or, to be more specific, he has asked three questions:

First: What is the proper function of government?

Second: What system of government can best perform this proper function?

Third: What are the legitimate powers of the government and the rights of the governed?

Although these questions have been pondered since the beginning of time, they are absolutely vital today. Dr. Quincy Wright, in his monumental book, "The Study of War," considers differences in political thought to be a principal cause of war throughout history. (And there have been 169 wars just in the 50-year period from 1900 to 1950.) Today differences in political ideology constitute a major reason for the division of the world into opposing armed camps. Not only are there strains between political systems but also there are strains and apprehensions within our own political system.

We are about to begin a section of the Foundations Unit on Comparative Political Thought and Government. This section is primarily for the purpose of reviewing our American system of government--its principles, its institutions, and its procedures, with emphasis on their relationship to the handling of present-day problems. We need to understand our system of government if we want to understand the problems of developing an adequate security posture. We must know our Government if we want to understand the problem of imposing controls over industry or controls over manpower, if we want to understand the problem of our economic life, if we want to understand problems of mobilization, civil defense, adequate military forces, and similar security measures. These are all closely related to the form of government we have.

I'll venture a prediction right now. Based on three years of hearing speakers here and in the National War College auditorium, I predict that several times this year you will hear expressions such as: "We know we should do this," or "we realize we should do that, but we just can't under our system of government," or some such similar apology for some of the limitations in our system--with the added assurance, of course, that in spite of these limitations we have no desire to change the system.

Our study of American Government, then, focuses mainly on our governmental institutions and procedures as a basis for better understanding of and participation in the subsequent units of the Resident Course.

But now, as an introduction to the course, I would like to try to stimulate your thinking and especially your critical reasoning about the Western political heritage, in general. Let us see what answers political thinkers have given to those three initial questions which I posed. In the short period we have for this talk, perhaps we can take a fleeting glimpse at about 25 centuries of political ideas, and perhaps the questions that are raised will stimulate you to further investigation. At least you will realize that the present-day problems are not entirely new. They have faced society for centuries, and past thinking does provide a perspective for our consideration of what to do today.

It seems to be fashionable to have a chart over here (on the easel) and so I have prepared a chart which shows the contributors to political thought. I will just barely touch on the work of these contributors in the first part of my talk. Please don't take time to try to read the whole chart now; but, as I go through the first part of my talk and I mention these various political thinkers, you may glance at the chart and see their names and fix their times in history and some of their works.

Most commentaries on political philosophy begin with Plato, and most authorities in the field claim that all political theories borrow something from Plato. So it is appropriate that we take a look at the Platonic concept.

Totalitarians claim Plato as their intellectual ancestor because there is so much in his writing that is explicitly undemocratic, or outright antidemocratic--like the philosopher king that General Houseman

mentioned in his opening talk. On the other hand, socialists claim Plato for their champion because virtually all communistic and socialistic thought has its ultimate root in Plato.

This brings up a point that applies to all the political ideas that we shall sample. None of them is perfect or absolute. They are neither all right nor all wrong. But political philosophers were trying to answer those three initial questions which I posed. They were trying to arrive at the ideal social order; but frequently their ideas changed during their lifetime, and if and when their philosophy ever was applied to a state it underwent practical change. This practical modification for utility, or pragmatism, as it is called, is especially typical of our own application of political philosophy in this country.

But, to get back to Plato: he wrote "The Republic" in his early maturity and "The Laws" in his old age. "The Republic" is by far the most read. He was very much concerned about the incompetence of democracy. His concept of the state was aristocratic, with government in the hands of a philosopher king and a small elite which he called "the guardians;" and their primary attribute was wisdom. They were to be aided by auxiliaries, or fighters, and their primary attribute was courage. And under the wise guardians and the courageous fighters were the workers, and their primary attribute was appetite.

His socialistic and communistic ideas are found in his belief that this elite, this group of guardians and fighters, should lead a sort of

communal life, with all causes for temptation eliminated. Families would be eliminated; love would be eliminated; all wealth and all property would be eliminated. There would be collective education of children under the state, instead of parental care, and there would be state control of science and ideology.

So here we find about 400 years before Christ a rationalization of the idea that a few wise rulers can govern the people better than the people can govern themselves. And Plato was serious about this. He was trying to develop a utopian social organization. People, he believed, were just not capable of governing themselves, because he thought that government is a specialized art and that justice consists of giving every man his due.

Plato's pupil, Aristotle, became famous in his own right. Aristotle was much more sympathetic to the concept of constitutional government, and he rejected most of the communistic and socialistic ideas of his teacher. While Plato considered democracy to be a "charming form of government, full of variety and disorder and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike," Aristotle believed that "democracy is a just form of government in which the citizens at large administer the state for the common interest."

Now, from the chart it looks like there is a very barren period in the history of political philosophy; but this is not true. Several important theories developed. The theory of natural law, or the law of nature, as it is sometimes called, states that all citizens have certain basic natural

rights. Also during this time was developed the theory of the divine right of kings. The rise of the Christian Church brought the theory of the two swords, the two centers of power--the temporal power and the spiritual power.

There were many important contributors to political thought. Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine are two of them. We just didn't have time to cover them all. So let's skip about 18 centuries, to approximately 1500.

I cite Niccolo Machiavelli because he has been much more criticized than read. His minor work, "The Prince," is quite familiar, but relatively few people are familiar with his great works, "The Discourses," and the "Art of War." Machiavelli has given an adjective to the English language--Machiavellian--which is generally used to mean cunning, crafty, deceitful; and yet this man has been called by many authorities "the first modern thinker." He wrote the first great book on warfare, and from it has developed a huge literature of books on strategy and power politics, such as by Clausewitz, Jomini, Mahan, and many others.

Machiavelli was the first to consider the problem of war and peace as a practical understanding of material resources. His writing focused attention on preparedness, and mobilization, and such related matters as we study right here at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He preceded Clausewitz in the well-known concept that war is continuous with peace.

Machiavelli is remembered most for his statement in Chapter 18 of "The Prince," where he said:

"A prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when, by so doing, it would be against his interest, and when the reasons which made him bind himself no longer exist. If men were all good, this precept would not be a good one, but as they are bad and would not observe their faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them."

The real contribution of Machiavelli, however, is his concept of the art of using superior preparedness, ruthlessness, and threats of war to achieve bloodless victories. This sounds quite modern, doesn't it?

His main concern was for the state, and he believed that the chief foundations of all states are good laws and good arms. In regard to arms, he argued violently against mercenaries and auxiliaries and in favor of a national army, which was a new concept at that time.

Now let's jump only about 150 years and look in on Thomas Hobbes. He is most remembered for his book, "The Leviathan," the first comprehensive work on political philosophy in English, and published in 1651. The two primary political ideas he gave the world were the idea of a social contract and the idea of the absoluteness of sovereignty. However, he rejected the idea that the state was divinely ordained--the divine right of kings.

The political philosophy of Hobbes is sometimes stated in the form

of one of the sentences from his book, in which he said: "Life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." This statement must be placed in its proper context, because Hobbes was pointing out that life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short in the state of nature. Human behavior in nature, according to Hobbes, was a war of every man against every man. There was no right, no wrong, no justice, no injustice, no order, no regulation, no civilization of any kind. And, because such a situation is completely intolerable, and moreover because it is destructive, self-preservation demands cooperation. Hobbes found that peace and cooperation have greater utility for self-preservation than violence and competition. For security, government is required, and government must have power to enforce law. For security, then, men give up the concept of self-help and subject themselves to a sovereign, who, by necessity, has absolute power, in accordance with the contract.

Much of the importance of Hobbes derives from the fact that he developed a scientific, consistent political theory, and in doing so he influenced the work of subsequent political philosophers, especially John Locke, Charles-Louis de Montesquieu, and Jean Jacques Rousseau. In violent disagreement with Hobbes' state of nature, Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau believed that man is, by nature, good.

Locke's philosophy is expressed in his two "Treatises of Government," the second of which is the more important, called "Civil Government."

Locke continues Hobbes' social contract idea, but he develops it in such a way as to establish the ultimate supremacy of the people over government and to demonstrate that the sphere and the powers of government are limited by the terms of the contract. Locke also referred repeatedly to life, liberty, and property, or estate, as the natural rights of man.

Now, I need not point out the tremendous influence that Locke has had on American political philosophy. His answers to those three initial questions are pretty much our answers--the natural rights of man to life, liberty, and property. (Incidentally, in our early state documents that phrase appears, but, as you know, it was changed to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," in the Declaration of Independence.) His theory that the purpose of government was to secure these rights, and that the source of power of government is from the people, and that there are limitations on the powers of government is our American political heritage.

Thomas Jefferson took these ideas and put them into the words that are so familiar to us:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The significant contribution from Montesquieu consists of an addition or supplement to Locke's philosophy--the separation of powers. He accepted the ideas of natural rights, the social contract, the protective role of government, and limitations on government; but he went on in his "L'Esprit des Lois" or "Spirit of the Laws" to develop the separation of powers theory as a means to limit and control the powers of government. Montesquieu said:

"There can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or body of magistrates, or if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers."

This idea also, as you very well know, became a basic feature of our own government.

Now we should look briefly at another English political philosopher, Edmund Burke, who wrote "Reflections on the French Revolution." Most of us probably got acquainted with Burke in high school because of his "Speech on Conciliation," which was so often required reading along about the junior year. I suppose most of us remember reading it but not understanding it. I know I didn't understand it at the time.

An interesting aspect of his political philosophy is his theory relative to representation. I mention this because it is something for us to think about in connection with our own situation. Should your Congressman

or your Senator in Washington represent exclusively your State or your district? Should he try to get for his people, for his constituents, as much of what they want as possible? Or should he concern himself first and foremost with the interests of the Nation as a whole and decide in his best judgment what is best for his constituents? In other words, should he be a Western Union messenger boy simply delivering the message of his constituents or recording their views, or should he act "with power of attorney" for them?

Edmund Burke had the answer to this question. He defended a representative's independence of judgment and action. Once elected, the representative is responsible for the whole interest of the Nation, and he owes to his constituents his best judgment, freely exercised, whether it agrees with theirs or not. He wrote these ideas to his constituents in Bristol, and he spoke to them several times in the same manner. I don't think I have to add that he was not reelected to office.

In historical chronology this brings us to the time of our own American political philosophy. Although the philosophy of Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, Marshall, and other Americans is my favorite subject, I will have to skip over it this morning. But you will get some of these thoughts on government in our next lecture, which is on the Federal Government, by a top authority, Dr. Elmer Schattschneider. Also, I suggest that you read The Federalist, which has been called

America's greatest single contribution to political philosophy.

Now let's turn to just a little bit more sampling of some other political ideas which are part of the Western political heritage.

No survey of political philosophy would be complete without a look at communism and totalitarianism, because these philosophies provide the attack on democracy which we face today. Both of these philosophies go back to Plato and both have had vastly more application over the centuries than has democracy. But both of these philosophies come more directly from a post-democracy philosopher; that is, one whose thinking was a reaction to democracy--a German named Hegel. Hegel's political thinking is expressed best in his "Philosophy of Law," written in 1821.

The major significance of Hegel comes from two points--his dialectic as a method, which was later adopted by Marx, and his idealization of the state. The term "dialectic method" comes from the method employed by Plato, who presented his thinking in the form of dialogues of opposing views. Every idea can exist only if there is an opposite. For example, to have the concept of right you have to have the concept of wrong. To have the concept "high" you have to have the concept "low." Hegel calls these opposing ideas "thesis" and "antithesis," and he says the interaction of these two opposing ideas produces a "synthesis." He is concerned with opposing ideas in history.

Hegel uses this method to show what he calls the necessity of history

or the inexorable unfolding of history. He says that great men neither make nor guide history but at the most they understand a little of it and cooperate with forces enormously more massive than their own will and understanding. In other words, he says that history unfolds inexorably from this process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, and that nothing can stop it. Great men really don't make history. They simply perceive what is taking place and they latch on to it.

The state, according to Hegel, is an end, not a means. The state is far more than the association or total of its individuals. It is a being and it has a spirit of its own. And people exist for the state-- not the state for the people.

Hegel's concept of freedom was that in self-sacrifice, duty, and discipline the individual finds his supreme freedom. War, rather than peace, shows the health of a state. Many authorities say that Hegel's philosophy, as immensely significant as it was, is really a rationalization of his desire for a powerful Germany. And Hegel had a tremendous influence on both communism and totalitarianism, particularly in the concept that the individual is merely the tool or the means and the state is the end.

The father of Marxian socialism and communism, Karl Marx, was a student of Hegel, and from Hegel, he borrowed the dialectic as a method and developed his theory of dialectical materialism and his economic interpretation of history. As Marx put it: "My dialectic method is not

only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. With me the ideal is nothing more than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." In simpler words, Hegel said that experience follows the idea. Marx said that the idea follows experience and is the product of experience, especially economic experience.

I have prepared a little diagram here to help explain the Hegelian dialectic and the Marxian dialectic.

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The Hegelian dialectic says that we have opposing ideas, thesis and antithesis, which produce synthesis, that this is an idea, and that from this idea we have experience. Marx said, "Yes, we have these opposing forces, but they are opposing experiences, and from them we have a synthesis which is an experience, and any ideas that we have in this world are the result of experience, especially economic experience."

Marx also applies this to history, and he says that all history has been nothing more than class conflict--the masters and the slaves, the patricians and the plebians, the nobles and the serfs, and now the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Eventually we will have a synthesis which will be a classless society.

The philosophy of communism states: "The mode of production of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social,

political, and intellectual life." All the institutions of society are merely tools of the exploiters used against the masses. Morality, ethics, and social customs are all tools of the exploiters. And religion is an invention of the exploiters to hold down the oppressed class, or, to use the words of Marx: "Religion is the opiate of the people."

Much importance is attached by Marx to the theory of surplus value. Briefly, this theory is that the workers receive only part of what they produce, and profits are siphoned off by parasitic capitalist exploiters. Thus, since the workers cannot purchase the full value of their work, surpluses develop, and as surpluses develop, competition increases, and as competition increases exploitation becomes more severe. As competition for markets increases, nations are forced into imperialistic ventures for colonies and for more markets for their surpluses, and this in turn leads to imperialistic wars. So, according to Marx, capitalism is doomed, and again to use his words, "because it sows the seeds of its own destruction."

And so the Communist Manifesto says:

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, Unite!"

And Lenin a little bit later in his book, "What is to be Done," says:

"We do not believe in external principles of morality. Communist morality is identical with the fight to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is necessary to use cunning, deceit, unlawful method, evasion, withholding and concealing truth."

Now, with the forceful overthrow of all existing capitalist society and its institutions, a classless society will evolve in which all means of production will be community property. The government, to use the words of Marx, "will wither away and instead of government of people, we will have administration of things." All will share equally in abundance under the arrangement of "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs."

Of course this authoritarian, communistic arrangement was not new. We saw some of it in Plato, and you may recall that about two centuries before Marx some of these ideas were tried right here in our own country by, among others, the Pilgrim Fathers. It made no difference how much or how little any member of the Plymouth Colony produced; that production went into a common warehouse and it was doled out in accordance with the authority's idea of needs.

Of course the system didn't work. Many starved and died. The second winter, Governor Bradford called them all together and said, in

effect, "Look here. This system isn't working well at all. It is not working out. I think this spring we will discard the principle 'From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs' and instead we will substitute 'To each according to his effort and his merit.' Come this spring, each of you will have what you, yourself, produce or earn."

Now, we don't have time to go into the many fallacies of Communist philosophy. But out of all this theory that I have just barely outlined for you, one definite thing has emerged--the dictatorship. As for the withering away of the state, or the withering away of the government, that is either a long way off or else it is just plain window dressing.

Let me show you just one example of this Communist window dressing. Here is Article 125 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union:

CHART

"In conformity with the interest of the toilers for the purpose of strengthening the socialist system, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law (a) freedom of speech, (b) freedom of the press, (c) freedom of assembly and meetings, (d) freedom of street processions and demonstrations. These rights of the citizens are insured by placing at the disposal of the toilers and their organizations, printing presses, supplies of paper, public buildings, the streets, means of communication, and other material conditions necessary for their realization."

Their communal life is expressed in Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution,

which states that the land, waters, forests, mills, factories, and mines are the property of the people. But, even though they own these things, they don't have much control over what they get from them.

The philosophy of totalitarianism also borrows from Hegel. Developed further by Fichte, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Trietschke, with his concept of the supremacy of the "big blond beast," this philosophy reached its greatest point under Hitler and Mussolini. Glorification of the state, cult of race, uncontrolled leadership, duty, and self-sacrifice are some of the characteristics with which we are all quite familiar.

This philosophy holds the incredible view that the ultimate in human dignity and freedom is in the maximum power of the state, and there is a singular lack of scruples concerning method. Hitler demonstrated this when he said:

"We will incite the people, and not only incite, we will lash them to a frenzy. The pigsty of Jewish corruption, democratic hypocrisy, and Marxist deception must be swept out with an iron broom. Arise, master race of the globe!"

Mussolini also expressed the totalitarian philosophy very very well when he said:

"The will for possession and power has always been the driving force in history . . . Justice, happiness, and peace are dreams; comfort

is boring and senile; man is a beast of prey. . . Everything is for the State. . . Welfare of individuals is not the object of society. . . Democracy and freedom rest upon a false faith in the reasonableness of human natures."

Well, there you have a very light sampling of political ideas from history. Admittedly, it lacked depth; it was only a veneer. What I had in mind was simply to stimulate your thinking about the Western political heritage in general.

I especially suggest that you read some more about these political philosophies, particularly communism. You really should understand the Communist theory and know exactly what it is. It will help you to see through Communist propoganda and it will help you to fit Communist action into a pattern. You will find after you read more of it you will appreciate far more our own American political philosophy. J. Edgar Hoover had this same idea in mind. In his recently published book, "Masters of Deceit," he said: "It is the duty of every American citizen to learn exactly what communism is."

Now, out of all these political ideas I suggest that you keep two key problems in mind throughout the government section of this course. As a matter of fact, they are the two key problems for you to keep in mind throughout the entire Resident Course. The first is the problem of how much government, and the second is the problem of the role of the military in government.

The first problem--how much government--was very well stated by our friend Edmund Burke. He said:

"The most difficult of all problems confronting social philosophers is that of determining what the State ought to take upon itself to direct by public wisdom and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual freedom."

Lincoln put it in the form of a question. He asked: "Must a government of necessity be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?"

The Founding Fathers had the answer. They said: "That government is best which governs least." But they insisted, on the other hand, that a government ^{must} have power to govern.

As a matter of fact, our Government has undergone considerable evolution and is still changing. Our Founding Fathers hadn't the remotest idea that the Government should be a provider of low-cost housing, and they probably would never recognize the present cornucopia of handouts as their creation.

The change began with the Declaration of Independence, and by the time of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 already there was a change in thinking from the idea of least government to one of a stronger government. Of the 56 who had signed the Declaration of Independence, only 8 were delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Patrick Henry, who inspired the Revolutionists with the memorable words, "Give me

liberty or give me death," was so much concerned about liberty that he saw danger in the Constitutional Convention, which was to provide a stronger government. When he was invited to attend the convention he said, with less memorable words, "I smell a rat."

With our Government as it is today, critics can no longer say that it has the negative merit of not doing harm but lacks the positive merit of doing good. Our Government has become strong, centralized, ubiquitous, and all-pervasive. It is everywhere and it gets into everything, especially into your pocketbook. Yet just recently a Stanford professor said that we must put a greater portion of our productive capacity to significant and worthy use. I have heard that thought put forth here in this auditorium. I suppose that means that, instead of a half-billion dollars of our gross national product--or whatever the figure was--every year going for private swimming pools, it should be directed into welfare measures or into preparedness measures. This is very worthy but it means more government. It means more direction of our national economy, more direction of our entire national life, and less individual freedom.

It seems that, as the external threat increases, we are forced into more and more government. Maybe this is the big problem of today. Perhaps we should recall Alexander Hamilton's warning in The Federalist, No. 8. He said:

"Safety from external danger is the most powerful director

of national conduct. Even the ardent love of liberty will, after a time, give way to its dictates. The violent destruction of life and property incident to war, the continual effort and alarm attendant on a state of continual danger, will compel nations the most attached to liberty to resort for repose and security to institutions which have a tendency to destroy their civil and political rights. To be more safe, they, at length, become willing to run the risk of being less free."

Is this the way we are headed? Is this the way other democratic nations are headed? Is a garrison state or a completely regulated state inevitable or necessary in the face of the Communist threat? If not, how far can we go in central organization, in control, and in preparedness without losing what we are willing to fight for? Ponder these points as our eminent speakers during the rest of this week and during the coming week speak to you on the expanding role of the Federal Government. You will hear outstanding authorities, such as Dr. Schattschneider; Dr. Hilsman; Mr. Scammon, an authority on political parties, from the Governmental Affairs Institute; Mr. Jones, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission; and Dr. Bernstein, one of the authors of American Democracy in Theory and Practice.

The second key problem to keep in mind--the role of the military--is of vital importance to the Nation and of keen interest to us. Our Founding Fathers were quite opposed to an active military in peacetime. They feared military power. The Virginia Bill of Rights said that

standing armies in time of peace should be avoided as dangerous to liberty and that in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power. Of the many, many such expressions from our Founding Fathers, one of the most forthright was from James Madison, who said: "I must cordially agree that a standing army is one of the greatest mischiefs that could possibly happen."

Distrust of the military is so deeply rooted in American tradition that it has persisted throughout our national existence down to the present time. Senator Taft feared that the military was making the United States a militaristic and a totalitarian nation. Hanson W. Baldwin not so long ago found that--these are his words--"The growing influence of the military in American life is dangerous to our democratic liberties." He also found that the use of former military men in political positions is dangerous, because of their "military mind," which General Mundy referred to in his opening address. According to Baldwin, the military mind was defined as rational but not intuitive, disciplined but unable to grapple with intangibles. He believes that officers to the grade of colonel are yes-men, that generals are arrogant, closed to advice, and insulated. In short, he believes that the military mind is undemocratic and that the military is dangerous to democracy.

Personally, I am not at all convinced that there is any validity at all in that idea or that there even exists a military mind. In any event,

I have no objection to it, and I certainly don't feel insulted by the reference to the military mind. But I do feel that, if it is to be defined, the definition should include the statement that the military mind is characterized by intense loyalty to the United States; and when I say "the United States" I mean its principles and its institutions, as well as its territory.

Just as in the case of the problem of how much government we need, we are faced with the problem of how much military we need. As the external threat increases, we need more and more military; and, with more and more military, the role of the military within the Government expands.

Dr. Thomas Bailey, an outstanding authority on American diplomatic history, writing in 1948, said that a basic weakness in America is the inability of our people to recognize the intimate relationship between the military power and the national policy. He cites the incontrovertible dictum of Bismarck--"Political questions are questions of power"--but he says that we have a horror of power politics. The astute French statesman, Clemenceau, once said: "War is much too important and too serious to be left to the generals." However true that may be, foreign policy is now much too important and too serious to be left to the diplomats.

Ponder this problem as you hear one of our speakers, Mr. Walter Millis, an outstanding writer on civil-military relations, whose most

recent book is "Arms and the State."

I hope you enjoy the course on American Government to the extent that you are interested enough to do some more reading on the subject. You will find that there is a bare minimum of essential reading listed in the Curriculum Book; but even that is quite elementary. Of course it goes without saying that a rereading of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution is a sine qua non. But, in any event, you have plenty of time for reading of your own selection.

Now, I haven't discussed the mechanics and the procedures of the course, but these matters will be presented to you by the faculty moderators at the first discussion group meeting, which is this afternoon.

Let us turn briefly to a note of optimism, pessimism, and challenge--all in one. The primary virtue of our system is that it has within itself the means for orderly change and improvement. This very capacity for change constitutes the basic strength of America. Yet this strength, this capacity for growth and adaptation, faces a challenge at this point in history which will put it to a severe test as a result of today's pressures.

Dr. Erich Fromm said on a television program recently that America has the greatest society ever achieved, but he found that it is in danger because American man is more concerned with self, job, and material production than with society. Whether this is true or not, it is a fact that anti-intellectualism does persist in our country. To so many people, numbers and size are most important. We must have the most and the

biggest. So long as we can count and measure we don't have to think.

But thinking is an essential responsibility of democracy. Our Commander-in-Chief, President Eisenhower, emphasized this in his address to the graduating class of the United States Naval Academy in June 1958, when he said: "Military officers of today must concern themselves more with the problems of maintaining the peace (problems of government and society). Command of armed forces alone is not sufficient."

Now, in closing, let us see if we can wrap up this whole thing in a neat package. This grappling with intangibles is troublesome and annoying--besides, it taxes the military mind.

Let's turn back to our three initial questions:

What is the proper function of government?

What system of government can best perform this proper function?

Well, I think we have found answers to those first two questions, at least to our own satisfaction. Some of those gentlemen over there on the chart tried to confuse us, and as a matter of fact about one-half of the world does not agree with us.

The third question is: What are the legitimate powers of the Government and the right of the governed? That is the eternal question. It is the subject of orderly, gradual evolution and development. It has been the subject of violent controversy, and it is the subject of violent controversy right here in our own country today--the powers of the Government and the rights of the governed. Maybe it is the big problem

of our time. In any event, I leave it with you.

Now, the two key problems I suggested that you keep in mind--
how much government and the role of the military--are aspects of
this third question, vital aspects of the big problem of our time.

Thank you.