

THE CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY
OF CERTAIN OF THE FOUNDERS OF
AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

by

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INTRODUCTION

In the present stage of developing world governmental policies it seems especially necessary that those whose duty it is to formulate the educational policies of our school systems should make apparent the basic principles of our American government and consider the possibility of using these principles in the improvement of their educational policies.

In many times and places it is popularly said that this or that view of democracy had its origin in the ideas and writing of the Fathers, of those men who gave us our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution, and who before that latter document was written gave freely of their property, their fortunes, and indeed risked their honor and their lives to make possible an American government and an American people.

It has seemed, consequently, that it may be of some moment to go back to the ideas of the founders themselves and make an objective inquiry into what these men did say, as a matter of fact, concerning the various ideas and concepts that today we hear spoken of as necessary implications of democracy. From an analysis of whatever may be found, they said, it is then possible to draw whatever implications seem logical as to their beliefs.

It is perhaps true, even probably so, that until within the life of the present generation, many, if not most, of the people of our country took the term Democracy for granted, using it merely in a rather broad and vague symbol; a symbol so broad and vague as to give little concern as to either its meaning or its implications. But it seems reasonable to believe that the majority of the people of the United States today, if asked to consider and then to subscribe to some one or another of the more prominent political theories in vogue in Europe and America today--or even in Asia in so far as typical Americans are either interested or informed concerning Oriental affairs--would with considerable feeling and more intellectual consideration than ever before, accept and support the philosophy of government, and so of life, that the state exists for the people, or, as Lincoln said, the people believe "this country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it." Evidence is also convincing that democracy has as its chief competitor a governmental philosophy now exemplified by Hitler. Hitlerism reflects the other extreme in governing--the state exists for the state and the people under its laws have no rights apart from the government.

Those persons responsible for the content of our curriculum, especially in the social sciences, it seems, should

so construct the curriculum as to contrast the respective differences in the principles of these two theories of government, the democratic state and the totalitarian state. Since "the new education emphasizes the freedom of the learner"¹, the natural result of this contrast, perhaps, would be an appreciation of the basic principles underlying the form of government that now exists in the United States.

Even a casual consideration of the bibliography attached to this dissertation will show that it was not written except after a considerable amount of reading, and of reading a somewhat large variety of source material. There has been an endeavor to understand, unhampered by method, rule or doctrine, a real public issue. The freedom used in the handling of the historical materials bearing on this issue has contributed to a broader concept of democracy, in its relation to modern education, than would have been possible had the study been made to fall under any one single academic classification, such as history, economics, or philosophy.

Political thinking seems to be an integral part of man's search for truth. It belongs in the same category of life as religion and philosophy which man has incessantly tried to understand. The success or failure of each political proposal, however, seems to provide a basis for new

1. John Dewey, Experience and Education, pp. 10, 11.

political theories of future generations. Under the idea of democracy have appeared a multitude of political theories radically unlike in application and interpretation. These creeds, it seems, are usually developed to meet some emergency or to solve some problem, and so usually are in the first instance highly theoretical. Wiltse states,

It is the speculative thinkers like Hobbes or Marx who formulate these principles, within which more practical men, like Locke or Lenin, work out solutions demanded by the times.¹

It is so nearly a truism that one hardly needs to demonstrate it that the people of the United States, during the first century and more of its history, took the word democracy for granted. It was a shibboleth. So long as we ourselves lived in a world of agrarian possibilities no one seriously questioned a laissez faire philosophy of life, whether social, political, or economic. Whether or not we seriously practiced it at home, we believed that the democratic philosophy of government should and would universally prevail. Its spread over the western hemisphere was taken for granted. Except for the popular song imputed (wrongly it may be) to the marines, Mr. Taft's reference to our "little brown brothers" in the Philippines seemed to us entirely fitting. During the second decade of the century the United States rose as a man, almost, to

1. Charles Wiltse, The Jeffersonian Tradition, p. 5.

follow President Wilson in his eager wish to "make the world safe for democracy"--even to crossing the seas to battle.

Not until the sobering days of the post-war period was there much of an effort at any close analysis of the meaning of the term Democracy. Many took it most readily to mean, inherently at least, "manhood suffrage", and Andrew Jackson's successful struggle to deliver the powers of government to the common people seemed to mark the beginning of the present era. Others, especially those of a more philosophical turn of mind, headed perhaps by John Dewey, began to insist that democracy is a way of life. This view found its way into the philosophy of education before long, and today is exemplified by the authors of the Social Frontier, and by the writings of Dewey, Bode, Hullfish, Kilpatrick, Rugg, Childs, and others, and is finding its way into expression by the efforts of the leaders of the Progressive Education movement.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

It is possible to assume that the phase of political thought which broadly may be called democratic takes its rise in the sixteenth century. The era which produced such prominent figures as Luther and Calvin has been labeled the "Reformation". The role played by these two reformers in evolving our democratic ideals is not yet stated for Borgeaud explains that "Modern Democracy is the child of the Reformation, not of the reformers",¹ and the true meaning of the reformation is probably found not in its intention but in its final outcome. It becomes apparent that the ultimate goal of the reformers was to restore the principles of the early Christian Church, but in doing so the movement spread to include not only a reformation of the church but also of political policies of the state.

The religious views and actions of the reformers, it seems, were principally directed toward the authority of the Pope. The Church and the State were apparently one and reactions in one of the institutions had its effect in the other. Abbott states,

1. Charles Borgeaud, Rise of Modern Democracy, p. 2.

It is thought by many and it may not be greatly exaggerated that Catholicism has a living connection with Monarchy and Protestantism with Republicanism.¹

Apparently everything, even the power of life and death, was in the hands of the Roman Emperor. Several cities in this expansive empire managed to retain the name of free cities but they were without means, however, of protecting this democratic principle.² Harrison says,

A portion which might not exceed one-tenth enjoyed the benefit of citizenship whilst ninety percent of the actual dwellers within the walls might be slaves, freedmen, aliens, strangers, clients and camp-followers.³

It is obvious that the many were for the use of the few who had no right to share in any of the benefits of society's institutions.

The reformers, led by men such as Calvin and Luther, used two principles to break the authority of the Holy See: free inquiry and the "priesthood of all believers". Calvin declared if religious revolutions were to be lawful it was necessary to proclaim these two principles.⁴ These ideals, free inquiry or the right of everyone to open the Bible and read it, and the priesthood of all believers or the equality of all people within the church are guaranteed principles harbored in many constitutions of democratic governments.

1. Lyman Abbott, Rights of Man, p. 2.
2. Op. cit., p. 3.
3. Frederick Harrison, Meaning of History, p. 231.
4. L. S. Stebbing, Life and Times of John Calvin, p. xxi.

The reformers did not foresee political revolution nor did they desire one. On the contrary, they sought governmental support.¹ Calvin was called upon to apply the principles of politics contained in his Principles of Protestantism to the actual conduct of government.² The reformers did not seemingly wish to gain political control, but in substituting new ideals for the church they also created principles that directly affected the affairs of the state--a situation which, presumably, the reform leaders did not contemplate. Borgeaud states,

The authority of Rome meant monarchical authority. If the Divine Right of the pontiff might be disputed, why not that of kings? The primitive Church was democratic in its organization; to return to it meant to break with the conceived ideas, to make the community the visible centre of the Church, and the people the principal factor of social life.³

It is doubtful if any of these men realized where the path they trod was leading. Abbott suggests that Roman imperialism understood the meaning of this message, democracy,

perhaps even better than some who delivered it, and seeing very truly that these apostles had come to turn the world upside down, undertook to destroy the new spirit by wholesale persecutions.⁴

1. L. S. Stebbing, Life and Times of John Calvin, p. 3.
 2. George P. Gooch, History of English Democratic Ideals, p. 3.
 3. Charles Borgeaud, Rise of Modern Democracy, p. 3.
 4. Lyman Abbott, Rights of Man, p. 7.

It is possible to perceive that the religious, the educational, the industrial, and the political institutions of the Roman Empire were built on the assumption that the world is made for a few, and the many are to be the servants, while those of the early Hebrew nation, on the assumption that the world is made for all and that the few are the servants of the many. Christ embraced the democratic principle of this last assumption when he made the statement, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant."¹ Few will deny the statement that Christ was not one of the greatest of all social reformers.

Morley relates that the history of Europe from the first to the nineteenth century may be regarded as the history of the conflicts between these two conceptions of life and the social order, between the principles of democracy and the principles of monarchy, in which the original Hebrew conception triumphed over the Roman conception once entertained unquestioned throughout the civilized world. He also states that "the Empire was a political organization resting on military power; the church was a social organization made vital by conviction."²

One of the outstanding reformers of the sixteenth century was Martin Luther. It is generally agreed that Luther

1. Matthew; Chapter 23, verse 11.

2. Dennis Diderot, John Morley, V.1, p. 100.

never seriously reflected upon the matter of establishing political opinions. He did, however, insist upon one form of political activity and that was rebellion--rebellion in one direction, against the Pope. In 1545, Luther wrote,

The Pope is a mad wolf against whom the whole world takes up arms without waiting for the command of king or magistrate. And all who defend him must be treated like a band of robbers, be they kings, be they Caesars.

Luther insisted that a magistrate would not command anything contrary to the Law of Nature. While this is democratic in many respects, the method suggested for the punishing of certain types of criminals is today questionable.

It is possible to account for Luther and the ideals of democracy. Luther's ancestors were of the small farmer class of freemen and it is related that he took great pride in his free peasant origin. His parents, in accordance with the practice of the times, were strict disciplinarians. He even remarks that this excessive harshness eventually drove him into the monastery. He chose this life, Adams tells us, because

he was one of those unusual persons who are perpetually driven by a sense of personal guilt and sin, unfelt by the general run of men, and by a compelling necessity, to find in some way a counterbalancing sense of reconciliation with God.²

Luther was not the apostle of a political or social upheaval, but by "attacking the church", writes Bohmer:

1. Jacques B. Bossuet, Variations, Book VIII, p. 1.
2. George B. Adams, Civilization of the Middle Ages, p. 427.

Luther, without realizing it, at the same time provided the impetus for the abolition of the civilization, created and directed by it, and for the growth of a new civilization.¹

Obviously Luther was the champion of spiritual liberty only, but in this transformation the embers of political liberty lay smouldering. Luther's political and social views, Bohmer relates, were most "antiquated, medieval, and unborn".² Luther sees the ideal state as one in which the material welfare of the people is the first concern, and one of his democratic ideals is portrayed when he declares the government has no right to decide questions of belief, and "thoughts are not dutiable".

There must be some sects. Let the intellects clash and meet in controversy. If as a result some are led astray, let them go, such is the fortune of war. Where there is conflict and battle, there some must fall or be wounded.³

Luther would have the government take command only when controversies could not be settled by the scriptures. His opinion concerning private worship is democratic, for he says,

In their chambers also those of other religious convictions may adore and worship whomsoever they wish and as many gods as they want to.

1. Bohmer, Luther in the Light of Recent Research, p. 318.

2. Ibid., p. 303.

3. John Calvin, Institutes. Translated by John Allen, Book II, Chap. XV.

He also suggested that the relationship of state and religion was one of reverence and that political powers should have only duties but no rights.

Although Calvin's ideas of government as explained by him in the chapter on "Civil Government" in the Institutes is sometimes confusing and inconsistent, it is ever evident that he felt that some form of government was necessary. It was difficult, however, for him to decide which form was best. When pressed to indicate a preference, he stated that it would be for an aristocracy either pure or modified by some form of popular control.

Calvin admits that the natural feeling of the human mind is to hate tyrants, but with his usual contempt for natural inner powers, he makes it an evidence of respect to God to obey princes "by whatever means they have so become and though there is nothing they less perform than the duty of princes",¹

Calvin felt that the freedom of the will was decidedly limited, for he explained that man, before his fall, had free will; after the fall, he had freedom in respect to sin, and the true freedom of man lies in his being free to conform to the law of holiness.

It is apparent that the principle of sovereignty of the people and its realization in the modern state is clearly a product of the Reformation. Political thinkers whom

1. Institutes, Book IV, p. 20.

the Reformation inspired are able to trace the progress of democratic ideas step by step from the middle of the sixteenth century. From Hotman of the Huguenots down through the works of Rousseau, Knox, Milton, and Locke, runs this common thought of democracy, sometimes hard to distinguish but always to be found and serving to unite the political works of the long line of writers of the Reformation.¹

John Locke is usually called the theorist of the Revolution. His two Treatises on Civil Government became its textbook and in these papers he pointed out the main problem of the state--that of the conquest of freedom. He with Hobbes² insisted that from the "State of Nature" are born men's rights. The natural rights of men are those of Life, Liberty and Property. A corollary of these rights is the right of revolution. Reason, Locke declared, governs this natural state and the rights therein can only be realized by a contract with the whole community. This involves the necessity of majority rule. Governments sometimes abuse their powers so the temptation to usurp will not become too great. It is the duty of the government to evolve rules to preserve the natural rights of the people and also to enforce these laws. A collective body of states Locke calls "Federative".

1. Charles Borgeaud, Rise of Democracy, pp. 77-90.

2. Harold J. Laski, Political Thought from Locke to Bentham, pp. 36-55.

The American mind, at the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, because of the encroaching imperialism, apparently developed a liberalism that was militant in purpose. It was vigorously individualistic. Dunning¹ states that its ideas were,

an original, pre-political state of nature, in which men are free and equal; a contractual procedure by which the free and equal individuals establish government for their joint and several welfare; a body of rights in every individual secure under all circumstances from denial by the government; the indefeasible sovereignty of the people expressed ultimately in the right of revolution; the restriction of all governmental organs by reciprocal checks and balances and by the careful prescriptions of a written constitution.

This right of revolution as expressed by Locke was welcomed no doubt by many of the early colonists.

Another political theory which probably had little influence upon the early Republic but which later in the eighteenth century, during the Jacksonian era, caused much concern, was the philosophy expressed by Rousseau. His ideas as stated in the Social Contract gave to the common masses enormous power.²

Martin³ relates that two liberal traditions flowed from the eighteenth century. Voltaire represented the individualistic tradition which emphasizes reason, science and individual excellence and responsibility. The second tradition

1. W. A. Dunning, Political Theories, p. 92.

2. Ibid., p. 16.

3. Everett Dean Martin, Liberty, Chapter V.

was represented by Rousseau. It emphasizes faith, theology, collective sovereignty and the uprising of the people.

Martin¹ explains clearly the ideas back of the Colonial Mind and the transformation that followed in the statement:

There is not much evidence that the leaders of the American Revolution were greatly influenced, at least directly, by Rousseau. They seem to have derived their liberal traditions from Locke and the old English liberals. But when the generation who had carried through the War for Independence passed away, a change began to come over the American mind. It became more romantic, more democratic. The franchise was extended. With the success of the Jacksonian movement the old political leadership of the educated classes was repudiated. The power and influence of the rank and file increased enormously. The public expressions of civilization in America became colored to an extent hitherto unknown in our history by the interests, prejudices, beliefs and self-idealization of the common masses. The shifting of the cultural center of gravity was felt, not only in politics but in religion, in art, in journalism, in literature. Everywhere it tended to lower the quality of leadership. It was then that the old liberalism, derived from England, began to decline, and a new liberalism appeared modified by the ideals and enthusiasms and social hopes of the average man.

Statesmen such as Burke saw that the Colonies did not contain the materials for founding a constitutional monarchy or a powerful aristocracy, and that a great part of the traditional habits and observances that operated in England could not operate with equal force in a new country. It was then necessary to adopt other means with the same ends in view.

1. Everett Dean Martin, Liberty, p. 176.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL THEORIES

I. Oliver Cromwell

Cromwell grew up in a moderately prosperous household in which Puritan piety and strictness of morals were old traditions. Harrison explains that "for generations the Cromwells were conspicuous for loyalty, chivalry, and public spirit."¹ No matter how bitterly his enemies hated him, they were compelled to confess that his private and domestic life were exemplary.

Cromwell's first political appearance was before Parliament in 1628. During the course of debate he spoke of "Popish intrigues" conducted by a preacher in the neighborhood. Because of this he was greatly disturbed, for he remarked that if these were the means of advancing in the church, what can people expect? Secrecy, he affirmed, had no place in the policy of the present form of government.

In the system of government the Protectorate, established at the advent of Cromwell's rule, is usually regarded as a temporary dictator set up to close an epoch of revolution and war. "Taken broadly, it may be regarded as a cross

1. Frederick Harrison, Oliver Cromwell, p. 2.

between the Elizabethan system and the Agreement of the People."¹

Constitutional right, Cromwell maintained, was not a part of the Protectorate. All government, he insisted, in time of war or peace, rested on the sword. "Whenever a crisis came . . . the soldiers would be called to the front and appear, what they were in reality, the arbiters of the political world."² Cromwell maintained that the first duty of the Protectorate was to keep order and peace throughout the domain. Apart from its dictatorial character, it is argued that Cromwell's Protectorate was quite just and wise. Neal is of the opinion that justice and law now opened a new era: education was reorganized, universities reformed, and

if there was a man in England who excelled in any faculty or science, the Protector would find him out and reward him according to his merit.

Not in accord with general opinion, Cromwell believed in religious toleration, and

stoutly he contended with Parliaments and Councils for the Quakers, Jews, Anabaptists, Socinians, and even crazy blasphemers.³

Special securities for religious liberty seemed to find a place in Cromwell's scheme of government.

1. Samuel R. Gardiner, Cromwell's Place in History, p. 86.

2. Ibid., p. 89.

3. Frederick Harrison, Oliver Cromwell, p. 216.

The democratic idea of a constitutional government became a known quality in Cromwell's scheme of thinking, for in his third speech to Parliament he propounds this principle:

In every government there must be something somewhat fundamental, somewhat like a Magna Charta, which should be unalterable. That parliaments should not make themselves perpetual is fundamental. Liberty of conscience is a fundamental. That the command of the militias should be placed so equally that no one party in Parliament or out of Parliament have a power of ordering it is a fundamental.¹

But Cromwell could not trust Parliament to preserve the fundamentals:

Of what assurance is a law to prevent an evil it be in the same way legal to unlay it again? Are such laws to be lasting?²

Cromwell would have an ideal government consist of a parliament, elected by "worthy members of the nation" assisted by such an executive as was suitable for the interests of the country. These, he ventured, would in ordinary conditions carry out the functions of the government but if any difficulties should arise a single person should be the dictator, resigning his power after the circumstance which made it necessary had passed. The dictatorial authority assumed by Cromwell sufficed his desire for power, for when the proposal was made that he assume the title of king

1. Third Speech, September 12, 1654.

2. Ibid.

he remarked that he had no desire to rule in that capacity.¹ Perhaps Cromwell foresaw the fate of the English rulers after the advent of these democratic ideals in which he believed, and smothered all suggestions and desires that he become a sovereign ruler.

The civil government of Cromwell apparently enjoyed a period of unbroken prosperity and its democratic ideals were displayed and practiced with astounding success. Harrison writes,

No government had ever been so tolerant in things of the mind. None so just in its dealings with classes and interests; none so eager to suppress abuses, official tyranny, waste and speculation. No government had been so distinctly modern in spirit; so penetrated with desire for reform, honesty, capacity. For the first time England had the republican sense of social duty to the state which began to replace the old spirit of personal loyalty to a sovereign. For the first and only time in modern Europe, morality and religion became the sole qualifications insisted on by a court.²

In analyzing the political theory believed and practiced by Cromwell, it is possible, with reservations, to list some of his democratic ideals. Among these are freedom of the will, justice, understanding, honesty, equality, and a form of religious liberty.

It is argued that the English Empire felt the influence of Cromwell's principles of governing. Firth states that

1. Francois P. G. Guizot, Republique, II, p. 273.
2. Frederick Harrison, Oliver Cromwell, p. 208.

"no English ruler did more to shape the future of the land he governed than Oliver Cromwell."¹

II. The Quakers and William Penn

In addition to the discontented political forces of the seventeenth century, the English government faced enemies of a widely different nature. Among these were the religious sect known as the Quakers. The theory as to their origin is that they sprang from the Anabaptists or the Ranters.²

Many of the early Quaker missionaries who began to wander through the country were charged with scattering seditious books and papers of communistic tendency to the disturbance of the peace of the Commonwealth.³ Evidently their principles were somewhat undemocratic for Cromwell became quite concerned over their activities. In 1665 he wrote Thurloe:

Our most considerable enemies are the Quakers. Some of our soldiers have been perverted by them, and I think their principles and practices not very consistent with civil government, much less with the discipline of an army. Some think them to have no design; but I am not of that opinion. Their counterfeited simplicity renders them the more dangerous.⁴

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1. Sir Charles Firth, Oliver Cromwell, p. 486.
 2. Charles Leslie, Answer to the Switch, VI, pp. 297-315.
 3. John C. Hamilton, Quarter Sessions, pp. 164-165.
 4. Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, pp. 518, 530.

That their actions bordered on the communistic is questionable. There is some evidence that in Holland a great amount of excitement was caused when a Quaker apostle preached that all goods should be common.¹

Cotton Mather's account of the Quaker activities in the American settlements presents an excellent picture of their political ideas perhaps better than in England itself:

When they came over in 1657 they induced many to oppose good order, sacred and civil. They manifested an intolerable contempt of authority. It is very enraging to hear these wretches saying among the people, 'We deny thy God, thy Christ; thy Bible is the word of the devil.' There was the frenzy of the old Circumcissions in these Quakers. I appeal to all the reasonable part of mankind whether the infant colonies have not cause to guard themselves against these villains.

Their reply to Mather was that they could not own a government to be of God unless the light of Christ in the conscience witnessed to it.

Mather and others quickly recognized another form of Quakerism decidedly different from the old radical form. They were then obliged to confess that the Quakers were for righteous laws, righteous government, and for none to rule by force.

William Penn, historians assert, justly exemplifies the political, religious, and moral ideals of the Quakers in the colonies.² In Penn's Plan for the Peace of Europe

¹. George Gooch, History of English Democratic Ideals, p. 276. ². Edward Channing, History of the United States, p. 102.

many of his ideals are embodied. The Quakers, like those of today, led by Penn, were passionately opposed to war, for he declared,

He must not be a man, but a statue of brass or stone whose bowels do not melt when he beholds the bloody tragedies of this war in Hungary, Germany, Flanders, Ireland, and the sea. . . What can we desire better than peace but the grace to use it?¹

This democratic principle of peace, so fervently upheld and practiced by the Quakers, is considered by many to be their only outstanding democratic ideal. Abbott analyzes this Quaker principle very well when he states,

Democracy is utterly opposed to war; the military spirit and the democratic spirit are essentially antagonistic to each other. Wars may be sometimes necessary . . . but if so they are a necessary evil. . . For war can only be carried on successfully under an autocracy.²

Penn felt that justice was the only means to realize peace between the people and the government. He urged the formulating of just laws and non-political courts. Justice, he maintained, would prevent strife and also end it. "Thus peace," Penn declares, "is maintained by justice, which is the fruit of government, as government is from society and society from consent."³

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1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III.
 2. Lyman Abbott, Rights of Man, p. 2.
 3. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III.

Many of the views developed by Penn are recognizable in the plans of modern peace congresses. Penn inquired into the policies of nations, the causes of war, the conditions of peace, and the many phases of international relationships. He insisted that the mark of a statesman was his ability to secure and maintain peaceful relations with other nations. He was of the opinion that in all cases peace was more readily obtained by justice than by war.

In Penn's proposal for a Congress for Europe, he suggested that all disputes between nations be decided by the wisest and justest men acting as representatives from every state. The decision of these judges was to be final and their judgments were to be enforced by the allied powers of Europe. He failed to state, however, what action was to be taken against an offender. It has been suggested that he would have recommended any plan except war.¹

At an early date Penn realized that man did not have the right to be a judge in his own case, and since society had advanced from the ruder to the more civilized form, individuals tended to make laws and bind themselves to submit to certain restrictions. These restrictions, he pointed out, were principally those of giving up their old rights of judging and avenging their own quarrels in exchange for the rights and restrictions for the good of society. In Penn's

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III.

democracy the rights of the individual were considered only when these rights were to benefit society as a whole.

The democratic principle of the brotherhood of man is vividly evident in the belief of many Quakers. Woolman writes:

Men having power too often missapplied it; that though we made slaves of the negroes and the Turks made slaves of the Christians, I believe that the liberty was the natural right of all men equally. . . I believe liberty is their right.¹

It seems logical to conclude that the fundamental principles and outstanding democratic ideal of the Quakers was their desire for peace. Their early persecution in England aroused in them the desire for a more peaceful life in another country. There is every reason to believe that Penn's Plan for Peace in Europe was one of his most cherished ideas. The principles embodied in this plan, Penn realized, had to be applied in the colonies if the colonists were to realize another fundamental right, the "natural right" which he called liberty.

Penn argued that religious freedom was a basic principle of a democratic government. In the "Frame of Government" he writes that all persons believing that the "one almighty and eternal God to be the creator, upholder and ruler of the world" should in no way be turned on or molested for their

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III.

religious persuasion or practice. However, Christians only, he thought, should have any benefits from the government.

To the democratic ideals of peace, liberty and religious freedom upheld by the Quakers, it is possible to reason that the principles of the Brotherhood of Man can rightfully be added. Penn was anti-slavery beyond any doubt. He felt that all men were brothers and that all should be treated with the same respect.

The spirit of the democratic ideals practiced by the Quakers is justly summarized by Penn when he writes,

Love, forgive, help, and serve one another,
and let the people learn by your example as
well as by your power the happy life of con-
cord.

III. Samuel Adams

Samuel Adams is often called the "father of the Revolution". Though probably less interested in religion than other revolutionary leaders, and although he came from a very religious family, it is reported that he carried his theological state of mind over into the political field. There is also a possibility that John Locke furnished Adams with most of his political ideas, much as Aristotle supplied the content for the philosophy of the medieval scholars.

Facts show that Adams was a failure in the business world. These shortcomings, Harlow points out, caused Adams to become radical in many of his ideas and developed in him an "inferiority complex". Before 1764, few men considered Adams as one of the leading political figures. He depicts Adams as one of the important personal agents during the Revolution, and during this period he and his associates devoted most of their time to the task of convincing the people they were oppressed. At this point, Harlow states, "The Revolution was not a spontaneous movement, the result of genuine uprising, but rather the product of something not so very different from agitation and propaganda."¹

The course of events leading to the actual revolution seems to fail in proving that the English oppression, as such, caused the colonists to revolt. It is thought by many that a group of men led by Adams succeeded in convincing the public that this "mole hill was a mountain" and something in the form of war should be done about it. Although many of the principles of Adams appear democratic on the surface, it is possible that he used questionable tactics. Adams boasted at one time that "he never looked forward in life; never planned; never laid a scheme or formed a design of laying up anything for himself or other after him."²

1. Ralph V. Harlow, Samuel Adams, p.
2. John Adams, Works, II, p. 238.

Perhaps Adams sought power to overcome his feeling of inferiority, and after years of failure he doubtlessly experienced a keen satisfaction from the outcome obtained in the role of the political agitator. It is also obvious that Adams had a great deal of enthusiasm for "liberty", but he was not the kind to be stopped by merely legal obstacles. Since he wrote with a great deal of fervor, the legal deficiency of his arguments perhaps became blotted out.¹

The politics of Adams, it seems, were from two maxims: rulers should have little and the people should have much. The rank of rulers is from the good they do, and the differences among the people only from personal virtue. His world was an open world for genius and for industry.

Historians explain that Adams' object was to make the whole province responsible for his radical principles and to develop a strong political organization.² The colonies apparently were seeking a philosophy that would justify their independent position and Adams' doctrine seemed to be the answer. The colonists obviously concluded that a set of principles that conformed to conditions as they were was worth more for practical purposes than any logical system.

1. Claude B. Van Tyne, Causes of the War of Independence, p. 211.

2. Warren, Adams' Letters, p. 29.

It is possible to believe that the democratic ideals professed by Samuel Adams were based primarily upon what he calls the "first law of nature", and that of "self preservation". He argues that it is the duty of every man to preserve himself and if he is to realize this right to live he must have freedom, real and personal property, and also the right to protect these in the best manner he deems possible.

Man, Adams believed, while fully recognizing the importance of individuality, is naturally a social being. It is the right of every man to chose, enter, and leave any society, provided he meets the demands and limitations of this society for so long a time as he is a member of it.

He was of the opinion that religion was not included in all positive and civil laws. He believed man had a right, in or out of society, to worship as his conscience dictated.

There is one natural liberty Adams maintained that is the right of every man--freedom from all superior powers on earth. The law of nature is man's ruler. If a man desires to live in society, he must be willing to pay his just quota for the support of the government, the law, and the constitution. He believed that governments have no right to take whatever they please from society. The community has a right to say who is to govern and how much in the form of taxes is to be paid for the support of this institution.

IV. John Quincy Adams

John Quincy Adams, to many people, is the most interesting and suggestive personage in the period immediately following the Revolution. Few of our great statesmen had an individuality so marked; perhaps no other has combined so many humors and prejudices with so much ability, liberality, and fine character. Throughout his lifetime he was in the public eye and in whatever position he was placed he made his peculiar temperament, his strong views and intense determinations keenly felt.

Historians agree that because of certain obvious faults, Adams was not as great a statesman as Jefferson or Jackson, yet he was probably one of the best equipped men ever to enter the presidency.¹ Many failures marked his administration, presumably because this was a period of sectional jealousies and factional quarrels, and Adams' unyielding temper seemed unfit to cope with either.

Adams seems to have been an aristocrat and he had temperamental difficulties in understanding the views of the common people. He did not attempt to win their favor and they were unable, in turn, to understand his views. This lack of understanding, combined with his irritability

1. John B. McMaster, People of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War, p. 237.

and pugnacity, it is shown, crippled him in diplomacy and in congress.¹ It is obvious that every word he wrote, every speech he made, reflected his warlike, sensitive, independent Puritanism. Since the theory of democracy is in direct opposition to the theory of aristocracy, Adams no doubt experienced much difficulty in trying to conform to the wishes of these people whom, for most of his life, he had considered inferior to himself. It seems that Adams personally accepted the individualistic theory of democracy because it resembled the theory of aristocracy to a greater degree than did the collectivism theory propounded in his writings.

In 1764, Adams gave to the public his first printed work--A Dissertation on the Canon Feudal Law. The object of the work was to show that the colonists had consented to a virtual exile so that they might free themselves from the powers of the pope, the monarchy, or the aristocracy of the Continent. Here Adams calls on the people to study and to understand their rights and privileges.

Be it remembered that liberty must, at all hazard, be supported. We have a right to it derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers earned it, and bought it for us at the expense of their ease, their estate, their pleasure, and their blood. And liberty cannot be preserved without the general knowledge among the people, who have a right, from the frame of

1. McMasters, op. cit., p. 288.

of their nature, to knowledge as their Creator who does nothing in vain has given them understandings and a desire to know; and besides this, they have a right, and indisputable, unalienable, indefeasible right, to that most dreaded and envied kind of knowledge, I mean of the character and conduct of their rulers. Rulers are no more than attorneys, agents, trustees of the people; and if the cause, the interest and trust is insidiously betrayed or wantonly trifled away, the people have a right to revoke the authority, that they themselves have disputed, and to constitute other and better agents, attorneys and trustees.¹

Like his father, Adams was a Federalist. He states in his letters that he is a natural conservative and believes thoroughly in a strong, central government and a broad construction of the constitution. Politics apparently had little meaning to Adams for he went with his party only so far as he believed his party right and its proceedings calculated to promote the welfare of the country, but no party claims could induce him to sanction any measure which he believed prejudicial to the interest of the people.²

Although Adams believed in a strong central government he was also of the opinion that one of the fundamental rights of the people was that they elect their own rulers and if they grew tired of the existing government, they should then exercise their constitutional right of amending it. Adams felt that the country belonged to the people and that the principles of any political party were undemocratic that were adverse to the interest of the people.

1. Webster, Discourse in Commemoration of Adams and Jefferson,

2. McMasters, op. cit., p. 269.

Rulers, he maintained, are necessary, but provisions should be made to hold the rulers in check lest they become too powerful. A democracy, he pointed out, tends to promote the welfare of the greatest number because it comes from the majority, while the aristocracy tends to concentrate wealth in the hands of the minority. He fully realized both democracy and aristocracy would make mistakes, but he considered the evils of a democracy to be fewer than those of the aristocracy.

Adams faithfully argued that the basic principle of a democracy was the freedom of choice.

V. Benjamin Franklin

An outstanding characteristic of Benjamin Franklin was his strong inclination to assist in public affairs.¹ It is obvious that Franklin had a full measure of the social and public spirit and at the same time he was deeply devoted to his private affairs. As the originator of the American Philosophical Society, whose object was to promote useful knowledge, he made it evident that education was an important factor in his concept of society as it should be.

The possibility of having a new form of government for the colonies was not expressed by Franklin, it seems

1. Parton, Life of Franklin, p. 7.

probably, until he heard of actual bloodshed in Lexington. Until this time, Franklin looked upon the king as the supreme ruler.¹

The actual part taken by Franklin in framing the constitution is not known, but it is generally supposed that its principles were approved by him. The provisions for rotation of office, right of suffrage, freedom of the press, and religious toleration were fervently defended by Franklin later in life, so it can be assumed that he had much to do with their finding a place in the constitution.

It is reported that Franklin was the author of the most remarkable feature of the proposed constitution--the single legislative assembly. This feature, we learn, never became a part of the notable document.² During the Constitutional Convention, when its members were deciding the policies of the constitution, several articles of the Articles of the constitution failed to meet Franklin's approval, but he states,

It therefore astonishes me, sir, to find this system approaching so near perfection as it does; and I think it will astound our enemies, who are waiting with confidence to hear that our councils are confounded, like those of the builders of Babel, and that our States are on the point of separation, only to meet hereafter for the purpose of cutting one another's throats. . . . On the whole, sir, I cannot help expressing a wish that

1. Dr. Struber, Memora of Franklin, pp. 211-214.

2. Sidney George Fisher, The True Benjamin Franklin, p. 359.

every member of the Convention who still may have objections to it, would with me on this occasion doubt a little of his own infallibility, and to make manifest our unanimity, put his name to this instrument.¹

As early as 1728 Franklin relates his dissatisfaction with the religion with which he was acquainted, and he drew up a creed of his own because he said he felt that man needs something to worship. He apparently recognized the stability of religious principles, and in his idea of democracy these religious ideals were incorporated.

Franklin was of the opinion that in a democracy there ought to be no offices of profit:

There are two passions which have a powerful influence in the affairs of men. These are ambition and avarice; the love of power and the love of money. Separately each of these has a great force in prompting men to action, but, when united in view of the same object, they have in many minds the most violent effects. Place before the eyes of such men a post of honor that shall at the same time be a place of profit, and they will move heaven and earth to obtain it. The vast number of places it is, that render the British government so tempestuous. The struggles which are perpetually dividing the nation, distracting its councils, hurrying it sometimes into fruitless and mischievous wars and often compelling a submission to dishonorable terms of peace. And of what kind are the men that will strive for this profitable preeminence, through all the bustle of Caval, the heat of contention, the infinite mutual abuse of parties, tearing to pieces the best of characters? It will be the bold and violent, the men of strong passions and indefatigable activity in their selfish pursuits. These will thrust themselves into your government and be your rulers. And these, too, will be mistaken in the expected happiness of their situations,

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. I, No. 1.

for their vanquished competitors, of the same spirit, and from the same motives will perpetually be endeavoring to distress their administration, thwart their measures, and render them odious to the people.

He maintained that the pleasure of serving their country and of being true patriots were motives enough for men to give part of their time to the public without receiving compensation beyond the payment of actual expenses while in service. This plan was practiced by Franklin, it is noted, during the three years he was governor of Pennsylvania.

The outstanding representative men among the founders of the American republic, it becomes apparent, were conspicuous in their time for their condemnation of wars between nations, and were stern advocates of legal and logical means of correcting international disputes. Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and John Quincy Adams all spoke strong words on the subject.¹ Franklin has been called an American citizen of the world, for almost one-third of his life, records show, was spent in England and France in service of the American people.² Ever before the eyes then were the devastating effects of war, politically, socially, economically, and morally. He utterly detested war and condemned it at every opportunity. Sparks writes, "He was an enemy toward it in all of its forms and disguises."³

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III, p. 243.

2. Ibid.

3. Jared Sparks, Life and Work of Franklin, p. 534.

Franklin was of the opinion that it was on this subject that men most conspicuously failed to use their common sense and human sentiment. "All Europe," he wrote in a letter to Josiah Quincy, "might be a great deal happier with a little more understanding," and "there never was a good war or a bad peace."

Many of Franklin's letters and writings embraced the theory that all were citizens of the world and all men are brothers. In a letter to David Hartley, December 1, 1789, he wrote:

God grant that not only the love of liberty but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his feet anywhere on its surface and say, 'This is my country'.

Perhaps he believed democracy to be as Abbott states:

A great religious faith; a superstitious faith, if you will, but a great religious faith. It is faith in man. It is not merely good will toward man; . . . Autocracy might be that; it is faith in man; autocracy is never that.¹

Of the many democratic ideals Franklin propounded, his arguments concerning peace and the settling of international disputes seem outstanding. Democracy demands peace, he maintained, but unlike many other statesmen of that period, he did not believe in going to war to obtain peace. He was of the opinion that all controversies could be settled

¹ Abbott, Rights of Man, p. 196.

by legal and logical conferences and congresses. This is possible, he argued, because "we are citizens of the World." Classes of society had no place in his democratic scheme. All men are brothers, he maintained, and should be treated with equal consideration. Worship as you choose was his motto, but have some creed and follow it. Order and justice, he pointed out, were the key tools to operate a democratic government.

Sparks gives an excellent picture of the ideals of Franklin:

His single aim was to promote the happiness of his fellowmen by enlarging their knowledge, improving their conditions, teaching them practical lessons of wisdom and prudence, and inculcating the principles of rectitude and the habits of a virtuous life.¹

VI. George Washington

It is the consensus of opinion among historians that, with the exception of Alexander Hamilton, Washington was the only person who grasped and realized the probable growth and future of the United States.²

From the beginning of the republic, it is apparent that Washington heartily approved of its principles and its development. In 1783, he wrote to Hamilton "to see the Union of these states established upon liberal and permanent principles and an inclination to contribute my mite in pointing

1. Jared Sparks, Life and Works of Franklin, p. 534.

2. Claude G. Bowers, Jefferson and Hamilton, pp. 25-53.

out the defects of the present constitution, are equally great." These defects, Washington believed to be mainly in the necessity of a better central government:

There are four things which I humbly conceive as essential to the well-being, I may venture to say, to the existence, of the United States as an independent power: first, an indissoluble Union of the states under one federal head. Second, a regard to public justice. Third, the adoption of proper peace establishment; and fourth, the prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which induces them to forget their local prejudices and policies: to make these mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity; and in some instances to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community. . . These are the pillars upon which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. . . Liberty is the basis.¹

Washington was equally perturbed by the contempt shown by the foreign nations and the generally sinking of the national reputation. In 1786, he wrote a letter to Jay, which stated: "I do not conceive how we can exist long as a nation without having lodged somewhere a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the state government extends over the several states."² The vital point in maintaining a Union, Washington believed, was not only the need of a national government that would deal with the individual citizens, but also one that would develop an adequate foreign policy.

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. I, No. 13.
2. Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 99.

Again, it seems, one of the leaders of the republic believed one of the basic principles of a democracy was that of having peaceful relationships at home and abroad. The basis of both the foreign and national policy was peace, for we must recover, he said, from "this convalescent state" and a predominant motive has been to endeavor to give time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanely speaking, command of its own destinies. "Peace alone," Washington argued, "is the only means of giving the new government an opportunity to organize and meet the conditions of its well being."

Neutrality, Washington said, was the only means of maintaining peace, and isolation was a concomitant factor. Because of geographic location, he accepted the policy of isolation and it was impossible, he thought, to act in close harmony with anyone without destroying our peace and discarding our whole principle of neutrality.

The peace policy advocated by Washington, Wriston relates, presumably was the instrument copied in the Jay Treaty. Its principles of arbitration for the settlement of irritating questions between nations which might cause war were righteously upheld and advocated by Washington.

It is a remarkable evidence that he was a leader, and a singular triumph that Jefferson would be compelled to take Washington's essential ideals as his own to epitomize and complete his policy, and that the ultimate verdict, a generation later, should come from the pen of James Monroe.¹

Washington's addresses to the American churches include many of his ideas concerning the democratic principle of religious freedom. The spirit of fraternity of the churches he deemed necessary for a true republic. To the Baptist churches in Virginia, he wrote:

If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the constitution framed in the convention where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and, if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution. For you doubtless remember that I have often expressed my sentiments that every man conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.²

The following words, addressed to the Hebrews of Savannah, are equally impressive:

1. Wriston (Minnesota History), Washington's Foreign Policy, p. 26.

2. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III, No. 65.

I rejoice that a spirit of liberality and philanthropy is much more prevalent than it formerly was among the enlightened nations of the earth, and that your brethren will benefit thereby in proportion as it shall become still more extensive. Happily, the people of the United States of America have, in many instances, exhibited examples worthy of imitation, the salutary influence of which will doubtless extend much farther if gratefully enjoying those blessings of peace which under the favor of heaven have been obtained by fortitude in war, they shall conduct themselves with reverence to the Deity and charity toward their fellow-creatures. May the same wonder-working Deity who long since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors and planted them in the promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dew of heaven, and to make the inhabitants of every participate in the temporal and spiritual blessings of that people whose God is Jehovah.¹

It seemed to be Washington's sincere wish that all should enjoy religious freedom, and the time would never come when religious disputes would endanger the peace of the colonies.

Washington laid plans for the development of democratic ideals through a system of national education. Conflicting opinions apparently caused the system to be discarded. He argued that education under the auspices of the federal government would be the surest way to provide public happiness. The curriculum would have included the principles of politics and good government. The project was one of Washington's favorite ideas. Since the system did not materialize, its effectiveness in the establishment of principles will never be known.

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. III, No. 65.

It is apparent that Washington was influenced by conservative ideas, but statesmen such as Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams

enjoyed one attribute in common, and only one in common: they were men of elastic mind, sensitive to the quickening impulse of a new time, swift to grasp a fresh vision of public duty and to present their solution in a form capable of rallying public opinion to its support.¹

It seems logical to believe that Washington had visions of a rich future for the American Union. He felt that the present moment was of little importance to the good of the Union. Prejudices, unreasonable jealousies, and local interests, Washington argued, must yield to reason and liberality if the right of life and liberty and property were to be realized. The preservation of the Union, he felt, was of the utmost importance.

Hence, likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican liberty.²

The Union, he declared, is the main prop of liberty. "Beware of entangling alliances, if your government is to be preserved, and observe good faith and justice toward all nations." He maintained that neutrality was the only stand to take. Religion and morality are indispensable

1. Charles A. Beard, Unique Function of Education in American Democracy, p. 19.

2. Old South Leaflets, Vol. I, No. 4.

supports, he argued, to political prosperity. It is the right of the people to make and alter the constitution and it is also their duty to obey the established government.

Washington's writings are filled with the idea that unity of government is the essential factor of any government. He writes,

The Union is a main edifice of your near independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize.¹

VII. Thomas Jefferson

Men who knew Jefferson remarked how little there was in his personal appearance that exemplified the powerful, dominating leader and disciplinarian he was. It was noted that his conversation was "loose and rambling", but "he scattered information wherever he went, and some even brilliant sentiments sparkled from him." People who classify Jefferson as an aristocrat do so probably because of his ancestors. He himself dismissed the idea with the statement that his mother traced "his pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let everyone ascribe the faith and merit he chooses." His father was a middle-class farmer, and it seems logical to believe that from him Jefferson received his earliest and most lasting ideas.

1. Old South Leaflets, Vol. I, No. 4.

In a convincing manner, Dodd explains why Jefferson was democrat:

It is not difficult . . . to see how the great principle of Jefferson's life--absolute faith in democracy--came to him. He was the product of the first West in American history; he grew up with men who ruled their country well, who fought the Indians valiantly. . . Jefferson loved his backwoods neighbors and they in turn loved him.¹

Democracy in Jefferson was inherent, and his dislike of the aristocratic system amounted to a prejudice.² It seems that Jefferson's ultimate purpose was to blot out every trace of autocracy. He invited the aristocrats to hate him and appealed constantly to the middle-class yeomanry.³ During the period when he was ambassador to France, although royalty entertained him in the society of Paris, he would not accept its system. While in France it seems that he was principally concerned with the welfare of the common man, and he relates from his findings that the French people "are ground to powder by their form of government."⁴ It seems apparent that his probable interests in America would also be for the middle class.

Bowers explains that "Jefferson was a humanitarian ahead of his time", for he wrote passionate words concerning the mistreatment of the German prisoners, the abolition

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1. William B. Dodd, Statesman of the Old South, p. 23.
 2. Claude G. Bowers, Jefferson and Hamilton, p. 97.
 3. John Fiske, Essays, p. 148.
 4. Ford L. Paul, ed. Works, pp. 81-82.

of capital punishment from treason, and though he was a slave-holder, his slaves were treated with utmost consideration and respect.¹ His attitude toward slavery is clearly expressed in a letter written to Warville: "It is decent of me to avoid too public a demonstration of my wishes to see it (slavery) abolished."²

Wiltse argues, however, that Jefferson's humanitarianism is

always of the head rather than the heart, although ever the champion to the common man, he remains always aloof from the masses; and if he claims equality for all men, it is not because he reasons that they must be so--his is rather a rational world in which emotion must give place to logic--he could not doubt that the world order was rational and therefore ultimately good.³

Study the mistakes made by others, Jefferson reasoned, and you will avoid making the same mistakes.

The political philosophy of Jefferson rests on two basic assumptions: that the end of life is individual happiness and that the purpose of the state is to secure and increase that happiness.⁴ In a letter to John Page, Jefferson subscribes to this philosophy:

1. Ford L. Paul, op. cit., pp. 101-102.
 2. Paul, ed., Works, VI, p. 428.
 3. Charles M. Wiltse, Jeffersonian Tradition in American Democracy, p. 41.
 4. Ibid., p. 203.

Perfect happiness, I believe, was never intended by the Deity to be the lot of one of His creatures in this world; but that he has very much put in our power the nearness of our approach to it, is what I have steadfastly believed.¹

The ultimate goal of a government, Jefferson maintained, was to further the material and spiritual well-being of man. A government, then, is the voice of the people and is responsible to the people. Among the elements he believed necessary for happiness were liberty, security in the possession of material goods, and freedom from arbitrary coercion by others.² These elements, he called natural rights and since man is a social being, he felt that some form of government must be set up to keep men from infringing on the natural rights of others.

Jefferson reasoned that complete freedom could not be realized under any form of government, and since pure democracy was impractical, the lesser of the evils then was representative democracy. This he called the Republic. Every man was a potential ruler and it was his duty to serve if the people so desired. The good government is realized only when there is an enthusiastic interest by all in public affairs.

1. Federal edition, Writings, I, p. 443.
2. Charles M. Wiltse, op. cit., p. 203.

Jefferson's interest in public education was even greater than the interest demonstrated by Washington. Not only was he personally concerned but his activity exemplified interest in education and all of its branches. Beard relates that Jefferson was

a college graduate, a student of the classics, a leader in public affairs, interested in every branch of art, science, and letters; eager to make and deep the cultural foundations of democracy, Jefferson dedicated years of his life to the consideration and promotion of education in all of its phases, from elementary instruction to advanced research in universities.¹

The thought that gave Jefferson his greatest pleasure was that he was the founder of the University of Virginia.²

His scheme of education for the state of Virginia made it possible for elementary schools to be within the reach of all and the institutions of higher learning were to be relatively close to all students. Jefferson's University was to be of the highest type, "dedicated to the freedom of the mind and unlimited research for truth." The motto he chose for the University of Virginia was the ancient saying, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."³ A university education was to be provided for all of the ablest boys of the republic, and even the very poor. While his plan never became a law, it

1. Charles A. Beard, Unique Function of Education in American Democracy, p. 20.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

3. Ibid., p. 22.

is evident that Jefferson "saw clearly the need of talent in public and private affairs and education was to enable talent to flower."¹

Jefferson's educational plan was for the state of Virginia, but he also subscribed to a National Educational policy. Even during the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, he urged congress and the people to consider plans for the promotion of education among all the citizens of the American Union.²

It is related that Jefferson was a product of the West. It seems possible that something of the pioneer character is found in his Philosophy of State:³

Not wealth, not property or class, but men for the basis of the political order; free men, in whom justice and fair dealings are instinctive; who labor together for the common good of all, in scorn of selfish aims.⁴

Jefferson's analysis, it seems, realized that there was a close relationship of rights and duties. He argued that an individual could exercise his rights only so far as they did not conflict with the rights of other members of society. The ultimate purpose of the state, he felt, was not that everyone gets all he wants but that the group as a whole is benefitted.

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1. Charles Al Beard, op. cit., p. 24.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Charles M. Wiltse, op. cit., p. 210.
 4. Op. cit., p. 210.

Jefferson's analysis of equality stated that the state would recognize no distinction between its citizens, and that meant that there is no external restraint applied to any person. He points out that equality is a form of restraint in that man is free to act if his actions do not infringe upon the rights of others. However, he reduces individual liberty, perhaps, to intellectual liberty. Man's rights of liberty, he wrote, are "Liberty to think, to speak, to worship; liberty to read and write without censorship, and to associate with others for any legitimate purpose."¹

Though Jefferson professes to be an individualist, he also declared that the purpose of a democracy is to benefit society as a whole. It is reasonable to believe that in the Jeffersonian era these two doctrines were not incompatible. The democratic state placed emphasis upon the personal happiness of its citizens. A measure of an individual liberty must then be provided or it would be impossible to realize that end.

Jefferson's democracy appears to have Utopian ideals. He emphasized the social-utilitarian end of the state and to an extent discouraged large property holdings. The basic ideal of his democracy appears to be liberty and equality. Happiness for all was the ultimate goal of his

1. Charles M. Wiltse, op. cit., p. 212.

government. He had boundless faith in man and in a democratic form of government "unless its (the government) foundations be laid in justice, the social structure cannot stand."¹

1. Henry George, Progress and Poverty, p. 545.

CONCLUSION

IDEALS AND THEORIES OF OUR PRESENT METHOD OF GOVERNING

Any thorough study of the literature of the respective periods makes it perfectly apparent that the ideas and theories of our present democratic manner of governing slowly emerged from such varied sources as the political philosophy of the leaders of the Reformation, the governmental theories of the statesmen of the Revolutionary War period, and certain historical events during the eighteenth century. The evidence is also convincing that we have borrowed freely from other sources, such as from the English and many of their principles have arranged themselves into our American Heritage.

The American Republic was established during a period when the entire political and social forces of the world were keyed to a very high pitch. During this Revolutionary period, political thinkers of America launched a campaign to overthrow the ancient autocratic practices of class rule in favor of an entirely new governmental practice, based upon a theoretically old but previously untried principle--that of democracy.

It seems logical to classify the leaders of the era in question into two overlapping divisions: those men whose primary concern was the organizing of a government to further only personal interests and those men who doubtless desired sincerely but indirectly the welfare of the nation and so of its people as a whole, but who had no doubt such a state of affairs would best be brought about primarily by a direct furthering of their own personal interests. Their direct personal prosperity would flow indirectly but surely, they felt, to the masses of the people. It is apparent that several of the political agitators of the colonies, typified by Samuel Adams and Alexander, were somewhat concerned with having governmental sanction of personal gain, because of the spirit of the times. The other group that existed, consisting of Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, and others, seemed to have as its primary interest the establishment of a ruling body whose basic ideal was the improvement of society as a whole. They devoted much of their time to waging war against private greed within as well as foreign foes without, ever striving to promote a greater happiness for the free members of society.

Military rule by a class government is not incompatible with certain concepts of democracy. Like Cromwell, many of the extremists in the Union of the Colonies, such

as Samuel Adams, were of the opinion that centralized force was the means of assuring a social order. Adams maintained that government was an instrument to promote personal gain. He, with other individuals, argued that the government should be principally concerned with protecting the individual so he might realize great personal gain. Liberty and equality, he maintained, were incompatible. Equality of men would destroy both liberty and progress and it is the desire for individual betterment that makes progress possible. In a society, it was averred, it is such things as money, force, discipline and power that make liberty function. Private property, consequently, is beyond the power of the government to question. The enrichment of the individual is the primary aim. Democracy is the freedom to do absolutely as you wish whenever you wish. It is of minor importance to consider the rights of others. Force is the means of assuring a social order.

The laissez faire attitude was directly applicable to the agrarian concept of democracy of that period. The frontier seemed inexhaustible. When the pressure of social living became too great, it was merely a case of moving on to newer lands where a bountiful living was to be had for the taking. It does seem possible that laissez faire is a concept of democracy that is natural to an

agrarian age. This group of extremists, typified by Samuel Adams, had to retreat, however, in favor of a majority group of union founders such as Washington and Jefferson, whose concept of democracy was of a different nature.

The democracy proposed by Franklin, Washington, John Quincy Adams, and Jefferson, entrusted the fate of the country to the wisdom of society as a whole. It emphasized the social utilitarian end of the state and truly seemed an abrupt departure from the European aristocracy. In the beginning the philosophy of these men seemed to emphasize only the spiritual side of man, but later it grew to include also the economic and the political, and today the social. There was an absolute faith in human reason and in human nature--an Utopian Government--in a land of unbounded wealth and limitless resources. Liberty and equality, Jefferson argued, were the fundamental principles by which the goals of individual happiness and a balanced life would be realized. These men were in direct opposition to the stark individualists. They did not subscribe to the political theory that private gain would bring about the security and prosperity of the Union. They argued that self-denial in private affairs and devotion to the public good was necessary to achieve great social ends. Provide a military force only to keep the respect of other

nations, they believed. The progress of the entire Union demands peaceful relationships with all countries. Peace is necessary for the promotion of science, literature and education.

Washington's Inaugural Address stated very clearly to whom the government belonged. It was to be of the people and for the people and responsible to the people, not just an iron-clad ruling body basically interested in ruling. A government, Washington insisted, must be "exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens and command the respect of the world." "Beware of entangling alliances," asserted Washington, "if the Union is to be preserved." He, with other founders, was aware of the discomforts caused by war. Liberty and war were incompatible. The perpetuity of the Union demanded peaceful relationships with all nations. A country at war does not permit the natural development of its resources and its citizens. Democracy, they believe, hates war, but if the honor of the country is at stake, a war would result and then democracy has the power to unite, heal, and forgive the many tragedies resulting thereof.

Many of the founders of the American Union conceived the idea that education was a means of protecting and prolonging the ideals of their democratic form of government. Washington proposed a national university; Jefferson insisted

It was the primary duty of the state to educate its people; Franklin, as the founder of the American Philosophical Society, apparently realized the importance of having a well-formed society, and John Quincy Adams held it to be the right of the people to obtain knowledge and he urged the federal government to keep pace with the times in the formulating and backing of an educational program. It becomes clear that these statesmen realized the importance of having the citizens of society capable of evaluating and choosing, and also that public opinion is a dynamic force in any society.

Jefferson voiced the prevailing sentiment in America when he expressed as the fundamental principles of political faith in America:

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed. That, whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such form as to them seems most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Upon these principles the founders of the republic made a sincere attempt to establish public institutions for education. While they did not live to see their ideals realized

they did have an implicit faith in education and "deemed education indispensable to the perpetuity of the nation, to the realization of its ideals and to the smooth functioning of American society."¹

Profound changes have occurred since the "Fathers" expressed their views concerning Democracy. In the Jacksonian era the emphasis was placed on the sovereignty of the state, in contradistinction to Federal authority, in the belief that the self-determination of the individual might thus be better assured. Today many of the problems that were once those of the community or of the state are being taken over by the federal government. Whether this movement is consonant with the principles of Democracy is the vital question now facing the American people. The conflict between the collective interest and the individual interest still goes on. Many of the ultra conservatives believe the principles of Democracy to be threatened. In times of extreme want, they point out, little portions of Democracy seems a small thing to barter for any real measure of security.

It seems quite evident that the founders of Democracy generally agreed that upon education rested a large responsibility for the keeping of this conflict between various conceptions of democracy within bounds by wise, humane and scientific decisions. Since we now look upon Democracy as a way of life, these United States must seek a proper

1. Charles A. Beard, The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy, p. 67.

revision of our ways of decision in terms of our democratic ideals. In a Democracy, Harris¹ insists, "We believe that mutual consultations and convictions reached through persuasion make possible a better quality of experience that can be provided on any other scale." Since 1929, and for the first time in America, millions of our young people have no chance to work and within this generation cannot expect to have any chance. And whether the conflict between the forces responsible for a more democratic distribution of the satisfactions of life and those making for the deliberate perpetuation of whatever discrepancies may be found to exist shall rise to a state of revolution seems definitely to turn upon the promptness with which men's attitudes can be improved through education.

The men who had set up the new government after the Revolution were, as a matter of course, especially concerned with political education, with the preparation of the people for self-government. The processes of democracy to which they were committed, explicitly or implicitly, embraced five essential elements: the right of citizens to propose measures and policies; the right to discuss freely all proposed policies and measures; the right to decide issues at the polls; the obligation to accept decisions duly made without resort to force; and the right to appraise, criticize, and amend decisions so made.²

It was necessary, the founders believed, for the public to be enlightened concerning these processes in order to

1. Pickens E. Harris, The Curriculum and Cultural Change, p. 75.

2. Charles A. Beard, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

make these processes constructive instead of destructive. This was to be accomplished by establishing institutions to diffuse knowledge.

Carrying out these implications, Tugwell¹ urges that democracy be thought of as to include "delegation and qualifications for tasks". Our present-day society, he argues, can no longer cater to "personal prestige" and "traditional sentiment". The time has come when, by a popular recognition of the social implications of democracy, it will be possible to solve many of the confusions confronting our society. It is education's problem to determine scientifically who shall fill a position and also to prepare that individual for that task.

Those on the extreme left of the "Social Frontier" typified by Kilpatrick and Tugwell, insist on the ultra-modern idea of democracy--that society ought to be a function of education. Beard and Dewey, also thought of as leftists but who are not so extreme, would qualify that statement but little. Democracy is largely social in nature--"a way of living", they explain. Going back to the sources, however, we see that this concept, true as it may possibly come some day to be (or not, as may happen), was not directly so stated by the "Fathers". This social view may be the logical outgrowth of the germs of political thought expressed during the eighteenth century. But it was only implicit in them, not explicit.

1. Tugwell and Keyserling, Redirecting Education, p.87.

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