

CCL : FIRST-YEAR GROUPS

Lecture Five

TEACHER: SAIGHI NORA

Monarchy and the Establishment

1-The Role of the Monarch

- a-The Monarch summons, prorogues and dissolves parliament.
- b-The queen opens parliament with a speech which outlines the Government's program.
- c-The Monarch has the right to be consulted, to encourage and warn.
- d- No bills passed by Parliament can become law without the Royal assent.
- e- All jurisdiction derives from the crown.
- f-The queen appoints the Prime Minister and makes appointments to many important state offices, on the advice of the Prime Minister.
- g-The Monarch is the head of the Army.
- h-The Monarch is the Head of the established Church of England. She is the Defender of the faith and appoints bishops on the advice of the Prime minister.
- i-The Monarch is the Fountain of Honour. (it confers life peerages, knighthoods and other honours such as the Order of the Garter, the Order of the Thistle, the Order of Merit and the Royal Victorian order.

2-The Value of the Monarchy

The real importance of the British monarchy is probably less to do with the system of government and more to do with social psychology. The Monarch gives people a symbol of unity, stability and continuity. It is a way of linking the past, the present and the future. The Monarchy dates back to the 9th century and the continuity was broken only once during the period of rule by the Council of State and Oliver Cromwell (1649-1660). The line of succession was broken with the execution of Charles I in 1649 but it was restored with Charles II. The royalty sells magic, history, state, nation but also class, privilege and social unreality. Ritual is a way of consolidating the institution and ceremonies such as the Coronation, the State Opening of Parliament, royal marriages and jubilees are means of increasing the popularity of the monarch.

It should be noted that the British Monarchy is subject to change and reformation. Many of its powers have already been transferred to the Prime minister and parliament. There are still proposals to modernize it. Reformers are in favor of a bicycle monarchy. They want the royal family to be more approachable like the monarchy in the Netherlands. But this raises the question of the mystique of the monarchy. The monarchy is magic because it displays great wealth and aristocratic connections, because it is set apart from its subjects because of this pageantry. There is also talk of cutting down the expenses of the monarchy. It started with the reform of the civil list. Since 1993, the queen has accepted to pay in-come tax. The queen funded the restoration of Windsor Castle and opened up the Royal finances to public scrutiny. Furthermore the future of Grace and Favour Apartments at Kensington Palace is the subject of intense internal debate.

The Government

In Britain the word government is used to refer to the most powerful of politicians, namely, the Prime Minister, and the other members of the cabinet. It is, also, used by the media to refer to all the politicians who run government departments, or have other special responsibilities, such as managing the activities of Parliament. As a consequence of the electoral system, Britain has single-party government. In the two periods (1915-1922) and (1931-1945) Britain had coalition governments. The single-party government has helped to establish the tradition known as collective responsibility which means that every member of the government shares in the responsibility for every policy of government. By convention, no member of the government can criticize government policy in public. Any member who does so must resign.

The Cabinet

The leading politicians in the governing party usually become members of the Cabinet, where they are tied to the government policy by the convention of collective responsibility. The cabinet meets once a week in order to take decisions about new policies, the implementation of the existing ones and the management of the various government departments. Everything discussed or said in these meetings stays secret. The reports of the meetings, which are circulated to other government departments, include summaries of the discussions and decisions taken but individuals are never referred to. An organization called 'the cabinet office' runs communications to keep ministers in touch with each other and draw up the agenda for cabinet meetings. It also does the same thing for the various cabinet committees. These committees are appointed by the cabinet to look into the different matters in more detail than the cabinet has the time (or knowledge) for.

Unlike the government itself, the people in these committees are not necessarily politicians.

The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister (PM) holds a position in direct contrast to that of the monarch. The Queen appears to have a great deal of power. However, she has very little. On the other hand, the Prime Minister appears not to have much power, but in fact he has very much. The Queen is obliged to appoint the person who can command a majority in the House of Commons as the Prime Minister, which means the leader of the party with the largest number of MPs.

The position of the PM is described by the traditional phrase 'first among equals', but in fact the other ministers are not as powerful as the PM is. The PM has the power of patronage, that is the power to appoint people to all kinds of jobs and to confer honours on people. Theoretically, it is said that the Queen appoints people to government jobs 'on the advice of the Prime minister, but in reality, it is the PM who decides on their appointments; he also changes his cabinet quite frequently. Some members can be dropped, some brought in, but generally the existing members are shuffled around, each getting a new department to look after. The second power afforded to the PM by the modern media over other ministers is called the power of the public image. The media's spotlight is put on the PM, consequently, he can sometimes go over the heads of the other ministers and appeal directly to the public.

Third, all ministers have little time to think about government policy as a whole because they are busy looking after their government departments except the PM who has direct control of the cabinet. As a result he knows more of what is going on. Whenever there is

not enough time for the cabinet discussions, the PM makes the choice of the matters to be discussed and makes decisions about the remaining ones.

The Civil Service

The Civil Service helps the government of the day develop and implement its policies as effectively as possible. It provides services directly to people all over the country, including: paying benefits and pensions, running employment services, running prisons and issuing driving licences etc. Government come and go, but the civil servants remain the same.

This earned the most senior servants the name 'Permanent secretaries'. These people get higher salaries than their ministers have absolute job security and have a good chance of being awarded an official honour. For these reasons civil servants often exercise control over their ministers. In the second half of the twentieth century, ministers began to appoint experts from outside the civil service to work on various projects, which made civil servants lose some of their former influence.

Local government

Local government authorities are known as 'councils'. British governments can reorganize local government, abolishing some councils and bringing new ones into existence. The system of local governments is essentially the same as it is nationally. There are elected representatives called councilors (the equivalent of MP's) who meet in a council chamber in the Town Hall or County Hall (the equivalent of Parliament), where they make policy which is implemented by local government officers (the equivalent of civil servants). Local councils have traditionally been fairly free of constant central government interference. However, in the last half century there has been greater control from central government which have bypassed the local bodies and given more autonomy to locally provided services such as schools and hospitals. To redress the balance of power, Local Councils are allowed to collect

a local income tax. Local authorities can also have a directly elected mayor if they wish. An idea rejected by most of the people because they seem suspicious of concentrating too much power in the hands of just one person. Local Councils manage nearly all public services including public hygiene and environmental health inspection, rubbish collection, provision of public swimming pools and sports centres, public parks and libraries.

The British Political Parties/ The Conservative Party

Conservatism is the creed of those who believe in the value of conserving the present political, social, and economic order as much as possible. More precisely, it is the tendency to take one's bearings from those traditions and institutions that have proven themselves through the test of time and experience and to want to introduce changes in them only gradually and infrequently.

A conservative believes, first of all, that a society is a very complex organism, involving myriad interrelated elements that contribute to its well-being, often in unpredictable ways. This organism has evolved slowly, usually over centuries of trial and error. Continuity is thus an important conservative value. Every proposed change in society, or more particularly in its government, should therefore be evaluated not against some abstract and independent standard of right but as to how well it can be incorporated into the complex governmental organism with a minimum of undesirable side effects. The conservative seeks to reawaken the distinction between theory and practice, for a compelling theoretical idea may be ineffective and even dangerous in practice. A ruler a conservative feels, should therefore be suspicious of too much artifice and philosophy in the political affairs of state and must let himself be guided by precedent and by what has worked in the past. A conservative thinker typically expresses his insights into political principles in works and speeches of the moment, designed for a particular purpose, rather than in abstract theoretical tracts. Conservatives tend to abhor the petitions, proclamations, and declarations of rights to which liberals are prone.

Conservatives tend to hold a strong respect for historically important institutions, such as the church, the family, and private property. Temperamentally, conservatives tend to be opposed to sudden change and innovation, and they are prone to accept the imperfections of human beings as a matter of fact, rather than to hope or count on their future perfection. According to Michael Oakeshott, in "On Being Conservative," to be conservative, then, is to prefer the familiar to the unknown, to prefer the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant, the sufficient to the superabundant, the convenient to the perfect, present laughter to utopian bliss, (...) the grief of loss will be more acute than the excitement of novelty or promise. It is to be equal to one's own fortune, to live at the level of one's own means".

The father of modern conservatism (although he never used the term) was the English parliamentarian Edmund Burke. Burke's ideas developed as a result of his reaction to the French Revolution of 1789. In his Reflection on the Revolution in France (1790), Burke attacked the French activists to whom he referred as "theorists" "metaphysicians" and "speculation"; for their preoccupation with theory and with ideas. The preoccupation combined with their tendency to judge political programs against abstract notions such as "right" led them to underestimate the complexity of government and to think that far-reaching changes could easily be brought about. Burke did not deny in principle the rights asserted by the revolutionaries - "they are metaphysically true"- but he did deny that it was wise to use them as framework for constructing a government- "they are morally and politically false". The rights of the people are best guaranteed by the well- being of the state, he held, and the well-being of the state depends upon the wisdom of its rules. Burke sought the foundation of government's function of providing for wants and needs. It was this idea, that governments should act primarily out of practical rather than theoretical consideration.

Great Britain was the birth place of modern conservatism. It has also maintained the strongest modern conservative political party. The British conservative party appeared in the 1830s as the descendent of the Tory Party. Benjamin Disraeli did much to turn it into a cohesive political force. Winston Churchill led a coalition during WWII in which the conservatives predominated. Since then, it has either governed or held the role of chief opposition party.

to continue
what has
worked
to what
belongs
to them
work what
stick to
what
belongs
to them
work what

with the
state
the
state
the
state

he did much to turn it into a cohesive political force
he came with a platform - to give the people a choice

British Political Parties

The Liberal Party

Liberalism is the creed of those who believe in individual liberty.

More specifically, since "no government allows absolute liberty" (Locke), it is

The belief that it is desirable to maximize the amount of liberty in the state.

Traditionally, a liberal believes that the primary function of the state is to protect

The rights of the citizens. These rights are often ascribed to nature

(natural rights) and frequently affirmed in proclamations, petitions, bills of rights, declarations of the rights of man, and so forth. Particularly at the beginning of liberal movements. Liberals are reformers, enemies of entrenched Institutions, traditions and customs. Liberal programs, therefore, seek to place constraints on government power. These constraints may also include barring the government so far as possible from the market place, as in the policies known as laissez-faire economics. Finally these constraints may be introduced in the form of more specific limitations on governmental power, such as guarantees of habeas corpus, bail, rights of speech... and so on.

As the word liberty is ambiguous, however, so is the word liberal. A liberal may believe that freedom is a matter for the individual alone and that the role of the state should be minimal, or he may believe that freedom is a matter for the state and that the state can and should be used as an instrument to promote it. The former view in its extreme tends toward anarchism, while the latter in its extreme tends toward socialism, called social, or welfare liberalism.

Rarely has a liberal movement been unaffected by this ambiguity.

The Liberals came into their own under Gladstone's leadership and played an important role in British politics. The last liberal government ended in 1915. Like most British political parties, the liberal party was a hotchpotch of interests, formed from the remnants of the Whigs, the disgruntled Tories who left their party with Robert Peel because they supported a policy of free trade and the left-wingers of the 19th c. called "Radicals". It was looked upon as the reforming party and many of the new working-class voters attached themselves to it. The fortunes of the liberal party were closely tied to their ideas of free trade. In the middle of the 19th century, the idea of world-wide trade free of all customs duties appealed to a young industrial nation such as Britain. She could sell her industrial produce cheaply and import cheap food. The new industrialists were happy to support the liberals. The idea of the self-made man, the rugged individualist who should be left alone by the state to create wealth by his private enterprise, fitted liberal doctrine exactly. They believed that the greatest good for the greatest number of people would be achieved by encouraging each individual to pursue his own wealth.

The social problems of the new industrial cities and the rise of overseas competitors challenged these liberal ideas, and eventually the industrialists left them and favored protection of their industries by customs duties. The socialist voters also deserted them in favor of state control, and by the end of the First World War, the liberal hey-day was over. Queen Victoria could not bear Gladstone's preaching ways, which is not surprising for the liberals inherited the "Roundheads" attitude towards the monarchy. They believed that it should be kept firmly in its place as the minor partner in government. Some of them were republicans and wanted to abolish it, along with other old institutions which they argued had outlived their usefulness. Their attitude towards the Empire did not endear them to Victoria, either. They felt that it was a millstone and the sooner they were free of it, by granting colonies their independence, the better. Gladstone always found the Empire a stumbling block. He fought the election of 1880 as an anti-imperialist. When he was in office, however, he found it difficult to escape from the fact, whether he liked it or not, Great Britain did have an Empire to rule.

TUC / founded in 1868
skilled workers until 1889

The General Federation
of Trade Unions
(insurance fund for strikes)

Labour 190
Representative
Committee
↓
Labour Party
named / 1906

↓
1918
National Political
Party

↓
1924
Labour Party
won the
elections
under James
Ramsay Mac
Donald

(1929-37)
Labour Party

British Civilization

The Birth of British Socialism

Local social reform was also the breeding ground for a new national party, the *Labour Party*. Working men had banded together to help themselves ever since the Industrial Revolution had brought them to the factories and towns. *Friendly Societies*, like the Oddfellows, had developed as sick and burial clubs, even dying was too expensive for a worker's purse. They paid weekly subscriptions and met together to control their funds. At a Whitsun holiday procession in Blackburn in 1884, sixteen Friendly Societies, numbering 4000 people, marched under their banners to a local rally. The regulations of the Oddfellows set great store by correct behaviour and described themselves as "a useful school of morality where from various humours, tempers, customs, and circumstances in life a considerable portion of useful knowledge may be acquired, relative to men and things; where talent of every description may emerge from the clouds of obscurity and expand by proper exertion". Such organizations made good schools for working-class politicians.

So, too, did the local *Co-operative Societies*, Robert Owen was their prophet and he dreamed of workers banding together to accumulate and distribute wealth. The Rochdale Pioneers, who set up a "Co-op" in 1844, are considered the fathers of the modern Co-operative movement, although they were only one of many similar self-help groups. They set up shops and paid "dividends" to their members, but the basic idea was much bigger than this. They formed

Co-operatives in banking, insurance, coal-mining and engineering. In 1863 the Co-operative Wholesale Society was created. The pioneers took a lively interest in people's minds as well as their bodies and the Workers' Educational Association originated with them.

Many early leaders of the working classes learned their oratory and their compassion in the *Nonconformist Chapels*. Marx scorned religion, but the chapels of the north of England were a far cry from establishment churches. Elected bodies ran the chapels and they depended on lay preachers for their services. They taught the children to read and write. They sponsored working men's colleges and adult colleges and their Socialism was more a fervent compassion for human suffering than a neat political philosophy. Christian Socialism had its national figure in Charles Kingsley. You may have read some of his novels, such as *Water Babies* or *Westward Ho!* (1855-75) *Anglican clergyman, teacher and writer whose novels widely read in the Victorian era*

The more Left-wing workers were attracted to the local branches of the *Social Democratic Federation*, which was Marxist in its beliefs. Significantly, its leader was not a working man but H.M. Hyndman, a cricket-playing old Etonian who had been converted to Communism. Most workers were not politically minded and their Socialism consisted of a rather woolly belief in helping the underdog. They found the Marxist jargon and passion beyond them. One man who visited a local branch meeting wrote: "Much daring, I went one night to speak at the Battersea branch of the Social Democratic Federation where I was so belaboured with words about exploitation, proletariat, Bourgeois and others of learned length and thundering sound just then imported from Germany that I believe I retired sore all over and determined to go no more." Nor did the home-grown Fabian Society appeal to the ordinary working man. It was much an intellectual middle-class movement with such notables as George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells and Beatrice and Sydney Webb among its members. It rejected Marxist revolutionary ideas and believed that Socialism would grow gradually. The *Fabian Essays*, 1888, rather than Marx's *Das Capital*, became the British Socialists' bible. They did not want to set up a Socialist party, but wanted Socialists to become members of all political parties (...)

There has been a strong middle-class element in British Socialism, which has prevented it from becoming a one-sided "workers only" movement.

lay preachers = No
trained in a profe
sion
influenced Soc
development
in GB. He was on
of the first clerg
to support Darwin's theor
and to seek a
reconciliation
between modern
science and
Christian doctrine