

Political Philosophy as a Context for a New Model for Government Serving the Common Good.

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Introduction:

The author (McConochie) has done many studies since 2003 on the topic of political psychology, yielding a model for a new political party to promote public democracy defined in his studies as government serving the best interests of the community overall (McConochie, 2006 a, b, c and d). This model is justified by a variety of findings, especially that 90 percent of the public desires this form of government over four alternatives: anarchy, military dictatorship, monarchy and democracy serving special interest groups, the runner up, endorsed by only about 20 percent of several hundred adults surveyed.

The present paper is a review of political philosophy, to provide a long-range historical context for the author=s current effort to promote direct democracy. It is a brief review of the field of political philosophy to provide a broader context for understanding the relevance of McConochie=s research-based model for government.

The review is based on two publications, a lengthy review of political philosophy from ancient Greek philosophers through Heidegger in the 20th century (Strauss and Cropsey, 1987), and an introduction to topics of modern philosophy (Hudelson, 1999). The first reference is available in paperback, for about \$20 via Half.com. The second is presented in its entirety on the Internet (www.questia.com).

Review of Philosophies:

Classical philosophies:

The lengthy Strauss and Cropsey textbook (934 pp.) summarizes the highlights of theories of political philosophy from ancient Greeks such as Aristotle and Plato through 19th century philosophers such as Husserl and Heidegger.

I will attempt to show that within classical political philosophies are several evolving themes of suggestions for good government that dovetail closely with features of my research-based model for a party promoting public democracy, namely:

1. A scientific approach to constructing a model of government.
2. A focus on government serving the best interests of the community overall as opposed to special interest groups.
3. Democratic rather than authoritarian government, and, specifically,
4. Government policies and programs directly reflecting majority citizen desires.

My comments and asides are in brackets [].

[Political philosophers have offered ideas on the basic nature of human kind, issues of social organization, ideal political organizations and matters of war and peace. They have struggled with basic characteristics of humans upon which to base a theory of good government and the place of wisdom and science in formulating political theory. They have considered economic, cultural, geographic and social class issues and the roles in politics of philosophers, theologians, scientists, statesmen and jurists.

[They have based their ideas alternately on theology, philosophy and science, or at least speculations that science could someday provide a sound basis for clarifying principles that apply to the above issues.

[While the topic of politics has been subsumed in the 20th century for academic purposes under the rubric Apolitical science@, this topic in prior centuries has been primarily one of philosophy, which in essence seems to be one of definition of terms, clarification of basic assumptions, logical argument and discussion of topics related to the social and political organization of civilization, starting typically with assumptions about basic human nature before civilization and under civilization.

[Each philosopher or theorist in turn adopts basic premises reflecting a personal bias that tends to direct and justify his subsequent ideas. Each philosopher is a product to some degree of past thinkers and the current mores and general knowledge available to him at his point in history. For example, while many early political philosophers use Christian religion as the underpinning for typically

authoritarian political systems, later thinkers use assumptions about basic human characteristics, motives, etc.]

From Strauss and Cropsey:

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) imagined an important role of inventions (scientific findings) in political theory building and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) assumed several specific basic psychological characteristics of humans upon which to base his thinking about social and political organization. [In the absence of scientific data about the basic psychological characteristics of humans], Hobbes theorized a considerable variety of facts about human traits, such as:

Happiness consists in a continual progress of the desire from one object to another (p. 399).

A...a general inclination of all mankind [is] a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, (p. 399).

A...the presence in our nature of the love of glory, or pride, or vanity (p. 399).

A...all pleasures of the mind are directly or indirectly derived from glorying (p. 400).

A...laughter is caused by sudden glory (p. 400).

A...three great causes of quarrels among men, competition, distrust, and glory, make the state of nature really a state of war...of every man against every man. (p. 400).

Men live in a continual fear, and danger of violent death: and the life of man [is] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. (p. 400)

A Fear of death, desire for comfort, and hope of obtaining it through their industry incline men to peace. (p. 400)

He adds to these assumed basic psychological characteristics of humans certain assumed rights, such as the right to fight as one sees fit for self-preservation. However, when it came to theorizing on social behavior, Hobbes relied on religion: social rules may be considered laws to the extent that they are based on Christian scriptures (p. 401).

Thus, Hobbes seeks the basic nature of humans as a basis for his philosophy of politics, but in the absence of scientific information, he resorted to what we would today describe as social and psychological theory, bolstered by Christian theology. Indeed, According to Hobbes ... the higher law, the natural law, commands so to

speak one and only one thing: unqualified obedience to the sovereign power.@ (p. 297). In this he is virtually abdicating to theologians to design society, it would seem. And for him Amorality is nothing but fear-inspired peaceableness.@ (p 298).

[On the topic of war, political philosophers in general have ranged widely, sometimes justifying it as an essential and admirable quality of humankind.] For example, Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) thought that the ends justify any means, including cruelty to inspire fear, and war. For Machiavelli, political and national leaders must use war for self-aggrandizement, or for the aggrandizement of their countries. And conversely, the aggrandizement of one=s country is a legitimate service of a politician, or statesman or their political parties (p. 297). [While Machiavelli is considered by the editors to be the first to put his name to this political philosophy, the political philosophy of self-interest itself is, in my opinion, as old as human thinking on politics.] Machiavelli saw the populace as docile vis a vis leaders, engaging in Apeaceful occupations@, and controlled by Afear-bred obedience to the government@ (p. 301).

[The topic of the relationship of the populace to political leaders is another theme central to political philosophers. Often philosophers argue simply that the populace should obey leaders, either out of fear of cruelty or out of respect for leaders as agents of divine beings (usually the Christian God).] For John Calvin (1509-1564) Christian scripture, not philosophizing or reason, was the basis of proper political life (p 321). For Calvin, the State has duties to both the civil community and to the Church. It should promote peace for the civil community and financial support to pastors. The Church, in turn, should guide political rulers but not dominate their thinking or assume their authority in the realm of government. Regarding the role of the populace, AObedience to authority is ... in itself a good, and the only foundation on which stable social and political life may be built.@

Martin Luther (1483-1546) also honored authoritarian government, specifically monarchy. He does not distinguish between democracy and mob rule. Indeed, he argues that it is better to suffer the wrong of a tyrannical ruler than be subject to mob mentality (p 337). AObedience to an unjust ruler may be a cross we must bear in this world.@ (p 339). Obedience to political leaders is prescribed by religious scriptures, Luther holds (p 338).

In contrast, Calvin permits refusal to follow a political leader who wages a manifestly unrighteous war. However, he reports that killing is considered wrong according to the Scriptures. [Thus, any war would seem unrighteous. And who is to decide if a war is unrighteous?] The editors (Strauss and Cropsey) comment that much of Luther's political philosophy abristles with contradictions (p. 342). Luther considers specific government legislation the business not of theologians but of lawyers and judges (p. 348).

However, in another implicit contradiction, Luther discusses military heroes as persons chosen by God to lead wars to replace outmoded governments and opines that such heroes can disobey current laws and make laws of their own. He names examples, including Alexander the Great and Old Testament leaders, such as Samson, and David.

Rene Descartes (1596-1650) argued that improved political systems should be designed systematically by mathematics and physics, implicitly by scientific research, and by this, according to the editors, is considered to have made an important contribution to the advancement of philosophy (p. 438).

John Milton (1608-1674) lived in England during a time when government was in transition from a strict monarchy to a more representative form of government, with representatives to government elected by citizens. He praised the English constitution of his day, which made room for a mixed form of national government with elements of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy (p. 441). This form of government was similar in some respects to much earlier Greek and Roman government structures. He openly discussed what he saw as a serious weakness in monarchy, its tendency to deteriorate into tyranny [military dictatorship?] (p. 444). He apparently saw elected officials representing public desires as a less corruptible form of government, especially if those elected are devoted to noble rather than selfish government service, a true aristocracy. This aristocracy was to be devoted to the common good (p. 445) and was responsible for major legislation, including that relating to military matters. The key to the success of this model was guaranteeing that the aristocracy elected was truly virtuous. This was to be fostered by very thorough education for such persons, presumably before elected as well as while serving in office. This virtue was seen as necessary to guarantee that the religious faith of the elected official was of the proper focus. Local governments were also to be of a democratic nature, with elected representatives

and with a degree of collective power over national government (p. 448). General education of the public was advocated, in part to promote quality government at the local level (p. 454). Regarding the influence of religion, Milton saw religious leaders as a potential threat to usurping political power and considered government to be the domain of legislators, not religious leaders (p. 449). Church and state were to be kept separate.

Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) is said by the editors to be the first philosopher to write a *Systematic defense of democracy* (p. 456). He advocated a scientific rather than philosophical approach to understanding politics: *Observation of political phenomena are recorded and analyzed exactly as the phenomena of any other science. The human order is then deduced from the scientifically revealed eternal order.* Spinoza presumes that such an analysis will reveal that *The regulation of men is based fundamentally on the approval of those who are to be regulated. The scientific conception of power and the universal [scientific?] method of analysis lead us, by way of the new conception of man, to a rejection of classical aristocracy in favor of democracy.* (p. 458). Humans differ from each other in their opinions, which are to be respected, in part by honoring freedom of speech (p.460). Dogma and superstition are the antithesis of informed opinion. Humans are viewed as essentially deterministic phenomena, as a part of nature. Religion is viewed as unscientific human illusion (p. 461). Philosophers themselves are also determined, in this case to seek understanding. Theology is banned from philosophy, which is to be based on a rational, scientific understanding of the world as it is, not as one might imagine or desire it to be. While religion is seen from a naturalistic, scientific perspective, it is not to be ignored. *The scientific study of political phenomena requires a careful study of religion as the most decisive way in which political behavior in pre-scientific societies is conditioned.* Religious beliefs must be taken into consideration in planning political systems, as religious behavior is a prominent aspect of human behavior (p. 462). Spinoza posits that religion, history and politics all stem from basic human nature. Therefore, scientific understanding of human nature, including intelligible, universal principles, is essential for constructing desirable political systems (p. 463). *The relationship between religion and politics is not just an accident of history, but stems from man's nature.* (p. 463). Political leaders are given much power, such as the sole authority to determine what is in the general interest of the governed public. However, these leaders are expected to lead from careful understanding of human nature and to enact good laws. Political

philosophy is to be useful, not just an intellectual exercise (p. 463).

John Locke (1632-1704). Locke assumes that humans are essentially peaceful in disposition, not preoccupied with competition, as Hobbes had assumed. However, he acknowledges that humans engage in war. He posits that persons have obligations to preserve themselves but also to preserve all mankind, thus obligations to be both selfish and selfless, competitive and cooperative. War is justified in self-defense and to kill those perceived to intend harm.

Regarding democratic political decisions, he argued for majority rule. This touches on another theme running through political philosophy, the Acommon good@ of John Milton [or the best interests of the public or citizens overall].

To guard against corruption of political power, separation of powers is advocated, with power vested simultaneously in more than one body, e.g. legislative (making laws and policy), and executive (executing them). Judicial functions are considered part of legislative ones (p. 501).

[Another manifestation of this problem of corruption is special interest group activity in 21st century United States democracy, where wealthy minorities can and do buy legislative and executive favors via campaign contributions. These contributions are used for advertizing, propaganda, etc. to win public votes. This has prompted some in America to urge getting the Amoney out of politics@, e.g. via public financing of campaigns.]

Political society must decide its form of government, i.e. into whose hands legislative power is placed (p. 500). This is the first and primary task in forming a government and is decided by Athe majority of people@ (in a commonwealth) (p. 500). The majority may retain the legislative power and be a Ademocracy@ or entrust it to a few leaders as an Aoligarchy@ (p. 500), or to one leader and be a monarchy [or dictatorship]. [Locke does no=t raise the issue of which form of government the people prefer.]

The executive may act beyond or contrary to law for the good of the people, or contrary to the good of the people, to their peril (p. 502-3), Athe constant practice of tyrants immemorial@ (p. 503). ABut is there a practical way to ascertain a ruler=s intention?@ (p. 503). It is for Athe people@ to decide if the intention is for

their good, as the people have the right to resist tyranny (p. 503). The tyrant thus places himself in a state of war with the people (p. 504) [a warmonger?]. He thereby destroys their government and they have the right to defend themselves and society against him.

The purpose of setting up society and civil government is to exclude force and introduce laws for the preservation of property, peace, and unity amongst [the people].@ (p. 504) In essence, the people must be alert to and responsible for their collective safety in judging the quality of their leaders and government (p. 506). This question is to be answered by their feelings rather than by reason. (p. 506). Do they feel safe under a leader? (p. 510).

Self-preservation is the basic human motivation, which governs man's desire for peaceful and stable society and requires him to require of leadership government service to this end. Fear of failure to this end is the constant burden of the people, and their responsibility is to assure their leadership does not become selfish and tyrannical. Freedom, peace and plenty are possible only with effective government.

Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755).

AGroups seek to become privileged, and...proceed to war upon each other.@ (p. 515) Social laws tend to be relative to a given society, climate, geography, etc. rather than all reflecting identical human needs (p. 516). England and Europe are more suited to democracy than are Asian nations, which are more likely to be despotic.

The main forms of government are republic (democratic or aristocratic), monarchy, and despotic (p. 516). ADespotism exists where one man rules as he wishes without law.@ (p. 521). Democracy is best, despotism worst. But different forms of government are suitable for different nations (p. 529). Human nature is to a degree relative, a function of climate, etc. (p. 526). Primitive man, as herders or hunters, is a loose organization characterized by severe wars, crude and cruel punishment of crimes and strong religious influence (p. 527). [All these phenomena are still manifest in various nations in 21st century world politics.] The right to self-preservation and duty to family are considered to be fundamental and universal to the species. War is justified only in self-defense and never to destroy another society (p. 528). International relations are always motivated only by self-interest and force versus agreement or consideration of the rights of others

(p. 528). Commerce and trade is an alternate means to wealth, the other being conquest (p 529-30). International trade permits riches, luxury and the arts. Commerce [is] the communication of peoples. Commerce also promotes learning and advancement of civilization in many ways (p. 530). Commerce as a term is used quite broadly, and includes inventions and ways to outwit tyrants (p. 530) and tends to encourage the arts and sciences, to conduce toward peace by linking nations via their needs, and to raise standards of living. (p. 530).

Thus, avarice and selfishly pursued wealth by some persons leads to the best of civilization for others, including peace. [This raises the issue of the proper balance between selfishness and selflessness, competition and cooperation.]

Humans are driven by passions, not reason. A philosophical legislator is not driven by ethics and must understand public passions and opinions by which intellectual elites and greater multitudes [the public] can be moved [persuaded, manipulated] (p. 532). Christian religion has both good and bad effects on civilization. Other religions should be tolerated (p. 533).

David Hume (1711-76).

Hume is best known as a skeptic, a critic of human reason and value judgments and thus of political philosophy itself [perhaps sensing that a true science of political behavior would prove superior to philosophical theorizing] (p. 535).

All human experiences are but perceptions and ideas based on perceptions (p. 536). We can have knowledge only of ideas, not of the world of realities (p. 536).

[Thus, he would seem untrusting of science, which is the formal study of the world of realities by methods of universal agreement. However, his essential appeal to science is reflected in his respect for the principle of cause and effect as basic to sound knowledge (p. 538)...and repeated similar experiences (known as replication of experiments in science). The fact that what is accepted as true at one stage of scientific understanding may be superseded by subsequent study is hinted at in Hume's skepticism of current knowledge.]

In fact, on p. 540, the editors explain that Hume did intend to justify the [scientific] methods of Newton.

Hume places morality and vice in our emotional reactions, not our reason (p. 543), in pleasure and pain, in the final analysis (p 543). [It seems to follow that what is

good for a society is what the people in that society collectively feel or want.]

Hume delineates various virtues, e.g. generosity, honesty, courage, industry and modesty, [but without apparent scientific basis, as present day psychology can yield (the Big Five personality traits: Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extroversion, Openness and Emotional Stability).]

For Hume virtue is what is good, what is good is what is pleasurable. Virtue more specifically is due to sympathy [empathy] for others.

The editors refer to Hume's ideas as a theory (p. 545), [consonant now with scientific thinking, an educated guess about how the real world works].

He sees good government as having checks and balances between different branches, e.g. monarchy, aristocracy and a popular assembly. Government should be kept free of church influence. Church should be dependent on government.

Hume holds that every government is founded on opinion. For example, the opinion that those in authority have the right to rule is majority opinion shaped by custom and tradition. Innovation is to be introduced with caution in the interest of preserving time tested government systems that work. [Present day public opinion poll results on political issues are increasingly referred to in the press, e.g. the percentage of citizens who approve the President's policies and performance.]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78). As do most political philosophers, Rousseau discounts all prior political philosophy, [clearing the way for his new and presumably "better" ideas]. He asserts that government must appeal to those governed and that it is the task of the political philosopher to make clear what man's nature truly is and, on this basis, define the conditions of a good political order (p 559). Science and art foster inequalities and are not good for the citizens as a whole. Ideal government will not be controlled by the few for their benefit at the cost of the many. Special interest groups promote the interests of the few over the many. A balance of special interests is not in the general best interest. A severe moral education is the prerequisite of sound civil society. (p 561). He calls upon science and introspection to imagine human nature before the contaminating influences of civilization. Early humans are imagined to fight each other only when resources are scarce. They have only two fundamental passions: the desire to preserve [them]selves and a certain pity or sympathy for the sufferings of others

of his kind. He has freedom of will and a perfectability, and secondary traits. Humans become more complex psychologically as they become more civilized, developing vengeance, interest in private property, agriculture, forethought, power-seeking, etc. War necessarily then ensues between the haves and the have-nots (p. 566). Government is developed to regulate social life, based on a devotion to the common good. Selfishness must be superseded with morality. Laws should presumably be fair to all to be appropriate, as they require citizens to give up some of their individual desires for the sake of community living. Only the voice of the people can establish law. And not nature, basic human traits, or religion. [As such, Rousseau seems to be advocating public opinion as the basis for laws.] ...each citizen is constantly a member of the lawmaking body. (p. 570). Even representative government is considered inferior to an implicitly direct democracy. Out of practical necessity, representation is needed, but those chosen to represent must be carefully instructed and exercise no judgment independent of the general will (citizen desires), even on specific issues of legislation. The general will requires constant consultation. (p. 570). But he wants those voting to be amoral, expecting otherwise a degeneration of majority decisions to a wild anarchy. Individuals must vote as individuals, not as members of factions or parties of special interests (p. 571). He thought that strong, charismatic top leaders were necessary and could even use religious appeals to convince the people to comply with law. But he was aware of the danger of wayward top leaders, strong men. Great flexibility in specific governments is possible, as there is great variety among people (p. 574). The people should only enact general laws and leave details up to the elected government officials.

The editors greatly admire Rousseau's thinking, stating, ...one feels that he presented the human problem in its variety with greater depth and breadth than any of his *successors* [italics added].

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Kant is less focused on political philosophy than other philosophers but emphasizes peace through international cooperation and law. For him, good will is the only true, basic good.

The Federalist writings of Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay, 1787-1788. A distinction is made between representative democracy and pure democracy, with the former being government by elected representatives and a pure democracy rule by all the people. Both of these are considered a popular

(of the people) governments. Faction is the central problem of popular government, to be solved by largeness of the government and division into three branches for checks and balances (legislative, executive and judicial). Representative democracy is thought to have an advantage, as the Many may be unwise. All three branches were hoped to be wise. It was hoped that the people would elect persons wise and virtuous enough to keep the common good in focus as their goal.

But this will work only if representatives represent so many people that there is sufficient distance between the representative and the people that he is not simply parroting a potentially unwise majority opinion or desire of the people. The majority are generally poor and without property, thus likely to be unwise [greedy?] and oppressive of minority groups (e.g. wealthy landowners in a minority). The danger of unwise majority decisions is addressed thus:

Many political factions among the public are desirable to protect the ruling majority of the public from oppressing minorities such as wealthy land-owners.

Larger nations, such as the United States, have more people and thus more factions, special interest groups, which will have more difficulty forming effective and potentially oppressive coalitions. More factions are also facilitated by commercial diversity of professions, opportunity even for the poor citizens to advance their financial lot through employment, and diversity of religions and of types of property ownership. Thus, diversity and opportunity are to be encouraged.

Thomas Paine (1737-1809). The laws of society are one with the laws of nature, and easily determined by good thinking if unencumbered by religion and superstition.

Edmund Burke (1729-1797). Everyday politics is very complicated and not predictable. Theory only works in ideal, oversimplified views of society. Thus, theory has limited practical value. For first principles he simply resorted to Prudence and the British constitution. Thus, for him, practical wisdom supercedes theoretical science. He denounces democracy: The people cannot rule; they are the passive element in contrast to...the true natural aristocracy (p. 696). Such aristocrats are bred to their position and do not choose it. They are imbued with a necessary sense of authority (p. 696). Thus, the ideal government is always in flux, a complex negotiation of conflicting interests within society. (p 698-

9).

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and James Mill (1773-1836). Bentham advocated dependence on objective information to design good political systems, rather than on tradition. In direct contrast to Edmund Burke's reverence for British tradition as a basis for government, Bentham advocated scientific measurement and quantification of human pains and pleasures [opinions?] upon which to build a scientific theory and model for good legislation and government. The more such scientific data, the better. He saw custom and tradition as typically used to justify minority special interest group oppression of majorities. He saw human motivations and attitudes as varying greatly but believed that a scientific approach could be applied successfully to designing good governments throughout the world (p. 714). He did not anticipate the specific forms such governments would take but only advocated a scientific approach to designing them. Legislative judgment is to a degree an art, but scientifically informed judgment is better than otherwise. He encouraged a reference to scientific data rather than simply accepting certain a priori human rights as the basis for designing legislation and implied that the public could be trusted to define what they considered good rights and duties, flexibly adjusting to changing conditions over time. [This implies that repeated assessment of public opinion regarding legislative issues would foster this end.]

James Mill, Bentham's godson, espoused a spontaneously growing, improving society, consistent with this attention to public desire (p. 717). Bentham's ideas led to many progressive changes in British law, reducing capital punishment and increasing the groups of persons who had the right to vote and to British citizenship (p. 717). [His scientific focus was, in essence, on psychology, as it focused on] pain and pleasure as the core of human happiness, the promotion of which for the greatest number of the citizens of a nation was his ultimate goal for good government. [Psychology per se as a science did not develop until late in the 1800's.] Society is the sum of individuals. Happiness of the greatest number of citizens is a similar composite. Cooperative deliberation was recommended to arrive at common principles,

[though specific procedures, such as public opinion polls were not discussed, apparently. Nor are any suggested by the editors. The editors, perhaps true to the tradition of political philosophers, end their review of Bentham with questions, Ayes but's, regarding problems of practical application. The editors don't directly

acknowledge the existence of a science of psychology and of public opinion polling and of political psychology that would have direct and practical bearing on extending Bentham=s theory to practical pilot studies to explore its utility. This failure of the editors speaks to the failure of academics to embrace an interdisciplinary stance. Bentham, whose theory is one urging utility, cannot rest quietly in his grave until psychologists take up his flag. To their credit, the editors do discuss issues that good public opinion polling should entail to determine specific legislation, i.e. weighing the pros and cons of different options, and assessing public opinion on those options (p. 721)].

Bentham derided Rousseau=s Ageneral will@, perhaps because Rousseau did not specify that it could be measured scientifically and fairly and Bentham seemed reluctant to trust any authority to speak for the public without taking into account the detailed opinions of individual citizens, though [in the absence of a science of public opinion assessment] he could only urge legislators to keep this ideal in mind (p. 724).

Mill said government must somehow be designed to guard against the corrupting influences of special interests, though he knows not how (p. 725). He sees no effective system of checks and balances, as between branches of government (p. 727). He calls for a system that prevents corruption of elected representatives, corruption distracting them from their obligation to the interest of the community (p. 727). Representatives are not to represent special interests, such as those of landowners or manufacturers (p. 728). He deeply trusts and respects the Amiddle rank@, average citizens, to define the best quality of government legislation.

Georg Hegel (1770-1831). Hegel, a German, glorified the state, headed by a monarch whose authority is inherited and rather omnipotent. Perhaps the most poignant aspect of Hegel=s thinking is on war. Wars are an honored aspect of foreign policy: Asuccessful wars prevent internal disturbances and consolidate the state=s internal power@ (p. 752). War promotes the health of people and avoids the Acorruption@ of peace and is recommended for advanced civilizations against more primitive ones.

[While this theory and advocacy of warmongering may have some theoretical interest, in practicality it is clearly dangerously antisocial, especially as exemplified in the subsequent activities of Germany as an aggressive warring nation in the

World Wars. As such, it justifies no serious place in political philosophy as a guide to constructive theorizing at present, in my opinion, except perhaps as material for understanding how a theorist of this antisocial nature could evolve, so that such can be discouraged in the future for the protection of society.]

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859). His central idea is that social conditions account for individual citizen characteristics, including opinions, types, goals, character, etc. In democracies, tyranny can thrive, especially the tyranny of the majority of citizens, whose collective views can discourage any expression of contrary opinion and thus promote mediocrity (p. 771).

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). John Stuart Mill was concerned that elected representatives in a democracy might not be expert enough to run government well. He was also concerned about minority interests not being heard and about a proper balance between individual citizen freedom, for creativity and self-actualization, versus sufficient restraints on individual urges to protect others in society from harm.

Friedrich Nietzsche. (1844-1900). Nietzsche considered Hegel's theory very dangerous, perhaps because of Hegel's advocacy of war. However, Nietzsche himself admired war. Nietzsche also notes with approval that the Greeks made a virtue of combat and contests....(p. 835). For him democracy is mediocrity. Public opinion is laziness. For him, Christian and all other moralities were dead. Nihilistic rejection of all prior politics and morals and endorsement of the will to power as the basic characteristic of all reality paves the way for his advocacy of a hierarchical society, with men dominating women and suffering a necessity (p. 845). He idealizes asocial individualism and even great apocalyptic political wars, eugenics, the merciless extinction of inferior people and races (p. 484). The editors raise the implicit danger in this philosophy, referring to the subsequent rise of fascism in Europe and hinting at the evils of Nazi Germany.

John Dewey (1859-1952). He advocated application of the scientific method to improve life in all realms, including social, political and economic ones, even though such application will be complicated, in part by conflicting opinions about what the best interests of affected groups of citizens will be under specific policies and programs. He urges a flexible growth and progress model rather than a fixed ideal state or goal of such efforts. He vividly described what we today see as

powerful special interest groups controlling government legislation for selfish ends (p. 862). Protecting against mismanagement of government depends on the development of a citizenry that is democratic in every respect, as could be fostered by high quality public education (p. 866). He thought that theory ought to be brought into the service of democracy so conceived (p. 867).

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Husserl encouraged careful clarification of one's basic assumptions, even when doing science. He thought much prior philosophy had failed to do this, finding fault with many prior basic assumptions, thus calling into question the value of prior thinking. He argued for an appreciation of the commonsense world as it appears prior to the distortions of theory (p. 876). In other words, what I say is just what I intend to say, not what a psychologist or political philosopher might paraphrase with, "What you really mean by that is", imputing some deeper, subconscious meaning to my statement. He seemed to respect scientifically clarified laws of nature as a sound grounding for logical reasoning (p. 878).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Heidegger struggled with what concerned many philosophers after the senseless, pervasive destructiveness of World War I, the difficulty of making sense of human life itself. Confidence in science and reason, the editor's assert, was ruined for many by the pervasive meaningless destruction of that war. Heidegger believed this war was an expression of nihilistic thinking that was a natural outcome of fundamental flaws in human thinking, especially the thinking of philosophers and those who listened to them, culminating especially in the nihilism of ones such as Hegel, Nietzsche and Husserl, some of whose ideas could be seen as supporting war as a necessary and noble activity. Though rather abstract and idiosyncratic in his logic, Heidegger managed to argue for a positive alternative course for nihilistic thinking, a course encouraging people to think and aspire from a stance independent from one's immediate place in culture and history.

Living in Nazi Germany, he both conflicted with and found positive elements in this political regime, but failed to make them clear then or later and failed to reconcile them with the obviously destructive, antisocial elements of Nazism, such as the policies of genocide, apocalypse and brutal nihilism. He believed that humans become mere cogs in the wheel of science, technology and labor, the effort of humans to understand and control nature, and the world they live in.

He views the constructive element of nihilism as leading to an appreciation of the importance of basic wonder as the source of thought and thus order in life (p. 902). However, he does not inspire one to wonder or explore the meaning of life, but rather seems resigned to a fate of being stuck, recommending that we learn to accept the inevitability of our own deaths and our respective places or fate within the destiny of our current social and cultural lives (p. 904). As such, his philosophy is considered by the authors to provide no overt basis for differentiating good from bad political systems and thus to have uncertain value for addressing fundamental questions addressed by political philosophy (p. 904).

Leo Strauss, Editor, (1899-1973). Strauss was a writer and university professor for many decades. He encouraged a political science in essence to replace political philosophy as just theory. He urged practical application of knowledge, quality education for citizens, focus on current, important political issues and thorough debate of conflicting viewpoints on those issues. He saw the role of the professional as that of a guide to citizens as active participants in the process of designing and pursuing government that was best, as they saw it, for their issues in their time.

[[End of Strauss and Cropsey text review.]]

Discussion of Major themes in Political Philosophy and related issues.

Thus, we have in classic political philosophies several recurring, basic themes:

1. Each philosopher discounts prior political philosophies as inadequate for one or another reason, e.g. because the current political philosopher finds fault with or disagrees with prior basic initial, underlying assumptions, e.g. replacing theology with assumed fundamental characteristics of human nature. However, in the absence of scientific information about human nature, all early philosophers are left to simply theorize about the basic fundamental characteristics of humans.
2. Arguments are given for human society characterized fundamentally by peace and cooperation on the one hand or war and competition on the other. Some philosophers assume humans are fundamentally peaceful, others that humans are competitive.

The history of humanity is characterized by significant periods of both in varying degrees in most societies. There are exceptions, such as societies that have been characterized by constant war and expansionism, such as the Roman Empire, and long periods of peace, as in some Pacific Island societies.

Political philosophers have attempted to explain the place of war and peace in human affairs and how they relate to political behavior per se. Who has the authority to wage war, and under what conditions? What if any differences are there between just and unjust wars? The various philosophers offer different answers.

My (McConochie) research suggests that an unconscious underlying species-promoting dynamic has evolved in the species, alternating war to effect population reduction in times of high pressure on resources and then peaceful cooperation and trade to promote thriving cultures when resources are adequate to demand. In the service of this dynamic, via Darwinian evolution, the human species has evolved to have a minority (6-8%) of persons predisposed to warmongering and a majority (90-93%) predisposed to peaceful activities. Each surfaces as Aneeded@ depending on the pressure on resources. Some individuals by virtue of genetics and experience are more inclined to war, some more inclined to peaceful activities. The peaceful majority can be persuaded by threats to needs and by propaganda to aggress against each other in war periodically.

3. Over the decades and centuries there is a gradual shift within political philosophy from theological, psychological or rational justifications for one form of government or another to a more scientific approach to the topic of how people do and should live together in political organizations. While a formal body of scientific information about political behavior was lacking in centuries past, political philosophers could imagine the value of scientific study for informing their arguments.

The role of current science in studying government models.

In the present day, via scientific study, I believe we can explore the various factors that tip the balance toward war or peace and explore the possible evolutionary values of war and peace for the species. Regarding the former, we can assume that there are many factors that tip the balance toward war in any given

instance, including ones that are psychological, social, economic, agricultural and weather-related. To this end, testable scientific theories or hypotheses can be generated, such as the following:

A. Social/survival factors: To the extent that a group of people is threatened with extinction by social ostracism by another group, economic deprivation, or deteriorating food resources due to deteriorating or insufficient agricultural resources, perhaps aggravated by drought or pestilence, that group can be expected to aggress against other groups who are perceived to have needed resources or who are imposing deprivations.

B. Psychological factors: Those members of the group who are by personality, training and other psychological traits more aggressive, fearful, hateful and strong can be expected to be more inclined to warmongering. The author has demonstrated that it is possible to develop reliable and valid psychological measures of warmongering and warmongering-proneness.

C. Psychological factors: Those who are prone to subservient obedience of authority, fearful of foreigners and gullible to propaganda can be expected to be more willing followers of warmongering leaders. The author has demonstrated that the trait of Authoritarianism Endorsement can be reliably measured. This trait has at its core heavy dependence on and obedience to authority. It also entails a tendency to see people in far away lands as the source of one's personal problems.

D. Combination of factors: Any given war will be an expression in various degrees of many factors. Some wars will be primarily the outcome of severe resource scarcity relative to population numbers, perhaps as in Rwanda, Africa. Some wars will be seen as the expression of an expansionist, colonizing culture, as was the Roman Empire. Other wars will be primarily the expressions of warmongering leaders run amok, as the case of Hitler's Nazi Germany and Milosovic's Serbia. The relative contributions of each can be studied and clarified in any given case.

E. Species/evolution factors: On a grander scale, one could hypothesize that the successful evolution of the species is due to an alternating peacefulness to promote mutually beneficial trade of goods and information in times of resource plenty and warmongering to reduce population numbers and pressures on resources in times of relative scarcity. The author's research results lend support such a

theory.

Regarding psychological factors, scientific studies can be conducted to explore such hypotheses, for example to determine if there are reliably measurable human traits of Awarmongering@ and Awarmongering-proneness@. One can explore the relationship between pro-social traits and attitudes about peace and war and the relationship between anti-social traits and attitudes about peace and war.

One can determine the proportion of persons who espouse war or peace or cooperation and study the relationship between these traits and related ones, such as endorsement of different types of government, sustainable policies and programs and a positive foreign policy. The author has conducted studies of these sorts.

4. Political philosophers propose one or another source of political authority, in whom ultimate responsibility for governing should be placed, whether authoritarian leaders to be obeyed, even under tyranny, or the people via some form of popular government, such as representative or direct democracy, or some combination of two or more individuals or groups, each with a degree of political power.

I believe that via polls of the public the merits of these various forms of government can be explored. Rather than leaving it up to philosophers to decide, the public can be asked what forms of government they prefer. Endorsement levels for new forms of democracy, such as ones incorporating more direct citizen input, can be explored by research. Pro-social and anti-social traits can be measured and related to such preferences.

The proportion of the populace that manifests pro-social and anti-social traits can be determined. The public can be asked how strongly they endorse various principles of human rights, whether they want separation of church and state, their attitudes about foreign policy, peace and war. Whether some forms of government are more preferred by anti-social persons and other forms by pro-social persons can be determined. Thus, the Amaturity@ or constructiveness of each form of government can be explored, from this perspective. Similarly, “good” or “pro-social” public desires can be differentiated from “bad” or “anti-social ones simply by running correlations between responses to government poll items and these pro-social and anti-social traits.

5. Political philosophers struggle with the place of religion in human affairs,

specifically in political matters. Does religious authority give to some leaders, such as monarchs, their right to lead? Is religion to be kept separate from politics and government? Does religious behavior and belief have any place in democratic governments? Is religious belief to be of one form and united with government or of many and any forms, as freely practiced and chosen by members of the public?

My research reveals two basic types of religious belief, fundamentalist and kindly, with strong ties to warmongering and peace-loving political attitudes respectively. The majority of citizens want separation of church and state and freedom to practice any civil religion. It would seem that fundamentalist religious leaders who espouse war on general principles, as warmongers, should be kept out of top government positions to protect nations from warmongering. Warmongers are not needed to fight defensive wars. Eisenhower, for example, is rated much higher than George Patton on warmongering-proneness.

6. While not universally espoused, many political philosophers advocate government serving the public as a whole, the Acommon good@. How to define and measure this common good is the practical challenge. And any measure of public opinion on such matters was not practical before the development of modern behavioral science and electronic communications.

I believe that one crude way to determine the public good has been based simply upon self-interest, as by appealing to special interest groups in political campaigning for citizen votes. Thus, by this approach, the Acommon good@ is what people selfishly want. However, selfishness, or compromises between competing selfish interests, is not necessarily in the common good from other perspectives. For example, prohibitively expensive medical technology, use of fossil fuels, covering agricultural land with buildings and roads, and constant high military spending serve short-term interests but at long term costs that may be counterproductive to a society. If sustainability and a positive foreign policy are valued, then government consisting of selfish policies and programs is not appropriate. If preoccupation with militarism leads to repeated aggressive wars, human society as a whole is not well-served. Nationalism and competition can lead to short-term benefits to one nation but at the expense of others. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels circles the globe affecting all nations.

My research implies that the majority of people can be trusted to define political processes that are noble, appropriate, peaceful, practical, and sustainable.

Specifically, my studies have revealed that:

1. Assessment of the public yields consistent, reliable measures of politically relevant traits, attitudes and opinions.
2. A strong majority of citizens are pro-social, endorsing the kindly religious orientation, human rights, sustainable policies and programs, public democracy and a positive foreign policy. Pro-social citizens are more likely than anti-social citizens to endorse a wide variety of constructive, specific political processes in general and specific improvement in government services of a pro-social content, such as health care, and affordable housing and public education.
3. A strong majority prefer government legislation not based on competing or compromising special interest groups per se, as exemplified by political parties appealing to special interest group interests and financed by special interest groups, but rather...
4. Government serving the common good, defined specifically as the Abest interests of the community overall@.
5. The public provides a clear, reasonable and noble agenda for human rights, separation of church and state, a positive, peaceful foreign policy and details on how a political party could be designed to promote government serving the best interests of the community overall, as defined by specific policies and programs defined by public opinion polls.
6. The public endorses election of political candidates whose campaigns are supported only by individual party member dues and whose political activities in office represent only the party agenda determined by votes of party members as individuals, not as members of special interest groups.
7. Pro-social citizens trust direct public judgment more than top government officials in making major political policy decisions, as on matters of budgeting, war and a national health care program. In contrast, anti-social citizens do tend to trust top officials instead of the public.

Issues in Modern Political Philosophy:

In more recent political philosophy, additional issues are addressed (Hudelson, 1999), such as:

The rights of minority religious groups, such as Jews, including those embodied in states, such as Israel.

The desires or rights of individual citizens for opportunities in educational and vocational pursuits and in broader economic matters.

The desires and rights of persons in subcultures, e.g. to protect their economies, ecosystems and languages, or to develop new ones.

International issues raised by rapid public communication via the Internet and media, air and ocean pollution, resource use, such as fishing in international waters, military conflict, and manufacturing and trade practices that influence people who have little or no direct say in whether they are exposed to these influences.

The needs or rights of less privileged persons, subgroups, cultures and nations, e.g. the mentally retarded, mentally or physically ill, illiterate, poorly educated, minority ethnic groups in majority ethnic communities, children and women, and the needs and desires of gay and lesbian persons.

The needs, desires or rights of individuals versus groups of persons and of individuals versus powerful organizations, such as insurance companies, corporations, and governments themselves.

In short, we can create a possibly endless and endlessly evolving list of such issues of value that can be addressed by governments and are thus legitimate topics of political philosophy and theory, and political science and applied sciences, such as applied political psychology.

An expanding role for psychology, applied political psychology.

A review of political philosophy highlights issues or features that can be addressed by applied political psychology. Applied political psychology can be defined as efforts to apply the findings and methods of psychology as a science to practical immediate problems in the arena of government and politics.

For example, opinion pollsters are employed to sample public opinion on a variety

of politically relevant issues, including their intentions to vote for candidates and their reasons for voting for or against specific ballot measures.

Psychologists can conduct research to measure the endorsement of human rights, foreign policies, preferred types of government, warmongering, religious orientations and related issues and to study the relationships between all of these traits and opinions and political preferences.

They can design models for new political parties and study citizen preferences for specific features of such model parties to improve the models. Psychologists can explore political philosophers= assumptions about basic human traits and preferences and their relationships to political preferences, attitudes and behaviors. These findings can then be applied to designing political systems, such as a new political party better serving the best interests of the community overall.

An example of applied political psychology. Empirically-based suggested features of an ideal political party.

Based on the pro-social features of government repeatedly recommended by classical and recent political philosophers, and based on the author's findings in studies of political psychology to date, one could argue that an ideal political party would incorporate features such as those below. The ideal party would be:

1. Flexible. Able to adjust to different cultures and features of societies from one period of history to another.
2. Comprehensive. Able to address a very wide range of issues, needs, human Rights@ or desires.
3. Responsive and inclusive. Able to hear and measure the input of all citizens affected by political issues. Repeated public polls can clarify current and evolving public desires re: government services.
4. Practical. Not just theoretical but able to be put into practice in a practical, affordable, appealing, doable manner in virtually any culture or society.
5. Empowering pro-social citizens politically. "Popular": of, by and for the majority of good, pro-social people. Doable by local citizens, by their methods, for their benefits. Correlations between pro-social traits and poll data can differentiate "good" from "bad" public desires. While various philosophers, particularly John Milton and John Dewey, have advocated education for both citizens and elected representatives, with the idea that this will improve government, my research

implies that at least one politically relevant trait, Authoritarianism Endorsement, is independent of education, as well as of age and gender. Thus, education is unlikely to alter this trait. Fortunately, those who hold this position strongly are in a minority (less than 10% of the population). This dramatizes further the importance of government that truly empowers the majority of pro-social citizens.

6. Understandable. Clearly explained and presented so that average citizens can understand its rationale, design, structure and function.

7. Grass roots. A design that lends itself to development widely in many communities simultaneously, using local energy, interest and leadership.

8. Oligarchy-safe. Designed so charismatic and authoritarian leadership is not needed and indeed is out of place, and cannot usurp or destroy the organization. Designed, modified and run primarily by the people, not by a small elite oligarchy of citizens privileged by education, wealth, power, or other influence.

9. Affordable. A party that can find sufficient funding via individual party member dues rather than special interest group money.

10. Free of special interest group contamination, money and influence.

11. Economically powerful. Able to raise enough money to finance its operations and the campaigns of party-sponsored political candidates without special interest group money.

12. Appealing, in meeting frequency, format, accessibility and content, to attract and hold millions of members spread throughout local communities and organized into regional, national and international networks.

13. Engaging. Providing opportunities for members to be actively involved in decision-making and appreciated for what they contribute to party activities.

14. Empirically-based. Having a party platform that is empirically based on scientifically obtained information, specifically sophisticated and regularly repeated public opinion polls of the general public and of party members.

15. Issue inclusive. Sensitive to all psychological traits and perceptions that are relevant to political behavior, including traits endorsing religious preferences, human rights, positive foreign policy, warmongering and peace-endorsement. Open to public opinion on all relevant aspects and issues of political import, e.g. from budget management and foreign policy to public employee wages and benefits to which public streets are repaired first.

Conclusion and next steps.

The author, as an applied political psychologist, has developed a non-profit web-

based research organization, Political Psychology Research, Inc., to continue his studies aimed at refining his model for a new political party to promote the best interests of the community overall. His efforts will incorporate the above insights. The corporation will conduct research over the Internet and elsewhere and publish at its web site all of its research findings. A research-based model for the new political party will be published at the site. As a non-profit 501-c-3 corporation, PPRI will not advocate for or against any specific government legislation or candidates.

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