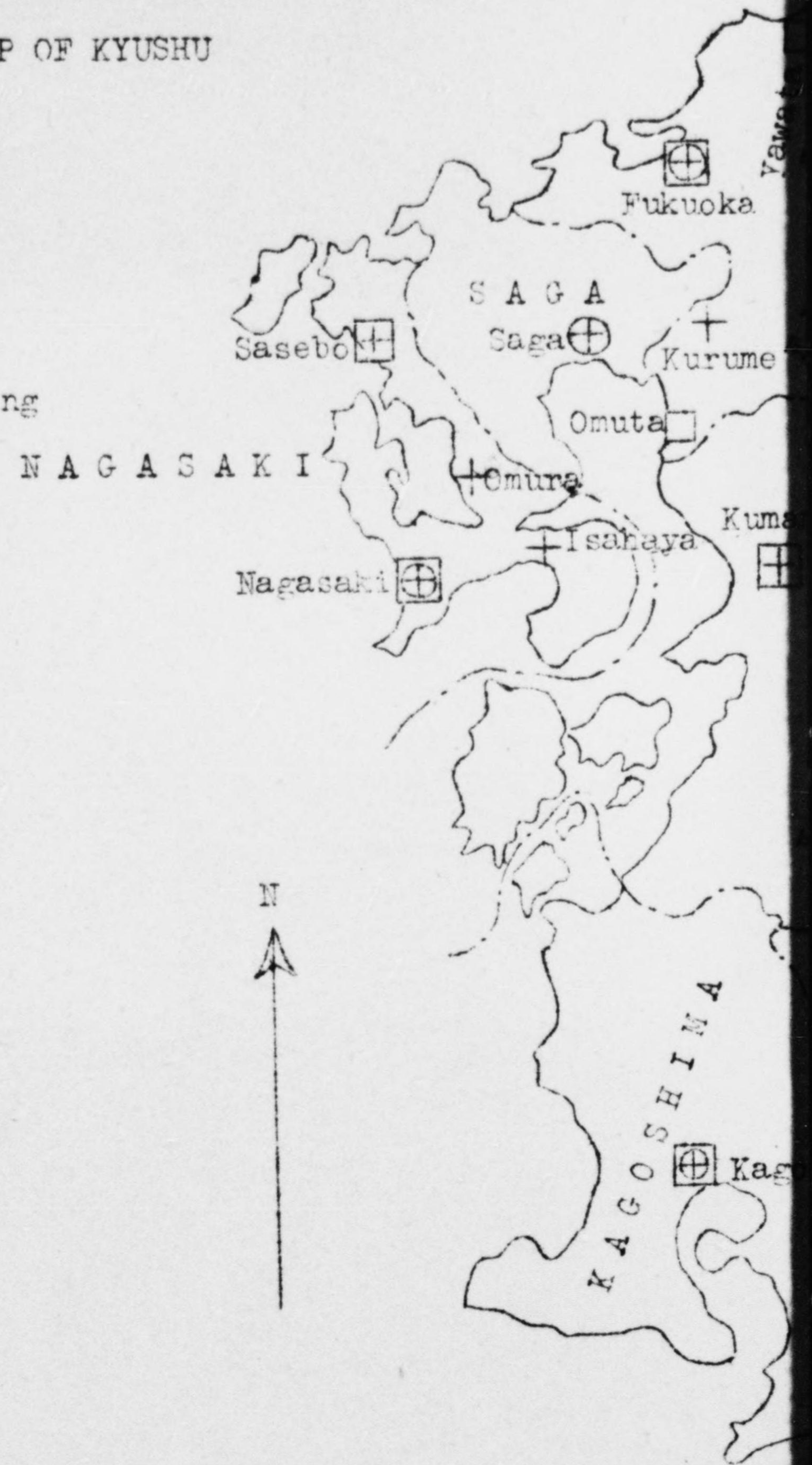
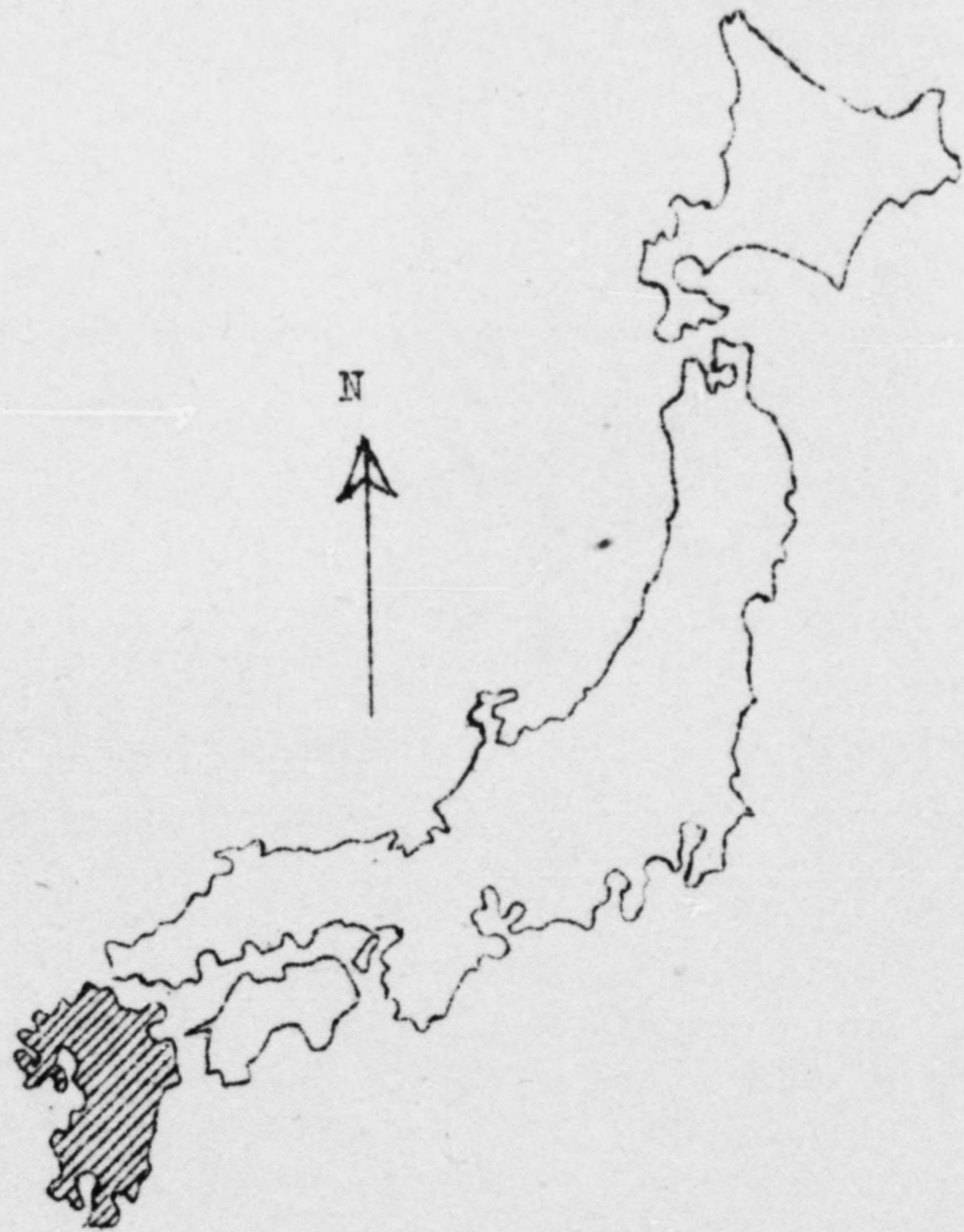


MAP OF KYUSHU

Legend

- Population of Over 100,000
- Prefectural Capital
- + Institutions of Higher Learning

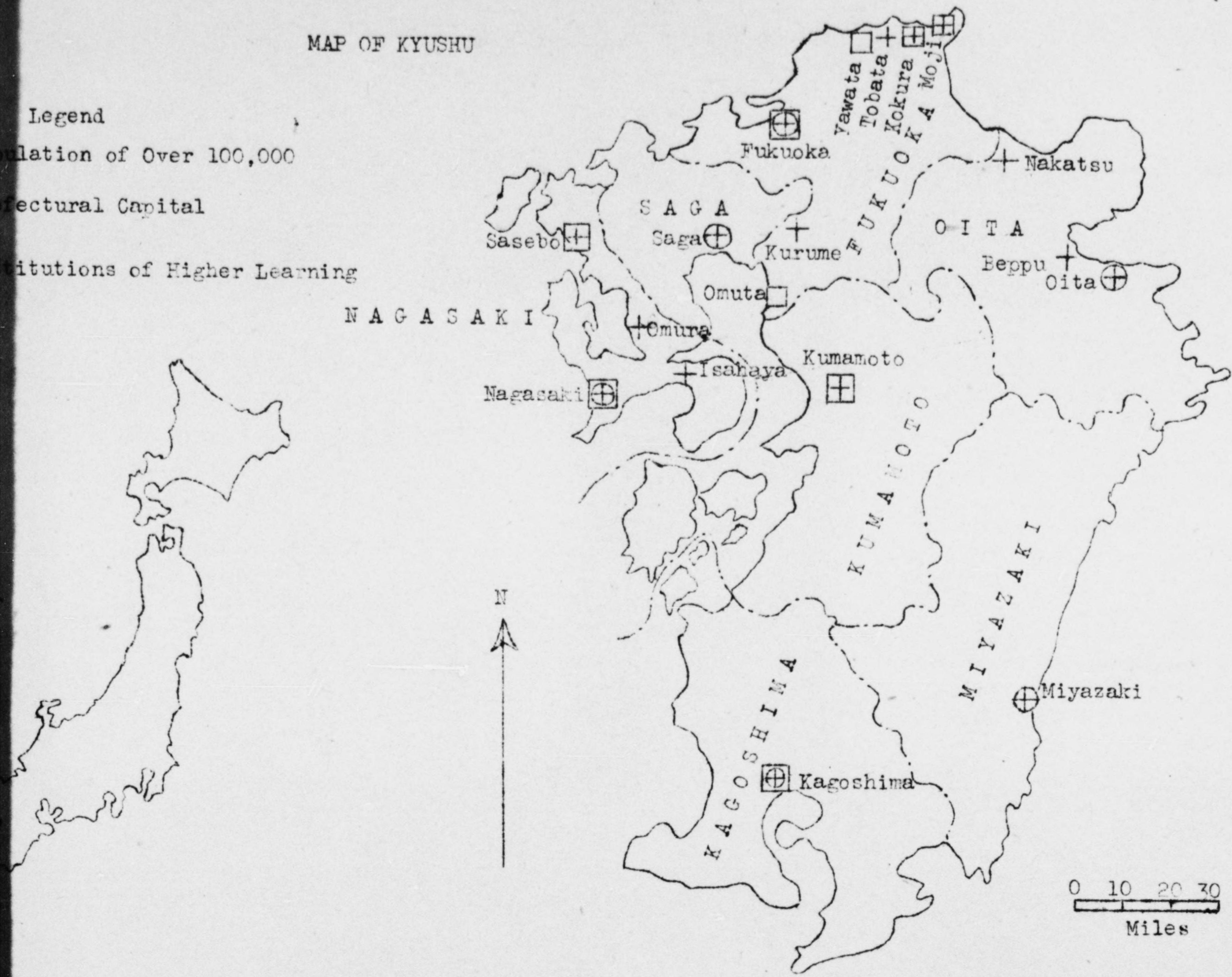




MAP OF KYUSHU

Legend

- Population of Over 100,000
- Departmental Capital
- Institutions of Higher Learning







THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ACTION  
is assigned to



United States Political Adviser  
for Japan

Tokyo, January 13, 1949.

No. 17

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OVERSEAS PROGRAM STAFF  
Japan-Korea Branch  
PDS/J

UNCLASSIFIED

JAN 19 1949

Subject: Transmitting Copies of Primer of Democracy. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Acting Political Adviser has the honor to transmit, in accordance with standing instructions, five copies of an English translation of Volume I of Primer of Democracy published by the Japanese Ministry of Education.

Civil Information and Education Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, has informed this Mission that the principal author of this publication was Professor ODAKA of Tokyo National University. Civil Information and Education Section stated that Dr. Howard BELL, one of its staff members, who first suggested the book, assisted Professor Odaka in preparing the manuscript and offered many suggestions for its improvement. Most of Doctor Bell's suggestions were reportedly accepted by Professor Odaka, but as a scholar of integrity, Professor Odaka insisted on retaining responsibility for the final version.

To date one and one half million copies of the Primer have been printed, 770,000 of which are for use in the tenth Japanese school year. During the ensuing year, Civil Information and Education Section reported, approximately three and one half million additional copies will be printed for distribution to all ninth and tenth year Japanese school children, to all teachers and to adult education groups in Japan.

Volume II of the Primer of Democracy is in preparation.

Enclosure: *att*

Five Copies of English Translation  
of Volume I of Primer of Democracy.

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Enclosure to Despatch No. 17, January 13, 1949,  
from United States Political Adviser for Japan,  
Tokyo, subject: "Transmitting Copies of Primer of  
Democracy."



## PRIMER OF DEMOCRACY

## VOLUME I

The Ministry of Education, Japanese Government, on 30 October 1948, published Volume I of a textbook entitled Democracy. The textbook was written by a committee of Japanese scholars, drawn from such fields as political science, economics, history and journalism, for use by students in upper secondary schools and adult education groups.

The attached document is an English translation of the Ministry of Education textbook. Copyright of the textbook is held by the Ministry of Education.

Announcement will be made by the Ministry when the publication date of Volume II is determined.

English Translation  
Ministry of Education Textbook  
30 October 1948

Incl-1



## FOREWORD

Probably no subject of our time is more discussed than democracy. But how many people know what democracy is and what it is not?

What then, is democracy? Many will answer that it is a form of government and that it permits the people to elect their representatives who will govern for them. True, that is one manifestation of democracy. But it is wrong to consider democracy as merely a form of government. Democracy is more deeply rooted. Where? It is rooted in the minds and hearts of individuals. It is essentially a spiritual thing. It is a disposition and a willingness to deal with all human beings as individuals having worth and dignity of their own -- this is the fundamental spirit of democracy.

Those who believe in the worth of individuals will realize that they must not pervert their own convictions or be caught by a boss's honeyed tongue. Those who deeply feel that people in the same community, people of a neighboring country, people living far away across the seas, are all leading worthy, dignified lives, will be determined to cooperate with them willingly, work for others and society, and endeavor to build up a peaceful, pleasant world to live in. They will vividly realize that the highest aim of government is to bring about mutual happiness and prosperity by the combined efforts of all human beings, having equal opportunities to give full play to their respective talents and virtues. That is democracy and it is nothing else.

Thus democracy is exceedingly broad in its scope. It will have to be realized in all the phases of life. Democracy is to be found in homes, in villages, and in towns. It is the principle which pervades a good government and a progressive economy. It is the spirit of education and the fundamental way of cooperative living which should pervade all fields of society. It is by no means easy to understand and practice the spirit of democracy in every aspect of social, economic, and political life. In order to get a full view of the varied, complicated world of democracy, a good chart and a kind of guide-book are necessary. This book has been written in the hope that it may serve as a trustworthy chart and guide-book.

Japan can prosper only as a democratic nation in the future. To make democracy part and parcel of our lives is the only way by which the Japanese people can hope to prosper. This understanding was the basis of the solemn pledge we took when we accepted the terms of the Potsdam Declaration.

Democracy, however, should not be a path to be followed merely because it is our pledge. It is a path opened only for those who want it and are willing to pursue it of their own accord. It is a path which certainly promises prosperous, constructive lives for those who strive to travel it. We Japanese must willingly march along the road of democracy, reconstruct our mother country which was devastated by war, and regain hope and prosperity in our own lives.

The job of reconstructing Japan falls particularly on the shoulders of the young boys and girls of today. Hence, we sincerely hope that all the Japanese people, especially all the Japanese boys and girls, will read this book and deepen their understanding of democracy. And we hope that you will readily translate into your daily lives what you can understand and practice. For democracy will be of no use if it is understood only by reading books. In other words, only the democracy realized in the actual lives of human beings is a true democracy.

*Japan's  
Problem*



## CHAPTER I

THE ESSENCE OF DEMOCRACYThe Fundamental Spirit of Democracy

Democracy has become a very fashionable word. Anyone opening his mouth talks about democracy and anyone picking up a pen discusses democratization. When one hears and reads all that is said, it would appear that the whole world, like a revolving stage, has turned democratic. One is further led to believe that all dictators have vanished from the earth, and that feudalism has departed from the hearts and minds of men.

Democracy, however, has different meanings to different people. The use of the word has become extremely widespread, and people interpret it in diverse ways. Therefore, sometimes things quite contrary to democracy are called democracy and forced upon a people in the name of democracy. In a society supposedly completely democratized, bosses with extremely anti-democratic powers still exist and the oyabun-kobun relationship prevails. It would be a fantastic mistake to think that democracy is always actually practised because the term democracy is in vogue. What matters is not the word but the substance. What, then, is true democracy?

It is extremely difficult to define democracy. But unless we have a clear grasp and definition of democracy, a serious confusion is likely to arise. It is no exaggeration to say that democracy is literally a matter of life or death. If the principles of democracy are correctly learned and faithfully practised, we can look hopefully forward to a future of prosperity and peace. If not, mankind faces the prospect of war and ruin. The earth where we live is the only world which mankind can inhabit. Whether we can build one world where man can live peacefully, happily, and comfortably, or whether we make this world "a hell on earth", filled with hatred, strife, and the fear of death, depends on our success or failure in understanding, and practising, democracy. Consequently, if we are to seek peace and happiness, it is of supreme importance for us to endeavour to understand the essence of democracy.

Many people believe that democracy is merely a political system. They think that it means nothing more than a democratic government. But if democracy is considered in terms of politics alone, it can never be truly understood. Of course, democracy as a system of government is important, but it is far more vital to grasp the spirit of democracy, for democracy is essentially a spiritual thing. What, then, is the fundamental spirit of democracy? In short, it is nothing other than respect for man.

From the standpoint of democracy, it is far more important for a man to respect himself as a human being and to respect others than merely to vote for or against some political issue or candidate. There may be some who retort that it is only natural for man to respect himself. But just think how many people in Japan have been content to humble themselves, and yield subserviently to power? How long have they been kept from advocating things they believed to be right? How often they were compelled to endure silently, quoting such proverbs as, "where might is master, justice is servant," or "Kings have long arms"! This betrays not only a lack of self-respect, but also a willingness to be enslaved. Despotism and totalitarianism, which have led mankind to great misfortunes, thrive by taking advantage of such attitudes on the part of the people. So, in order to grasp the essential meaning of democracy, it is imperative for each individual to learn first to respect his own personality, and to be faithful to his own beliefs.

Life in this world is necessarily cooperative, based on mutual dependence. Those who respect themselves as human beings must likewise



respect all others as human beings. It would be a fantastic mistake, however, to think that democracy means selfish egoism because it demands a respect of one's self as a human being. He who insists upon his own rights must also respect the rights of others. He who demands his own freedom must deeply esteem the freedom of others. The result is mutual understanding, goodwill, and faith, and the recognition of the essential equality of all human beings.

Christ said: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." Confucius also said, "Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you." If this spirit of goodwill and fraternity prevails in society, that society is democratic. If that spirit pervades the relationship between a factory management and their employees, that factory is democratic. And if that is the spirit which pervades and dominates human relations in schools, unions, or families, these institutions too, are democratic. Wherever and whenever this spirit dominates human relations, there is democracy. Government can be democratic in the true sense of the word only when it is based on this spirit.

Therefore, democracy means far more than merely a method of government such as the election of representatives to the national assembly or the determination of issues through majority rule. It has an exceedingly wide sphere of application, so its outward manifestation will inevitably vary according to time, place, and circumstances. But the underlying spirit remains the same, transcending time and place. If you think democracy varies according to countries, it is because you observe the external aspect only. Wherever and whenever the fundamental spirit of democracy prevails there grow relationships based on understanding and cooperation among men no matter how different they may be in occupation, religion, or race. Not only within a country but also among peoples who speak different languages and have varying cultures, the same relationships will spread. And the world will gradually become one world -- one peaceful world without antagonism, exploitation, and strife. Genuine democracy is a fundamental spirit that never changes.

Thus, in studying the essence of democracy, the central problem is not what kind of democracy but how much. Democracy exists in homes, in schools, and in factories. It also exists in social, economic, and political life. But, to what extent does true democracy pervade human relations? -- that is the question. Is there anything like a scale to measure the degree of democracy present in a school, a factory, a community, a state? We can measure the amount of pure gold in an alloy. We can distinguish pure gold from gold plate. In the same way, is it not possible for us to determine with some measure of accuracy the degree of democracy present in the social, economic, or political life of a community or a state? The measurement is undoubtedly very hard, for, unlike gold and silver, democracy is essentially a spiritual thing. It is, however, extremely important to distinguish between genuine democracy and despotism disguised under the cloak of democracy. However difficult it may be, we must do our best to measure the degree of democracy in our time.

#### Authority From the Bottom Up

The opposite of democracy is autocracy. Autocracy is also called authoritarianism, because those who stand above monopolize authority and cause the people below to do as the leaders dictate. Kings, dictators, or ruling cliques openly or disguisedly decide matters, formulate policies, and make laws arbitrarily, while the public is forced to abide by authority, good or bad. In such cases, those who monopolize authority will flatter, cajole, and even glorify the people. However, the people who live under dictatorships always remain "subjects" -- subject unconditionally to the orders and even the whims of their masters.



Therefore, although authoritarianism takes a variety of forms such as autocracy, fascism, nazism, or dictatorship, there are always the same fundamental characteristics. That is, persons having authority despise and look down on the masses and are indifferent to the welfare and the destiny of the common man.

Autocracy has a king; aristocracy its "well-born"; plutocracy its ruling rich, and dictatorships their bosses. For them, the people are mere creatures whose sole function is to obey -- convenient tools designed to make life pleasant and exciting for those on the top of the heap. There are times when such leaders make no secret of their intentions, while, at other times, they disguise their motives and pretend to favor the equality of all classes. But the result is always the same. There is no true respect for the common man. Authoritarian leaders respect themselves only, and treat the people in general as inferiors. The people in turn are led to think of themselves as inferior creatures, and blindly obey authority as a matter of course.

In times when society was less civilized, the rulers did not attempt to conceal their motives. Tribal chiefs and despotic kings ruthlessly exploited their people as workers and fighters for the simple and obvious reason that they wanted more power and plunder. But, with the progress of civilization and intelligence, the tactics of autocracy and dictatorship gradually become more dexterous and obscure. Dictators have discovered that it is more convenient and effective to dress up their greedy and arrogant motives in the fancy clothes of morality, of national honor, or of the prosperity of the nation, than to disclose them openly. "For the glory of our Empire" -- under this grandiose slogan, the people obeyed, served like horses, and went to the front hardly to return alive. But what on earth was it for? They did not realize that they were being manipulated by the criminal ambitions of dictators. Inspired by a sense of duty to their dictators, they fought and died.

Such was the manner in which Japan launched on the war. The war ended in the most tragic defeat. All the people have suffered from untold miseries and hardships that had been brought about by dictatorship. It may be thought that such a tragedy can never happen again. But we must guard against too much optimism. In our country, supposed to be quite democratized, there is no knowing where totalitarianism might once again appear. Those who are out to exploit totalitarian rule may change their methods and become more subtle.

Borrowing the most beautiful name of democracy which none can dispute, they may try to dupe the people by saying that what they seek would be "for the benefit of the people." They may try to cajole and tempt the people by means of alluring promises of prosperity and power. They may attempt to drive society into confusion, and conduct clever propaganda, taking advantage of the confusion. There might emerge totalitarian despots who will attempt to achieve their inordinate ambitions by any manner of means. What should we do, then, to defeat their ambitions?

There is only one way to defeat their ambitions. The method is none other than for everyone to become politically more intelligent. It is no good to act as an automaton. All of us must learn to distinguish right from wrong, and to make our own decisions accordingly. Democracy is a "government for the people." If we cannot judge by ourselves what a "government for the people" is, then we are not worthy of the name of a "democratic people." Everyone must think for himself and make his own decisions. Of course, it is impossible for all persons to agree on every issue, so we must abide by the decisions of the majority. As we all have our own occupations to keep us busy, we elect representatives whom we consider reliable and entrust the functions of government to them. However, instead of leaving things entirely to others, we must



strive to have our convictions reflected in our government. Then bosses or despots will never be able to usurp the power that belongs to the people.

Thus, democracy is the very opposite of authoritarianism, but it does not mean that there is no authority in democracies. In a democratic system, the authority lies in the people who conduct themselves intelligently and independently. It is authority from the bottom up. It is a government based on the consent of the governed. All political functions are carried out for the benefit of the people as a whole in accordance with majority opinion. Politically, the tune changes from, "Ye, our subjects," to "We, the people." The people govern themselves through representatives elected freely by them. Representatives of the people are not the masters but the servants of the people. Laws enacted by the will of the people not only regulate the lives of the people, but regulate the very government conducted by the representatives of the people. This is democracy reflected in politics.

#### National Life Under Democracy

The governmental structures of democracies will be described in detail in the third chapter, but a clarification of the manner in which the lives of the people are conducted under democracy will help us to understand the essence of democracy.

Viewed from its fundamental spirit, there is only one kind of democracy as previously mentioned. However, there are two forms of democratic procedure of government. The more popular of the two is called "representative democracy." Since the majority of the people are employed in business concerns, or in tilling the soil, or in taking care of the household and children, they can devote only a part of their time and energy to public matters. So they elect from among themselves persons to represent them in the national assembly, municipal assemblies, or other public bodies where political decisions are made. In the other form of democracy, the opinions of the people are reflected directly in political decisions without going through their representatives. That is, people vote directly on a proposed revision of the constitution, the enactment of a law, etc. This method is usually called "pure democracy."

However, it is not really proper to call only the second form of democracy "pure." Democracy is pure only when its spirit is free from despotism. If someone incites the people to usurp powers, or if the people lose independent judgment, democracy is no longer pure. In fact, it does not even exist. Referendum alone does not make democracy pure. Though Rousseau, the great French philosopher, was an ardent advocate of pure democracy, he warned the people to guard against a democracy in which the people became servile and played up to those in power, and, being afraid of suppression, agreed uncritically and unanimously with all that was said by those on top.

Thus there are two procedures of democratic government. In either case, the authority of government lies in the people. In other words, the ultimate course of government must be determined by the people. Therefore, real democracy sees to it that all the people, or at least those who are qualified as voters, participate actively in government. The surest way to reflect the will of the majority of the voters is for representatives democratically elected by the people to assume responsibility for government in accordance with the policies decided by the people. Needless to say, the aim of government is to promote the happiness and security of the people, in other words, to enhance the general welfare. Abraham Lincoln aptly epitomized the meaning of true political democracy as being "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."



Of course, it may be possible theoretically for a dictator or a "benevolent despot" to offer the people a government devoted to the promotion of the general welfare. But it has always been, and is bound to be in any era, a fatal mistake to assume that authoritarian regimes offer any guarantee of a government for the people. History teaches that if political authority is monopolized by a few, it inevitably leads to despotism, and despotism usually leads to war. The only certain way to realize a government for the people is to create a government of the people and by the people. If the people have a government that is truly their own, they will surely use it as a means of safeguarding their individual rights and elevating their standard of living. It is illogical for a people to support, or even tolerate, a government that is not clearly devoted to their general welfare.

It is characteristic of totalitarianism to place far greater value on the state than on the individual. To a dictator, the highest good in the world is an all-powerful state, and individuals are regarded essentially as a means of making the state more and more powerful. Individuals can be sacrificed if necessary to achieve this end. As an inducement to lure the loyalty and labor of the people, dictators will promise that, if only the state becomes powerful, the standard of living of the people will soon be lifted. If these promises are not fulfilled, there are always plenty of excuses. The people are told to be patient -- to wait five years or ten years and all will be well. If it turns out that all is not well, they are taught by the dictator and his controlled press and radio that the present generation should be sacrificed for the prosperity of posterity. In the meantime the lust of the dictator for power expands endlessly. Sooner or later, he tells his subjects that they must have "protection from encirclement" and more "living space," and, eventually, war. The recent history of Japan is a vivid and tragic illustration of a dictatorial government in which a small minority had all the way in directing the national destiny.

In short, totalitarianism assumes that the people prosper as the state prospers. By launching on the great gamble of war, they eventually lose both principal and interest.

Democracy, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that the state prospers as the people prosper. So far from being indifferent to or contemptuous of the individual, democracy has, at its very core, a profound respect for the worth and dignity of individuals. As individuals are provided with equal opportunities to develop freely the best that is in them, the moral, intellectual, and physical standards of the people as a whole will inevitably be elevated. Their economic life will prosper. Just as inevitably the state will prosper. In the last analysis, the strength of a nation depends largely on the strength of its people.

#### Freedom and Equality

Democracy respects the worth and dignity of individuals. Democracy therefore guarantees the greatest possible measure of freedom for the individual so long as this freedom is consistent with social order and the general welfare. It is an inalienable and natural right of each individual to live his own life and to pursue his own happiness.

In a society based on mutual aid, however, it is only proper for the individual to have certain obligations as a citizen that correspond to his rights and liberties. True, democracy guarantees a generous measure of individual liberty, but it is an unpardonable mistake to confuse liberty with license. It is true that democracy permits and encourages the individual to pursue his own kind of happiness as he pleases, so long as he does not infringe on the rights of others. We can believe in whatever religion we prefer, choose a political party, and write and speak as we wish. However, the more we enjoy such liberties, the more we must respect similar liberties and rights of



our neighbors and of the whole people. In other words, the greater the freedom we are granted, the greater is our responsibility to make good use of it so as to contribute to the welfare of society as a whole. Such is the fundamental way of thinking in a democracy. Unless individuals are willing to make the best use of their freedom for the sake of the general welfare, their liberties will turn out to be pearls cast before swine.

Among the various kinds of freedom which democracy respects, freedom of speech has particular significance. During the war, the Japanese people learned the bitter lesson that nothing is more dangerous than a judgment not based on facts. Newspapers and radios are responsible for writing and reporting facts. Based on these facts, the people should make conscientious decisions individually and exchange opinions freely. Through such training, critical minds will be developed and political views broadened. Active debates will be held, based on the exchange of authentic facts. Agreements will be reached through majority vote, and mistakes will be corrected by actual experience. A proverb says "Wisdom is not far to seek when three persons meet together." If all the enlightened individuals of the nation continue constant cooperation in their search for the common truth through the process of free speech, they cannot fail to discover the right course of things. The right course of things thus discovered by the people becomes the compass of national life to steer the ship of government.

Dictatorship, on the other hand, tries to conceal the facts from the people and feed them with propaganda advantageous to the dictator. All public information media which insist upon disseminating accurate facts are controlled or suppressed. All opinions except those favorable to the dictator are banned. Take the horse pulling a carriage for example. The driver puts blinkers on the horse so that it cannot look to the right or to the left, and whips the horse mercilessly whenever it fails to run as the driver desires. In the case of a horse, nothing of public consequence may happen, but suppose it were a man! Where individuals cannot develop their careers through the exercise of their own free will and judgment, democracy cannot prosper.

Along with freedom, democracy places great value on equality among men. Democracy respects all persons as individuals. As long as the dignity of all individuals is recognized, no kind of discrimination can exist. Prior to the progress of democracy, people were born into a society of class discrimination. A man was respected because of his high birth, while another of low birth, with all his ability, was forced to be content with his lot of obscurity all through his life. Could anything be more unfair? Any man, regardless of his birth, must be equally valued as a human being and his dignity respected. A man should not be valued merely on the basis of the status of his family. In a genuinely democratic society, discrimination by birth, race, position, or property disappears. It is a lofty ideal of democracy that all people be given equal opportunities as human beings to improve their minds and to develop their talents.

To treat all individuals equally is not only right as an ideal, but rewarding as a practice. Why? If everyone is given equal opportunities to develop his abilities, the rich ores of intelligence and personality will be brought to the surface to enrich the entire country economically and culturally. Shakespeare was the son of a poor butcher and a woman who could not write her own name. Schubert's father was a peasant and his mother, before marriage, a domestic servant. Farady, a great scientist, was born in a barn. His father was a sickly blacksmith and his mother was a labourer. These men lived in ages that were far from genuinely democratic, but they revealed their genius. If equal opportunities to learn are given to all, what a wealth of human resources could be mined from among the people! There will be more Madam Curies and more Murasaki Shikibus from among the womenfolk of the world, the



greater portion of whom, until quite recently, were unable to receive high education. The world will thus be made much brighter, and the life of the people will be lifted.

Thus equality of man means giving equal opportunities to all individuals to develop their knowledge and talents. To what extent they can make use of their opportunities, and develop and exhibit their abilities, depends largely on their own efforts and natural talents. Consequently, there tend to arise differences in social status that correspond to the individuals' abilities. This is quite a natural thing. It would be a gross misinterpretation to contend that democracy, which values the essential equality of individuals, should give everybody exactly the same treatment. If a capable, learned, and experienced man were to receive exactly the same treatment as an incapable and lazy person, such a system is not at all right -- it is nothing but "bad equality." In a society where there is justice, a person of high character is elected to an important post, while a man who is tempted and breaks a law is judged and punished. In olden times, a Greek philosopher by the name of Aristotle declared that justice meant distributing economic remuneration and spiritual honor to each individual according to his worth. A democratic and decent world must be built on a fair and equitable distribution that accords with the social, economic, and spiritual value of individuals.

#### Comprehensiveness of Democracy

The nature of democracy has been explained. Do you understand that democracy is something very broad?

In conclusion, let us repeat that democracy is not merely a political system. It is a spirit that must pervade every aspect of human life. It is a spirit of respect for man. It is the attitude that values the rights of others as well as one's own. It is a determination to base every action on good-will, fraternity, and a sense of responsibility. When this spirit pervades the people's relationships, there is democracy. Then, society, education, and economy will all be democratized. On the contrary, if the people lack this spirit, we cannot say that democracy has been realized, even though elections are held, political parties distribute handbills, and a form of parliamentary government is adopted. True democracy is not made in palaces or in Diet buildings. Democracy is made, if it is made at all, in the hearts and minds of the people. The true abode of democracy is the hearts and minds of the people who cherish and seek democracy and endeavor to realize its ideals in their lives.

In order to learn that a political system alone cannot create a democracy, let us consider relations between politics and economics.

As stated previously, if there is to be fair government, the reporting of exact facts and free speech based on facts is exceedingly important. This, however, is not enough. Another indispensable condition is the improvement of the economic life of the people. If the vast majority of the people are on the verge of destitution and are absorbed in the problem of getting daily bread, they can hardly afford to give time and thought to the cultivation of culture and the elevation of political views.

Under such conditions it is obvious that democracy cannot thrive. Taking advantage of the situation, a small minority of the rich may bribe information media to have false public opinion propagated. That is plutocracy. Those who are out to concentrate political powers in the hands of a dictator may pretend to care for the welfare of the masses and incite the masses who are struggling for survival to rebel against their government. They are political despots. Therefore, unless we practice economic democracy designed to give equal economic opportunities



and lift the living standard of the people, sound democratic government can never grow, even though representatives are chosen by elections and laws are enacted by the Diet.

The same thing can be said about democracy in social life and education. The details, however, will be explained in later chapters. In this first chapter we have tried to emphasize that democracy has a far wider scope than a system of government and that the foundation of democracy lies in man's spiritual attitude towards his fellow men.

Japan has now a new Constitution. It certainly is a fine Constitution. Yet, however grand the constitution may be and however sublime its promulgation, democracy is not set in motion merely by writing and promulgating constitutions. No constitution, no manner of law, and no structure of government ever, in themselves, brought forth a genuine democracy. Democracy springs from, and only from, pervasive good-will, intelligence, a spirit of fraternity and cooperation, and a firm determination of the people to lift their own lives by the sweat of their brows.



## CHAPTER II

## THE STORY OF DEMOCRACY

Ancient Democracy

Many people say that democracy began with the ancient Greeks and the Romans. The word democracy is derived from the Greek words demos and kratos -- demos meaning people and kratos meaning rule. Not only was the word democracy thus handed down from the Greeks but, in the City-States of Greece -- for instance, in Athens -- the government was actually conducted by a council of the people. Rome was at first a monarchy, but about 500 years B.C., it became a republic, and political and legal decisions were made by the People's Council and the Elder Statesmen's Council composed of free persons. Therefore, at least from the standpoint of governmental structure, it would not be wrong to say that democracy originated with the Greeks and the Romans.

In those ancient states, however, there were many slaves in addition to ordinary citizens. The citizens enjoyed freedom and numerous rights, but the slaves had none of them. The slaves were treated like domestic animals or goods, and could be bought and sold freely by their owners. Slaves were a part of the property of the owners and lived only to work as their masters pleased. Although they were human beings, they were not treated as human beings. How could a democracy, in the true sense of the word, exist in such a society? A government conducted by people who own slaves cannot be truly democratic. As long as human beings refuse to recognize the dignity of other human beings and act as they please and exploit other human beings, true democracy cannot exist.

For that reason, the development of democracy, even in the western nations, had to wait until the advent of the modern age. The first country in which democracy notably progressed was England. Then the United States won her independence and the French Revolution followed. However, even in these countries society was not democratized overnight. A democratic society was gradually built up only after a long struggle and the political awakening of the people. Let us for a while trace the historical progress of democracy in these nations.

Development of Democracy in England

Even when the Saxon Kings ruled the nation, the people of England enjoyed a certain amount of local self-government. However, it was not until the middle of the 11th century, when the Normans invaded and conquered the nation, that a certain measure of self-government became nation-wide. Of course, that self-government was extremely limited. In fact, it took some nine centuries before that small bud of self-government, after resisting all manner of oppression, grew to be the strong, sturdy tree of democracy as seen today in England.

The Norman King who conquered and began to rule England was called William the Conqueror. He was a shrewd man with strong ruling power. He pursued the policy of strengthening his position by favoring feudal barons who owned baronies. At that time, there existed in England a large group of nobility called barons. These barons arbitrarily ruled over their domains in much the same manner as the "hans" ruled in Japan during the Tokugawa period. William the Conqueror attempted to keep any baron or any group of barons from becoming strong enough to challenge his position. But, on the other hand, in order to induce the barons to abide by his authority, he did not forget to give them various rights and privileges.

About 150 years later, however, King John ruled in an arbitrary manner by ignoring barons and attempted to deprive them of the rights granted by William. This made the barons so angry that they rose in



revolt against the King and forced him to sign a document that would prevent him from ever resorting to despotism. The document signed in 1215 is well known as the Magna Carta.

The Magna Carta has been called "the bulwark of British liberties." In certain respects it may well be called so. The Magna Carta provided that the King had to receive the sanction of Parliament to impose taxes on the people; that the people should not be arrested, deprived of property, imprisoned or expelled without trials under the law; and that the King should not employ military force on people or deny their legitimate rights. Through the Magna Carta, the barons could now supervise the actions of the King through a conference organized from among themselves. If the King failed to abide by his pledge, the conference had the authority to protest to the King. If the King, in spite of the protest, still failed to mend his ways, the barons could mobilize the common people and seize the wealth of the King or otherwise torment him. However, it cannot be said that the Magna Carta was primarily concerned with the expansion of the liberties of the people or the improvement of their lives, for the primary aim of the Charter was to protect the privileges of the nobility from being usurped by the King.

Thus, the Magna Carta was a feudal document which determined the relations between the King and the nobility. Nevertheless, the signing of the Magna Carta was a very significant event in the history of England. Through this document, certain restrictions were placed on the powers of the King, and laws, which even the King had to observe, were established. The people were permitted publicly to resort to force to mend the ways of the King if he should fail to abide by these laws. Accordingly, the document served for centuries as a weapon in a fight to expand the power of the Parliament of England.

The number of persons eligible to become members of Parliament was gradually increased,--a process which, incidentally, was stimulated by successive Kings. Although it might appear that the King endeavored to protect Parliament and aid in its development, he was usually not motivated by his love for the people or by his enthusiasm for democracy. More often than not, he was inspired by his love of money. The English kings found that they could not collect sufficient taxes from the nobility alone and were faced with the necessity of increasing the number of taxable people. For that purpose, Kings utilized Parliament as a tool and increased the number of taxpayers. Thus even when the power of the Kings became stronger, they made no attempt to abolish Parliament. Instead, they continued to allow Parliament to exist in order to utilize it. Kings considered it expedient for their purposes to make the "will of the King" appear to be the "will of the people" by obtaining the sanction of Parliament.

Therefore, in its early stages, the English Parliament was not composed of the representatives of the people. Although the English Parliament was composed of two houses--the House of Lords and the House of Commons--the House of Lords was, from the beginning, an organization of the Lords, by the Lords, and for the Lords. The House of Commons was not by any means a commoner institution such as the name would imply. The word commons was not derived from the "common men" like the butcher, the baker, and the farmers. It was derived from the word "commune" or town, and thus the House of Commons was composed of the very wealthy, representing the communes, both rural and urban. This may also be easily understood from the fact that the King increased the number of people eligible to become members of Parliament primarily for the purpose of increasing his source of income.

It is an interesting fact that the development of democratic government in England was given impetus by the very vanity and self-interest of the rulers. For instance, the greed and extravagance of King John caused him to oppress the nobility and consequently to sign



the Magna Carta. Edward I thought that the income from taxes paid by the nobles alone was insufficient. In an attempt to seek a wider source of revenue among the wealthy, he encouraged the growth of Parliament. James I, in order to strengthen the powers of the King, got himself confused with God and enunciated the doctrine that the King rules by the will of God. Because of his despotic government, a revolt occurred in 1649, and his successor, Charles I, was finally sentenced to death by Parliament.

In this manner the powers of Parliament became gradually stronger. An epoch-making event in its historical development was the enactment of the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights was an outcome of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. With the passing of the Bill of Rights, the King no longer could nullify or declare void established laws, nor could he levy taxes without the consent of Parliament. It established various principles such as the free election of Parliament members, complete freedom of speech and discussion for members of Parliament, and the frequent convening of Parliament. It was a form of a constitution curbing the powers of the King, elevating the position of Parliament, and guaranteeing many freedoms for the people. The Bill of Rights served as an inspiration to the framers of the American and other constitutions.

Meanwhile, a Privy Council was established as an institution to take charge of governmental administration. It was a consultant body for the King. Later, the King selected several men from among the Privy Council to consult them on important administrative matters. He used the influence that these men hold in Parliament to achieve the passing of certain legislation he desired. This was the origin of the British Cabinet. In the early stages, the King presided over cabinet meetings, but his attendance became less frequent and the Government gradually came to be entrusted to the ministers. In due course a person to organize and preside over the cabinet in place of the King became necessary. That person eventually came to be called the Prime Minister.

At this stage, the King named the Prime Minister after his own fancy. It was common practice for the King to try to conciliate and appease Parliament so that it would support the Cabinet. Therefore, it was considered that the persons who governed the nation were the King and his ministers, and it was not until a long time later that real Parliamentary government came into existence. At this period, Parliament in principle gave sanction to law bills proposed by the Ministers. Its main function was to oppose or revise bills that were likely to put undue pressure on the people or to intensify their financial burdens.

Walpole, who became Prime Minister in 1721, instead of relying upon the King to control Parliament, used various methods to win over its members. He organized a majority party in the lower house from among his supporters and used them as his basis for government. In 1742, his cabinet began to lose the confidence of Parliament. Although he still retained the confidence of the King, Walpole resigned. It may be said that this was the origin of the present Party Government system of England.

As early as the 17th century two parties--the Tories and the Whigs--came into existence in the British Parliament. Although these parties were split on the problem of religion at that time, they eventually became known as the Conservative Party and Liberal Party. In such a Parliament, Walpole's resignation took place, and it began to be accepted that a Cabinet, to function as such, must have the confidence of the majority party in Parliament. The party with the greatest number of representatives in Parliament was considered to represent the interest and will of the greatest number of voters.



Thus, the belief became stronger that the Cabinet must be formed by the majority power in Parliament, so, when it lost the confidence of the majority in the House of Commons, it should resign and hold a new election.

If such a party Cabinet system were to become truly a people's government, it was necessary to extend the suffrage. Yet, at that time, the powerful House of Lords represented the aristocracy and wealth, while members of the House of Commons practically all belonged to the upper middle class. Almost for 150 years after the Glorious Revolution, political powers were monopolized by these people. It was not until the passage of the Great Reform Bill of 1832 that this monopoly of powers was broken. The newly established class of industrial entrepreneurs was thereby permitted to send representatives to Parliament. Further, with the second reform of the Election Law in 1867, citizens of townships and laborers in the cities were given the right to vote. The third reform in 1884 extended suffrage to miners and farmers. Following the First World War (1918), all men at least 20 years old, and women who owned at least a specified amount of property, were given suffrage. Finally, in 1928, a complete universal suffrage with equal rights for both men and women came into force.

The extension of the suffrage, however, meant that the people were allowed to vote only for members of the House of Commons. As long as the House of Lords exercised powerful influence, Parliament was still far from representative of the true will of the people. Therefore, it was only natural for the struggle between the House of Commons and the House of Lords to become more intense as Parliament came to play the central part of the "government by the people." While there existed rivalry between the progressive-minded Liberal Party and the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, the House of Lords was predominantly conservative as might be expected. This antagonism became particularly intense when the Liberals gained the majority in the House of Commons and organized a cabinet. Thus, in 1909, when the Liberals proposed the "treasury bill" with a view to levying heavy taxation on the wealthy class, the House of Lords rejected it. This eventually led to the enactment of the Act of Parliament of 1911. With the Parliament Act, the House of Lords could no longer revise or reject a treasury bill. The House of Commons could now establish a law by passing a bill three times in successive sessions in spite of its rejection by the House of Lords. The Act indeed meant the establishment of the domination of the House of Commons over the House of Lords. The House of Commons became the core, not only of Parliament, but of all the political organizations of Britain.

The history of the development of the British Constitutional Government illustrates that the building of a democratic system requires long and patient effort. England, the founder of modern democracy, was at first an autocracy. The powers that were monopolized by one King were first divided among the nobles, then to the great merchants of cities and to great landowners of boroughs. Later, political powers were gradually extended to factory workers and to farmers. On each occasion, there occurred fierce struggles to defend the rights and freedom of the people. With the advent of the 20th century, the influence of the Labor Party representing the interests of the laborers began to expand in the House of Commons. At long last a Labor Party Cabinet came into existence.

There is a saying, "Rome was not built in a day." The democratic government of England is the fruit of the struggle of her people which lasted nine centuries. Rome fell because of a corrupt monarchial government. But a sound democratic government, overcoming all obstacles, leads and develops human destiny to the path of hope and happiness. We must learn lessons from this great stream of history.



### Development of Democracy in the United States

The first Europeans to colonize on the American Continent were Spaniards. They were a dominant influence in America for a long time, but, during this period, not even a spark of democracy was visible in the new land called New Spain. The Spaniards who crossed the seas in quest of gold were out to exploit the labor of the natives to enrich Spain. The governors of New Spain held the same absolute powers as the nobility of medieval Europe. They owned vast territories and overworked the natives like animals. In due time, in order to share in the seemingly unlimited wealth of America, the French arrived and attempted to transplant a feudalistic system but they failed. The Dutch followed suit, but their attempt was no more successful than that of the French. It was a history of tyranny and cruelty by the white man. The victims were usually the natives.

It was not until the English settlers arrived to colonize that the first glimmer of democracy began to dawn over the New World.

About that time, the merchants and traders who were gaining a powerful position in England began to turn their eyes to the rich resources of the New World. Although they did not find the jewels and gold they sought, they found boundless fertile land, vast virgin forests, and other rich raw materials necessary for their home industries. There was the promise that the trade between England and the colonies would provide work for many unemployed people. Moreover, there was a rivalry between Spain and England at that time, and a strong feeling of patriotism spurred the activities of the settlers. The character of the British people, their sense of independence and their genuine feeling for freedom, especially freedom of faith, contributed to laying the foundation of the colonial ventures.

The management of these colonies was on the basis of private enterprise aimed at the profits of the colonists, but the gradual expansion of the colonies brought about the establishment of trading companies. These trading companies were given the right of monopoly trade within specified areas and were given considerable freedom of management. But sovereign rights over the colonies rested in the British King and Parliament. The King sent his own agents to rule the colonies. In this manner, the English began gradually to strengthen their foothold in America.

In due time, the merchants and traders, who controlled the management of the colonies, began to feel that it would be better for their own interests to grant a modest measure of self-government to the colonies. They thought that self-government would lessen their own financial obligations, and, in case things did not go well, their losses would be less. Moreover, it would attract more settlers and stimulate the colonization enterprise. Motivated by these considerations, the Virginia Company permitted the creation of the "first representative assembly" in America in 1619. Even when the English King, angered by the lack of profits, dissolved the company and converted it into a royal province, this representative Assembly remained intact.

The Virginia Assembly consisted of two houses. The "Upper House" was composed of a governor and six councillors, all appointed by the King, and had actual control over the colony. The "Lower House", known as the House of Burgesses, was composed of two representatives elected from each county of Virginia. Although its powers were weak, it played a part in protecting the interests of the people from the powers of a small group of rulers. The Virginia Assembly became a model for numerous representative assemblies that were established one after another in the English colonies along the Atlantic coast. Towards the end of the 17th century, each colony came to have a similar assembly.



Thus the original growth of democracy in America did not come from the good-will of the rulers towards the people, but was motivated by their desire to increase profits. Whatever the motive, however, once the seed of democracy begins to bud, it survives snows, cold, and frosts and continues to grow.

Among the colonists who went to America in that period, there were many Puritans who escaped from religious oppression and sought freedom of faith in the New World. The Puritans were convinced that freedom of religion was inseparable from other political freedoms. With strong conviction and firm determination, they strove to construct an ideal political society in the New World where there was no irrational tradition. Among other things, the Pact drawn up by the pilgrims on glimpsing the coastline of the New World from aboard the Mayflower on the 11th of November, 1620, to found an autonomous political organization, became a forerunner of the spirit of American independence. The seed of democracy sown by English rulers for their own interests was nurtured by such a spirit and gradually began to take root.

As democracy began to grow in various British colonies, it was small wonder that bitter conflicts arose between the colonists and rulers of the homeland, especially English Kings. The colonists desired to manage their own undertakings and regulate their livelihood by their own will, but their distant rulers attempted to suppress it. This clash finally resulted in the struggle of the colonists to defend their freedom by recourse to arms. The cry of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death!" tersely illustrated the passionate ideal of the people.

Of course, there were various conflicts among the colonists themselves. There existed strife between the merchants and farmers, and conflicts of interests between rural and urban communities. There was jealousy and rivalry between the various colonies. But the will to resist the political and economic domination of the British was so deep and widespread that it served, more than anything else, to unite the opposing groups and draw the colonies together. Thus, the War of Independence was fought on a large scale. In order to clarify their cause to the colonists and to the entire world, people sent delegates to Philadelphia entrusting them with drafting a statement. The result was the historic "Declaration of Independence."

The signers of the "Declaration of Independence" could hardly be called true representatives of all the colonists. Although the majority of the early colonists were farmers, almost all of the signers were from the cities, mostly lawyers and merchants. However, Thomas Jefferson, who actually wrote the Declaration of Independence, was an idealist who fought for the farmers and was looked upon as a dangerous "radical" even by most of the 56 signers of the Declaration. But, for that very reason, the Declaration is filled with forceful appeal. It not only expresses in stirring words the spirit of the founding of America, but also elucidates the essential ideals of democracy. It embodies the resolute determination not to rest until all autocracies and dictatorships are expelled. Most significant lines of the Declaration run as follows:-

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men were created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to 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 shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."



The War of Independence, which was fought to achieve this ideal, finally ended in victory for the colonists. The thirteen colonies of Eastern America completely severed their ties from the mother country and won glorious independence. A Constitution clarifying the structure of the central government and defining the powers of the President, Congress, and the Supreme Court was written and ratified. George Washington, who had led the nation to the glory of victory through the long bitter war, and who was respected both at home and abroad, was elected the first President of the new United States of America.

True, the United States of America enunciated the fundamental principles of democracy as the spirit of the foundation of the nation. One must not, however, jump to the conclusion that America realized a considerable measure of democracy from the outset. Though the Declaration of Independence embodied lofty ideals of democracy, long periods and strenuous endeavors of the people were required before the Government of the United States of America came to be operated on a truly democratic basis. Indeed, their efforts for democratization are still being made at present and never cease.

The American Congress was first composed solely of men of wealth. These congressmen were primarily interested in protecting their wealth and in profitably expanding their business. They did not trust democracy. In fact they feared its rise. They believed that the fundamental aim of government was to protect their property, encourage commerce, and to preserve the privileges of the privileged class. Although the Declaration of Independence written by Jefferson stressed the essential equality of man and the protection of human rights, it was actually regarded by many as mere words written on paper. The Constitution began with the phrase, "We, the people of the United States," but the drafters of the Constitution were not primarily concerned with the interests of all the people. At first, only one-eighth of the population were allowed to vote. So the will of all the people could not be reflected. It was only natural that, among the people, a movement for universal participation in government sprang up.

These two trends came to be represented by two political parties. One represented the interests of the rich and desired a strong central government to protect the special rights of the wealthy class. This party was called the Federalists. The other group did not desire a strong central government. They were opposed to the concentration of powers in the hands of the propertied few, and were called the Republicans. The first leader of the Republican Party was Thomas Jefferson. With the passage of time, the Republican Party became so dominant that the Federalist Party failed to survive. A little later, however, the Republicans split into two factions. One group represented the interests of business men and were in favor of centralization of powers. The other group, which was chiefly interested in agriculture and the development of the western frontier, supported the decentralization of powers to the states. The former group continued to call themselves Republicans, while the latter began to call themselves Democrats. They finally developed into the two major political parties dominating the political circles of America today.

Along with these political developments, suffrage was expanded, while the property qualification for voters was progressively decreased until it was removed altogether. Still later, restrictions with respect to race and sex, too, were being gradually removed. America was thus approaching the attainment of a genuine government of the people. The majority of the newly enfranchised voters joined the Democratic party, thereby greatly strengthening its influence. In 1828 the Democrats were able to elect their candidate,



Andrew Jackson, to the presidency. For the first time it was clearly indicated that the people could exercise a great influence on government. In this sense it may be said that the election marked a new era in the political history of the United States.

The Democratic Party was supported largely by those interested in the development of the western frontier. As the development of the Continent progressed, the western frontier gradually moved further westward. The western frontier was the safety valve for solving all problems of unemployment and social unrest. It was a land of hope and promise for vast numbers of immigrants flowing from Europe and other lands. However, the possibilities of exploration towards the west were not infinite. With the end of the westward expansion the time came when the United States had once again to consider the proper relations between business and government.

Even though the rise of industry, the concentration of capital, and the progress of large-scale enterprise gave rise to a great number of the poor and the unemployed, it was not so serious as long as there remained frontiers where the people could work. But, once the frontiers vanished as a major source of opportunity, it was no longer easy to solve such social problems without certain political reforms. Thus, toward 1890, there arose the progressive movement aimed at promoting the welfare of the masses by eliminating the remaining evils of plutocracy and adopting a more genuinely democratic type of government. About the time of the First World War, President Wilson conducted new government enterprises based on progressivism. Prior to the Second World War, President Roosevelt carried out a number of new policies. In this manner the democracy of America, a new nation, has constantly progressed. It is progressing and will continue to progress towards one goal--the attainment of a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

#### Development of Democracy in France

In conclusion, let us glance briefly at the situation in pre and post-Revolution France, a nation that has contributed much to the development of democracy on the European continent.

Prior to the Revolution, France was an autocracy and there existed a privileged class composed of the nobility and the clergy. All powers of government were held by these people. The privileged class were great landowners, and, coincident with their political powers, they monopolized the wealth of the nation. For a long time, the farmers and merchants were forced to submit to the privileged class.

However, with the development of industry and commerce, the wealth of the citizens began to increase and their influence in society also increased. These people began to buy a share in the government through the purchase of public bonds. These people, the merchants and bankers, contracted for government projects and supported the finances of the nation. Yet the ruling class continued to live lavishly and did not give much thought to the critical financial status of the nation. Furthermore, they still continued to retain the special privilege of exemption from taxation. Such a condition could not long endure. The dissatisfaction of the citizens began to mount and it was only natural for it to reach a point of explosion.

Around that period, democratic thought was already considerably advanced in France. A scholar named Montesquieu wrote a great book entitled the "Esprit des Lois" in 1748 and advocated that only through the separation of powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government can the people be protected from the autocratic abuse of powers. Another prominent thinker on democracy was Rousseau. Though born in Switzerland, he was active in France. In his classical "Contract Social," published in 1762, he asserted that, in any nation,



Following the establishment of a Republic, conflicts arose within the revolutionary forces--between the citizen class, composed of the more economically stable group, and the strongly socialist-minded labor class. The latter class attempted to establish a socialistic republic in June of that year, but was defeated after bitter street fighting. This was the so-called June Revolution. In the meantime, a Constitutional Assembly was convened through universal suffrage. By enacting the Constitution of 1848 the Assembly founded a republican form of government, dividing the powers between the National Assembly, entrusted with the powers of legislation, and the President, entrusted with executive powers. The June Revolution planted a seed of fear of socialism. The farmer class still worshipped Napoleon. Thus, in due time, the reactionary forces again became powerful, electing Napoleon's nephew, Louis Napoleon, president. In 1852, Napoleon III, too, following his defeat in the War with Germany in 1870, fell from power and the Republic was revived a third time.

After that, rivalry continued to exist between the liberal and the reactionary forces. Although the influence of the Monarchist Party which strove for the revival of Monarchism was rather predominant, there were various factions within the Party which could not unite. Thus the restoration of the Monarchy was after all not realized. Since then France has remained a republic.

As can be seen from the above, striking vicissitudes of power between the monarchic and republican forces marked the modern political history of France. Concurrently, fierce conflicts occurred repeatedly between the democratic and the reactionary forces. It was the French nation that overthrew the autocratic government at one stroke by the great revolution beginning with the demolition of the Bastille, and, pushing open the heavy curtain of the feudal ages, let in the rays of modern democracy to the European Continent. It was the same French nation that, on the morrow of the revolution, admired the military exploits of Napoleon and enshrined him as Emperor. On the one hand conservative forces longing and yearning for monarchism exerted a powerful influence upon the people, while, on the other hand, there were liberals who were willing to resort to street fighting to protect the interests of the masses.

Such a state of affairs reflected at once the national emotional character of the French people and their strong patriotic sentiments. The history of democracy in France did not follow any steady development in a definite direction as in the case of England and America. It was a chequered history of fluctuations. We, however, learn that, in the long run, democratic forces which no reactionary forces can curb or oppress, will always win in the end.

As everyone knows, France was attacked by Nazi Germany in the second World War, and her whole land was occupied by German troops. With the cooperation of the Allied Powers, however, she at long last regained her freedom. This great trial of the French people has deepened their confidence in democracy and has made them keenly feel the necessity of laying a firm, unshakable foundation of a democratic nation. Based on this confidence and necessity, the new Constitution of the French Republic was passed by the Constitutional Assembly in September 1946, and was confirmed by the plebiscite of the people on October 13 of the same year. This must be described as an exceedingly significant event.

The new Constitution of the French Republic solemnly reaffirms the fundamental human rights established by the Declaration of the Rights of Man, in 1789, and declares anew that the motto of the Republic is Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. It declares that the basic principle of the Republic is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. At the same time it guarantees perfect equality



sovereignty should rest with the people, and therefore laws established by the general will of the people must become the basis of all government. As this ideology spread among the intellectual class, the irrationality of an autocracy came to be widely recognized. The time was now ripe for revolution.

Near the end of the 18th Century, in 1789, the Bourbon King, Louis XVI, increasingly plagued by financial difficulties, convened the three-house assembly (Estates General), representing the nobility, the clergy, and the citizens. No sooner had the King consulted them on measures to tide over the financial crisis, than violent clashes occurred between the nobility-clergy representatives and the citizen representatives. The "third estate" consisting of the latter declared that it would organize an independent National Assembly and change the existing autocratic order. The curtain was now raised for the great Revolution.

The new National Assembly resolved to abolish the privileges of the nobility and the clergy. During that year, it further instituted the famous "Declaration of the Rights of Man," clarifying the fundamental principles of the Revolution. The purport of the Declaration was like this:-

Man possesses the inborn rights of freedom and equality. Any form of government has its raison d'être in the protection and promotion of these heaven-given rights of men. Therefore the powers controlling the government should be derived from the people, -in other words, sovereignty always resides with the people. The people make laws by their general will, guarantee their own rights, and prohibit any abuses of power. Thus all men are equal before the law and must have all freedoms in so far as law permits. Each individual is free, but his personal freedom must not encroach upon the freedom of others.

The "Declaration of the Rights of Man" established these principles and laid one of the foundation-stones of the new democratic age. So it is said that "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" served the French Revolution as its guiding spirit.

In 1791 the National Assembly enacted a Constitution, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man was enunciated at the beginning as the basis for democracy.

Destruction is always easy, but construction is hard. The French Revolution soon led to the overthrow of the monarchy, and Louis XVI was executed. However, there also existed forces opposed to the Revolution, along with the extremists who still felt that the Revolution had not gone far enough. The clash of these opposing forces led to bitter internal conflicts. In addition, rulers of other European nations, fearing the spread of the Revolution to their own lands, began to put pressure on the Revolutionary Government. The position of the Government became precarious. Napoleon, who then emerged, overthrew the powerless revolutionary government and established a dictatorship. Through a plebiscite in 1804 he became Emperor.

Napoleon was soon overthrown and a Bourbon monarch, Louis XVIII, succeeded to the throne. Although a constitutional monarchy was established, his reign did not last for long. The reactionary-minded government attempted to banish the petit bourgeoisie from government, which strengthened their dissatisfaction towards the government. Moreover, the development of modern industry was leading to the establishment of a new and large laboring class. These people, too, began to clamor for the right of participation in government. These new political forces instigated the so-called February Revolution in 1849, overthrowing the monarchy and establishing a Republic again.



of rights for both men and women, and promises that each individual has the obligation to work and the right to find employment. Moreover, it makes clear that any workers can, through their representatives, participate in the management of enterprise. In these respects the new Constitution can be said not only to have been faithful to the spirit of the French Revolution, but also to have expanded it further so as to meet the needs of a new era.



## CHAPTER III

## THE STRUCTURES OF DEMOCRACY

Anti-Democratic Systems

The adventurous story of Robinson Crusoe, a favorite among boys and girls throughout the world, had a model. In the autumn of 1704, an English sailor named Alexander Selkirk was shipwrecked off Chile, South America. He was cast adrift on a desert island called Mas-a-Tierra and spent 4 years there. Taking a hint from this adventure a poet wrote:

I am the monarch of all I survey  
My right there is none to dispute  
From the center all round to the sea  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.

But was Robinson Crusoe truly lord of the fowls and the brutes that lived on the island? Even after he arrived on this solitary island, the birds must have been flying freely in the skies. It was unlikely that animals came to kowtow to him. Robinson Crusoe caught some animals for food and taught parrots how to talk. But they were a very small portion of the birds and beasts inhabiting the island. The rest must have enjoyed complete freedom to fly in the skies and to run about hills and dales.

Man has intelligence far surpassing that of birds and animals. Nevertheless, none can dream of becoming the lord of birds and animals except in the realm of farms and zoos and fairy tales. In the world of men, however, kings and dictators have actually existed for a long time and ruled, not over animals which have far less intelligence, but over legions of human beings who were quite as intelligent as their rulers. Indeed there have been many instances of "idiotic rulers" with much less intelligence than the people they ruled. Why then was only one king or dictator able to rule a great many people? This is a riddle. But it is also a simple question, for there existed a system of government under which everybody had to obey the order of a person enshrined as king or dictator. Those who failed to abide by his orders were punished as the king or the dictator pleased.

A political structure under which absolute powers reside in a single ruler, and all the people must unconditionally obey his orders, is called an autocracy. If the ruler has so high an hereditary status that it makes him inaccessible to the common man, he is called an autocratic monarch. Why is it that the people hold an autocratic monarch in reverence when there is many a tyrant or idiotic ruler? This is indeed a mystery. There is, however, a device by which the mystery is solved. It is to make the people believe that the monarch's position is derived from God and that his orders are a manifestation of God's will. Thus, since ancient times, many autocracies have been established on the doctrine that the sovereign's rights were divine. As the people became enlightened and began to awaken to the fallacy of this doctrine, it is little wonder that autocracies fell one after another.

Because autocratic monarchism disappeared, it does not follow that autocracy itself has vanished. Even in the present age, there is plutocracy, namely, the control of politics by financial magnates. There is also dictatorial despotism which pretends to be democratic, but actually allows the people little freedom. True, elections are held in a dictatorial government camouflaged under a democratic cloak, but, since there is only one political party the free will of the people cannot be truly represented. The people have the right to vote but the candidates they vote for are usually decided beforehand. Under such conditions, what difference does it make whether elections are held or not? The participation of the people in government is in name only. The fact is that political powers are monopolized by a handful of powerful party leaders and everything under the sun is decided by their will. The people are taught that they were born to work, to obey, and to fight wars. ~~They are not even allowed to~~



question whether their wage is just, whether the laws they are obliged to obey are founded on justice, or whether the war they are ordered to fight is for a righteous cause. They are forced to believe that it is honor and for the sake of the "emancipation of mankind" to fulfill their duties silently, to become targets for bullets, and to die.

Since the beginning of history, many a government possessed, used, and oppressed the people. There have been so many governments of this kind that some people have advocated that it would be better to do away with government altogether. This is called anarchism. Kropotkin, a Russian, is famous as an anarchist.

The society considered ideal by anarchists would have no organization of authority. There would be no King, no President, no National Assembly, and no judicial court. If, as Kropotkin advocated, peace could be secured under such conditions and the welfare of society automatically promoted through the voluntary cooperation and assistance of the people, governments would become unnecessary. If there were no government, there could be no oppression of the people by authority.

So that as it may, a society that could do without a government would be an ideal society. In our earthly society there occur conflicts of views and interests. Since all claims cannot be met, a decision must be made to adopt the opinion of the majority of the voters. Those having opposite or different opinions must abide by the decision of the majority, and on those who refuse to do so the decision must be enforced.

The organization that has the power of such enforcement is known as "government." The necessity of government will not vanish and until the time comes when human society becomes so perfect that it needs no social compulsion. As long as government is necessary, it is desirable that the structure of the government be decided by the opinions of as many people as possible. Not only the structure of government, but also the policy of government should be decided likewise. The persons responsible for government, in accordance with the will of the people, must be representatives of the people, freely elected from among them. Such is the only way by which we can hope to accomplish a government for the people. This leads to the conclusion that democracy is the best government based on justice.

#### Principal Forms of Democratic Government

It is a fundamental principle of democracy that the representatives of the people conduct government for the people in accordance with the will of the people. This principle remains the same in any country where democracy prevails. As to the structure of the systems embodying this principle, there are certain variations in different countries. Accordingly we can distinguish between a variety of types of democratic structures. We shall give a simple explanation of the principal types and then see how they operate.

It was briefly explained in Chapter I that political democracy has two forms, namely, "representative democracy" and "pure democracy." Under a representative democracy, the people do not participate directly in the enactment of laws or in the practise of government. These matters are entrusted to representatives freely elected from among the people. The will of the people is indirectly reflected in government through the organization of the representatives of the people. Therefore this system is also called "indirect democracy." In contrast to this, under "pure democracy" law bills are adopted and important political problems are determined by the direct vote of the people. Thus, the latter system is called "direct democracy."

Among the organizations of indirect or representative democracy, the most important organ is the National Diet. It is composed of members elected from among the people and enacts laws on behalf of the people. The most significant function of the Diet is legislation. The executive



or administrative powers of the government must be exercised in accordance with the provisions of laws. Therefore, unless a government has the support of a majority of the members in the National Diet, it cannot operate as it desires. In consequence, it becomes natural and convenient for the political party or parties commanding the majority in the Diet to form a cabinet. If one party does not command the majority in the Diet, two or more parties unite and form a coalition cabinet. This structure of government is called "Parliamentary Government."

In contrast, there is a system under which the executive has a position largely independent of the Diet. Under this system, the chief of government, for instance a President of the United States, is not nominated by the Congress, but is elected from among the people by a different method. Under the parliamentary form of democracy, the executive is dependent on the legislature, but under the American structure of democracy the executive and the legislative branches are "separated." Therefore, this is called democracy based on the "separation of powers."

In parallel with the above, the system of courts, which hold trials in accordance with laws, has developed in all democratic nations. The courts are entrusted with judicial powers independent of the legislature and the executive. As far as this "independence of the judiciary" is concerned, there is no difference between the structure of parliamentary government and the structure based on the separation of powers.

Under direct democracy, laws are decided directly by the vote of the people. Although there is a Diet or Congress, it only deliberates on the law bills, and their adoption is decided by a "people's vote." This is called "referendum" in English. In countries with a greater measure of direct democracy, the people not only approve or reject law bills by referendum, but they can also submit law bills on their own part. This is called "initiative." Law bills submitted by a certain number of people by means of the initiative become laws after being further approved by the majority of the voters or being adopted by the legislative body.

The above-mentioned three structures of democracy are seldom if ever materialized in their pure forms. Different countries have different systems which are either a variety of forms or include variations departing from the pure form. We may, however, say that England is a model of Parliamentary Government, the United States is a model of the separation of powers, and Switzerland is a model of direct democracy. So let us study how the structures of democracy actually operate in these three countries.

#### The British Structure

It was in England that modern democracy first saw the light of day. England might well be called the founder of modern democracy. It is often said that the modern ages have learned religion from the East, the alphabet from Egypt, law from Rome, and much about political institutions from England. As the political structure under the new Constitution of Japan is similar to that of England, it seems helpful for us to begin with the study of the British political structure.

The center of the British political structure is Parliament. The British Parliament has almost almighty powers. Describing its omnipotent powers, someone said, "British Parliament can do everything except change a woman into a man or a man into a woman." Parliament is a bicameral institution composed of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Since the House of Lords is composed exclusively of hereditary lords, it is the House of Commons that is the centre of the British Parliament. When we talk about the democratic character of the British government and the strong powers of Parliament, we mean that the House of Commons has tremendous powers.

The English political structure is a constitutional monarchy, in which the King formally occupies the top position. Originally the King was



regarded as the source of honor and justice, and the possessor of the supreme power to make and enforce laws. But, as a result of long political struggles by the people who demanded democracy, actual governmental powers were gradually transferred to Parliament. Consequently the right to initiate and deliberate on law bills now resides solely in Parliament. The King has no say in these matters. Although technically the King has the right to reject law bills passed by Parliament, this veto power has never been exercised by an English King since 1707. In a word, the actual powers of the King are extremely limited. English scholars thus describe the King as the figure-head on the top of the edifice of democracy. The King is the highest, honored symbol to whom the peoples of the British Isles and the Dominions look up and pledge their loyalty, and is the splendid chain that binds together the British Commonwealth of Nations.

For this reason, although England is a monarchy, the powers of government are actually exercised by Parliament, particularly by the House of Commons whose members are elected by the people and represent the people. The English Parliament, centering around the House of Commons, is not only the highest organ of the state with the exclusive power of legislation, but plays the exceedingly important role in criticizing every action of the government. The government has the support of the majority party in Parliament, but there is always an opposition party in Parliament which ceaselessly criticizes and attacks government policies. In the face of such criticism, the government must constantly explain and defend its policies. Through such a process the government is constantly called upon to reconsider its political policies, and the people are trained to observe the focal points of political problems with a critical eye. Parliament fulfills its most important function as an arena where fair and open political discussions are held. It may be said that the English Parliament usually performs this important function in an exemplary manner.

Members of the House of Commons are elected by all men and women not less than 21 years old. It is complete universal suffrage guaranteeing equal rights for men and women. It took a long, long time, however, before the present universal suffrage was realized. In the early stages, suffrage was restricted to a propertied few, so the true will of the people was not at all reflected in Parliament. Suffrage was gradually expanded, until, in 1929, women were at last given equal political rights. The movement for women's suffrage in England is well known among the histories of the development of constitutional government. In striking contrast, the universal suffrage now recognized in Japan was suddenly granted to the people without any struggle on their part. For this very reason, even though the external political structure may be magnificent, the political awakening and training of the people is comparatively immature. Can we fill this magnificent structure with the substance of democratic government worthy of the edifice? It depends solely on the resolve of the people to live up to the fundamental spirit of democracy.

While the English House of Commons truly represents the will of the people, the House of Lords, as stated above, is composed of hereditary lords. Since lords are a legacy of the feudal ages, a system in which lords automatically become members of Parliament cannot be consistent with the principal of democratic government. In England, however, the House of Lords is allowed to continue with extremely limited powers. It was the Parliament Act of 1911 that once and for all reduced the powers of the House of Lords. Under this Act, the House of Commons can make a law by passing a bill three times in succession and by gaining the sanction of the King, even though the House of Lords rejects it each time. At the same time, the postponement of the decision of the bill by the opposition of the House of Lords enables public opinion to make enlightened criticism, with the desirable effect that thoughtless legislation is avoided, or at least minimized. This may be considered a merit of the bicameral system.

It is the cabinet which is entrusted with the actual operation of government with the support of the Parliament. There are three conventional principles governing the organization and resignation of the



cabinet. The first principle is that ministers must be members of Parliament. Further, ministers who are members of the House of Commons must exceed the number of ministers who are members of the House of Lords. The action of the cabinet is thus subjected to the constant criticism and advice of the Parliament which represents the people. The second principle is the joint responsibility of the ministers. Although each minister is separately responsible for the functioning of his particular ministry, all the ministers are held jointly responsible for the functioning of the cabinet as a whole. This provides a guarantee that all the ministers will unite and work together in accordance with one policy. The third principle is that the cabinet resigns when the House of Commons passes a resolution of nonconfidence or rejects a bill of vital importance to the cabinet. Instead of resigning, the cabinet may dissolve the House of Commons and appeal to the nation through a general election. The smooth operation of these principles serves to guarantee the democratic functioning of the cabinet which is deeply rooted in the people through Parliament.

The governmental structure of England was not built as such overnight. It is the cumulative result of a long historical evolution. While it was gradually built up as a series of laws, a considerable portion has been governed by conventional principles instead of written laws. Thus, although England is often considered the founder of constitutional government, it does not have a systematic statute called a constitution such as Japan and America have. The principle, however, is established by political precedent that, in the event of the revision of a law affecting the fundamental interests of the nation, a general election must be held beforehand to ascertain public opinion.

#### The American Structure

Let us now proceed to the structure of democracy operating in the United States of America.

Prior to the birth of modern democracy, in Japan and elsewhere, an autocrat held all the powers of the state, and could dictate laws as he pleased. For instance, if he declared out of sheer whim that he would put to death any person who tormented a dog, it would become a law. Thus a man who kept off a snarling dog with a stick could be executed. Without providing for law in advance, an autocrat could levy severe taxes on the people in order to build a palace. If he did not like a subject, he could kill him with his own hands straightway.

What can we do to protect people from such tyrannical government? The separation of powers is a device designed to prevent such abuses of power. First of all, laws, in America, are made by the Congress representing the people. The administrative enforcement of laws is entrusted to the President. The function of holding trials by laws is entrusted to the courts. The organ that makes laws is separated from the organ that enforces the laws and also from the organ that holds trials. When the legislative, executive, and the judicial powers are concentrated in one body, it makes possible a tyrannical government. It was to prevent such tyrannical rule that the principle of the separation of powers into the three independent branches of the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary was introduced. The Constitution of the United States of America gives clearest expression to this principle.

First of all, the body that is entrusted with the power of legislation is the Congress. The Congress is the only organization that can enact laws. As will be explained later, the President has the right to veto bills passed by the Congress, but his veto power is not absolute. Both the executive and the judicial branches are organized by the laws made by the Congress. They function in accordance with the laws and within the budget passed by the Congress. From this standpoint, it may be said that the functions of the Congress form the very foundation of all the other governmental activities.



The Congress consists of two houses -- the Senate and the House of Representatives. The United States of America is a federation of 48 states. The Senate is composed of members elected from the states, -- each state electing two members. On the contrary, the House of Representatives is composed of members elected by each state in proportion to its population. The right to participate in this election is very widely recognized on the basis of equality. Discrimination according to sex has long vanished. Discrimination due to color is also being gradually eliminated. That "all men are created equal" is the great principle recognized as self-evident by the American Declaration of Independence. So far as equal participation in government is concerned, this principle, it may be said, has already widely materialized in America.

The main function of the Congress is legislation, in which no other institution may participate. Accordingly, the President can recommend legislation to the Congress, but he cannot personally initiate laws. This is a result of the strict separation of powers.

When a bill is passed by either House, it is immediately sent to the other House. For example, if a bill is passed by the Senate, it is at once sent to the House of Representatives. If the latter passes the bill without revision, it is signed by the speakers of both houses and submitted to the President. If the President approves it, he signs and sends it to the State Department. It is then promulgated by the State Department. If the President vetoes the bill, he states his reasons and sends the bill back to the house which first passed it. However, even if the President vetoes the bill, it becomes law if it is passed again with a two thirds majority of both Houses. This is what we meant when we mentioned earlier that the veto power of the President is not absolute.

Secondly, the highest responsible person of the executive authority of the United States is the President. The President is chosen from among the people by vote. A boy born in the poorest family can hope that he may one day become President of this first-rate world power. The presidential election held every four years excites the whole nation. The President, however, is not elected directly by the people. The people first elect an electoral college, which in turn elects the president. In other words, the presidential election in America is an indirect election. However, the members of the electoral college do not vote by their individual opinion, but vote for candidates nominated in advance by the political party to which the members belong.

Therefore, the President is, in fact, elected when the people elect the electoral college. Hence the party convention for the nomination of the presidential candidates has very great significance. There are two major political parties -- Democrats and Republicans -- in America. Starting with the opening of the party convention for nominating presidential candidates, until November when the people vote for the electoral college, the whole nation seethes with political discussions. These functions provide great occasions which stimulate and elevate the political consciousness of the people.

The President, in order to exercise his administrative power, has a free hand in naming the Secretaries of the various departments. They become members of the President's cabinet and cooperate with him in the performance of his functions. A vote is hardly ever taken at cabinet meetings. Even though a vote is taken, it is nothing but the expression of personal opinion by each cabinet member. Though there may be some opposing views among the cabinet members, the decisions of the President are final.

In this manner, the President of the United States has predominantly strong powers with regard to administrative matters. A proverbial illustration of his power is an anecdote about President Lincoln. During a discussion of a very important problem, all the cabinet members opposed Lincoln. There upon Lincoln declared, "There are seven nays to one eye. The eyes have it."



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As a result of the strict observance of the separation of powers, the President does not interfere in the operation of Congress in any way. In order to carry out his policies, however, the President must have the Congress enact laws that will be the basis for his policies. Therefore it is of great importance that the President see to it that the Congress be encouraged and persuaded to enact laws which are consistent with his policy. Much depends on the initiative of the majority party, but the President can also recommend the deliberation by the Congress of measures he considers essential. This recommendation is often sent to Congress as a so-called "presidential message." The presidential message is presented in the form of a document or is delivered orally by the President.

The judiciary is entrusted to the Courts. The Supreme Court, in America, in addition to general judicial powers, has the other very important power of determining whether the laws passed by the Congress are constitutional or not. This is called "the right to examine the constitutionality of legislation." The Supreme Court can refuse to approve a law which it deems unconstitutional, and, as a result, the law automatically becomes null and void. This principle has been established by convention and is not explicitly stated in the constitution. But as long as this principle exists, the legislative powers of Congress cannot be regarded as final. After all, congress is a gathering of human beings, and, as such, it cannot always make infallible decisions. Therefore the Supreme Court is given the right to review the constitutionality of legislation so that it can curb any excesses of the Congress in case a majority decision of the Congress runs counter to the spirit of the Constitution. This is a fine trait of the American government that is worthy of special note.

The courts shouldering such heavy responsibilities are composed of the Supreme Court provided for by the Constitution and inferior courts established by law. Thus the details concerning the structure of courts are provided for by laws passed by the Congress. In brief, the Supreme Court has the power to curb any unconstitutional legislation of the Congress, whereas the Congress has a big voice in determining the organization of the Courts. As to Justices of the Supreme Court, the Constitution stipulates that they will be in office for life, thereby guaranteeing the independence of the Court. On the other hand, the appointment of Justices is done by the President with the consent of the Senate. To that extent, the participation of the executive in the personnel matters of the Supreme Court is recognized.

The long and the short of the story is that the three powers of the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary, while being clearly separated, are nevertheless ingeniously designed to be delicately inter-related so that they can preserve a mutual balance of power.

#### The Swiss Structure

Boys and girls throughout the world are familiar with the tale of William Tell, who was smart enough to shoot an apple off the head of his child while determined to shoot the local governor with another arrow should he fall. William Tell, who had the courage to defend the freedom of his father-land, Switzerland, against the tyranny of the local governor, may well be remembered as a hero of democracy. This is an ancient episode, but even today the Swiss set a fine example of democratic government.

Switzerland is a federation of states similar to the United States of America. The Federal Government of Switzerland is divided into the three branches of legislative, executive, and judiciary. The legislative branch is composed of the two houses of National Council and States Council. Each state, or canton, sends two members to the States Council. In this respect it is similar to the American Senate. On the other hand, the National Council is composed of approximately 200 representatives elected from each canton by the method of proportional representation. Proportional representation will be explained in the chapter on the



suffrage, but it is a method of election so devised that each political party may get seats in proportion to the support it enjoys among the people. Suffrage is granted to all men not less than 20 years old, but women's suffrage has not yet been recognized. True, elections are not held with such a passionate flourish of trumpets as in America and other countries. But absenteeism from the polls is conspicuous by its absence. We have much to learn from the calm with which the Swiss people analyze political problems in order to cast intelligent votes.

The executive branch of the Swiss government has a unique organization. The chief of the executive branch in other countries is normally one person like a King or a President, but, in Switzerland, it consists of a group of persons. It is called the Federal Council, and is composed of seven council members elected by both houses. The chairman of the Federal Council is elected yearly from among the members at a joint session of both houses and the title of President of the Swiss Federation is given him. But he has only the power to become the chairman of the Federal Council and to cast a decisive vote in the case of tie vote among the members. He cannot appoint officials, cannot veto bills, and cannot conduct diplomacy. Therefore, the President is entirely a nominal chief of the Federation and represents the nation only during ceremonies.

The most striking characteristic of the Swiss structure is the development of direct democracy. Important law bills are put to a referendum after being deliberated in the legislature. It is not until the people directly approve the bill that it is enforced as law. Furthermore, if a certain number of voters concur, the people can submit a bill and demand that the legislature adopt it or that the people vote for it. The former method is referendum, while the latter method is initiative.

As we previously said, direct democracy, under which the will of the people is directly reflected in legislation by these two methods, is an outstanding characteristic of the Swiss system. At the present time, certain states of America have come to adopt similar procedures. It may therefore be said that the United States of America as a whole adopts indirect democracy, but a few states are inclined towards a measure of direct democracy.

Direct democracy is the most thoroughgoing form of democracy, inasmuch as it is designed to decide legislative problems directly by the will of the people. The problem of legislation, however, is both complex and difficult. Nor can all the people be said to be conversant with legal matters. If the difficult problem of legislation is decided by the direct vote of the people not familiar with law, there is the possibility of matters being decided by pure whim or accident. In this respect the advisability of direct democracy is often questioned. We may perhaps say that, unless and until the political common sense of the people reaches a reasonably high standard, direct democracy is not likely to produce beneficial results.

There are various structures of democratic government. We have seen how the three principal structures actually operate in England, America, and Switzerland. If we were to go on and study the political structures of France, Canada, Australia and other countries, we would discover that they, too, have many differences. Moreover, the political structure of a nation constantly evolves with the passing of time, and will continue to evolve in the future.

Democracy is constantly changing and growing, like a living organism. Nevertheless, the underlying principle of democracy -- that the policies of government are determined by the freely expressed will of the people, are carried out by the freely chosen representatives of the people, and are always devoted to the welfare of the people--this principle remains forever the same.



## CHAPTER IV

## THE SUFFRAGE

Election of the Representatives of the People

A democratic government is a government by the people. It is, however, impossible for all the individuals of a community or state to be engaged in the actual task of governing. Accordingly, a democratic government is usually in principle conducted as a government by "the representatives of the people." The people elect their representatives from among themselves. The representatives execute a government for the people in accordance with the will of the people. Thus, the greater the numbers of active voters, the more accurately the elected candidates reflect the will of the people. Moreover, as the people take an increasingly enlightened attitude towards politics, it becomes possible to entrust government to representatives more clearly worthy of the people. Therefore it is no exaggeration to say that the quality of voting largely determines the success or failure of democratic government.

There are various kinds of representatives of the people, but of particular importance are the members of the National Assembly or Diet whose task is to make national laws on behalf of the people. The use of the word assembly is confusing as each community of any size usually has its own assembly. So we shall use the word "National Diet" when we refer to the assembly or Diet of the whole nation. Laws established by the National Diet govern the lives of the people, and, at the same time, regulate the course of government. Therefore, if good laws are made, the government of the nation becomes so much better. In order to make good laws, it is necessary for the National Diet to be composed of persons who truly represent the will of the people. In order to send good representatives to the National Diet, extensive suffrage must be given to the people, and the people must learn to exercise with good judgment their right to vote.

In an autocracy or a dictatorship, a single autocratic monarch or a dictator and a few trust lieutenants hold absolute powers. They wield powers as they please, oppress the lives of the people and trample on the rights of the people. With a view to preventing such abuses, a genuine democracy aims at regulating all the powers of government, so that they cannot be permitted to deviate from the proper course prescribed by established laws. There are laws, of course, under autocracies and dictatorships, but they are laws arbitrarily prescribed by autocrats or dictators. Moreover, these laws are always made to place the people under the bondage of the dictator. In a democratic system, it is not the king, not the president, nor the prime minister, but the people themselves, who make laws. Even the king, the president, the prime minister, or other persons holding any other public office must abide by laws made by the people. The fact is that, instead of the people directly making laws, this task is entrusted to the National Diet which represents the people. It must be crystal clear how important the function of the National Diet is, and how essential it is for the people to elect competent and devoted representatives.

There is however, an argument that the making of laws should not be left to the National Diet alone. Laws passed by the National Diet may not always conform to the true will of the people. There is a possibility that a law which goes against the will of the people may be passed by the majority party in the Diet and a government be conducted accordingly. So it is often argued that the making of a law should be approved or rejected by the direct vote of the people. The system which implements this argument is "pure" democracy or "direct" democracy as described in the preceding chapter.

The present national laws, however, are highly advanced and have a complex nature. The making of good laws requires technical knowledge and



a thoroughgoing study of all their advantages and disadvantages. If a law is drawn up by the people, the majority of whom are amateurs in law, it is unlikely that the results will always be good. If the people should vote with irresponsible judgment or for fun, good bills, created by painstaking endeavors, might be rejected. Moreover, if every bill is presented to a nation with millions and millions of voters, there is no knowing how much trouble and time would be entailed. So the practicable and effective way is for the people just to elect the members of the National Diet, and to entrust the enactment of laws to the Diet which should be a gathering of representatives with outstanding intelligence and experience. This is representative, or indirect democracy, which is the system adopted by most democratic nations of today.

Therefore, whether a democratic government will prosper or not depends largely on whether competent and devoted representatives are elected to the National Diet. An election should be a most solemn occasion in which each voter chooses a truly trustworthy representative to whom to entrust the important functions of legislation. But there are candidates, who, in an attempt to garner votes, curry favor with the electorate, spread plausible propaganda, or make promises that cannot be fulfilled. Under such conditions, the selection of real gems from among the imitations depends on the good sense of the people. If the representatives of the people are to make good laws and govern well, the political intelligence of the people must first be elevated. If the people have an unerring eye in the selection of their representatives, the people can, through able and devoted representatives, establish a government that will promote their own happiness.

True, the making of laws is the most important function of the National Diet. But, however right the law may be, if it is not administered properly, government cannot achieve effective results. As organs to enforce laws, there are courts, on the one hand, and, on the other, there is the Government or Cabinet which executes the laws. In order to ensure the smooth functioning of government, it is necessary that the National Diet and the Cabinet or the executive should get on well with each other. With this in view, many democratic nations have a structure in which it is possible to form a government that harmonizes with the National Diet. It is for this reason that the new Japanese Constitution stipulates: "The Prime Minister shall be designated from among the members of the Diet by a resolution of the Diet." Thus, when the people elect members of the National Diet, they are not only electing members of the Diet, but they are at the same time electing the chiefs of the government who will be directly in charge of administration. For this reason it must be said that a national election assumes even greater importance.

#### Methods of Election

The National Diet makes laws which regulate the course of government, and selects the chiefs of the government who execute the laws. Thus it may be said that the general policies of the national government are decided by the National Diet. However, as to the course which the national government shall pursue at any given time, there can be various shades of opinion. In accordance with these varying political opinions, a number of political parties are formed. The political party holding the largest number of seats in the National Diet usually determines the legislative policy. In a democracy of parliamentary government, such a party forms the cabinet. When one party alone is not sufficiently strong, two or more parties with similar policies combine and form a so-called "coalition" cabinet. As mentioned before, this is called parliamentary government.

In this manner, a few parties are pitted against each other and vie for power within the National Diet, which is the centre of national government. This may have the disadvantage of tending to obstruct the united, smooth progress of the nation as a whole. But it is very dangerous to decide upon the course of government by the opinion of only one party. It is much better to have opposing parties participate in the making of



decisions so that the problems can be considered from all angles through mutual criticism and argument. This is a nice point of democratic government. In contrast to this, it is characteristic of dictatorships to admit only one political party and policy as being absolutely right and to suppress all criticisms or opposition. This finally drives the people headlong into disaster and ruin, much as a cart-horse is driven by a ruthless driver. If, however, there are too many political parties which are all absorbed in a struggle for power, they will be a source of unrest that will disturb political stability. Therefore, it would be desirable to limit the number of parties to two or three so that they can argue with one another in an intelligent and straightforward manner.

For the above reason, when electing members of the National Diet, it is necessary for the people not only to consider the character of the individual candidate, but also to weigh his political beliefs and the political party to which he belongs. Through elections the people elect political parties as well as candidates.

Here the question arises as to whether voters should give primary consideration to the candidate or the party to which he belongs.

This is a very difficult problem. If there is a clear distinction between political parties, and their policies are established -- in other words, if political parties are mature--then first consideration might well be given to the party. However, if party lines are not clear-cut and the policies of the parties are vague and changeable, then it becomes necessary to give major consideration to the individual candidate. No matter how earnestly we may support a party and vote for its candidate, our vote would be of no avail if, after being elected, he is persuaded to change colors and join another party. Therefore, although we should give serious consideration to the political party, we must also give careful consideration to the qualifications of the individual candidate. Furthermore, we should not feel that our responsibilities are finished once the voting is over. It is up to us to continue to watch closely the conduct of our representatives, to criticize them in a fair open manner, and, by our own endeavors, to nurture and build up mature political parties that will nominate competent and devoted representatives.

The unit of parliamentary government is not the individual but the party. No matter how excellent an elected candidate may be, if the party he belongs to is a minor party, it is hard for him to play a leading part in parliamentary government. It often happens that one candidate in a political party is so outstanding a figure that he is elected by an overwhelming number of votes to the detriment of other candidates from the same party who fail to be elected. In other words, he gets more votes than is needed. Therefore methods have been devised under which votes in excess of those required for the election of a certain candidate are transferred to other members of the same party. A system of election in which members of the Diet are, by the above or other similar methods, elected from each political party in proportion to the support of the people, is called the "proportional representative system."

Theoretically, the proportional representative system is the most advanced method of election, but its actual operation is comparatively cumbersome and difficult. In Japan it has been customary for electoral districts to be divided into three categories. A small electoral district is an electoral district from which one or two representatives are elected. A middle electoral district is an electoral district from which three or four or five representatives are elected. A large electoral district is an electoral district from which six or more representatives are elected.

In a small electoral district, the people are likely to be familiar with the candidates and thus are more likely to elect a representative of high local reputation. On the other hand, in a large electoral district, the electorate has a much wider choice of candidates and have greater and better opportunity to choose suitable representatives.



The election of members of the National Diet is one of the most important elections under a democratic government. In a republic where a President is elected apart from the members of the National Diet, the people usually lay the greatest emphasis on the presidential election. But, in a country like Japan, where the Throne is hereditary and the Prime Minister is designated by the National Diet, the general election for the members of the National Diet is far the most important. The right to elect members of the National Diet is the sacred right of the people of a democratic nation, and the conscientious exercise of this right is their sacred duty.

#### Expansion of the Suffrage

The history of the development of democracy is largely the history of the expansion of the suffrage. When democracy was still in its infancy, the scope of the suffrage was extremely limited. Even in countries such as England and America, people without property or people of certain races or religious beliefs were at first excluded from elections. When the number of voters was limited, the voice of the people in general was silenced, and the aristocrats and the plutocrats had their own way. This was an initial stage in the transition from autocracy to democracy.

Depending on the manner in which it is used, the power of government can be either a medicine or a poison. Just as a drug, when diluted, can be used as a helpful medicine, but becomes poisonous when undiluted, so power, when monopolized by one person or a few, becomes a deadly poison to the welfare of the people. Therefore, it becomes necessary to dilute and divide political power among as many people as possible and thus strive to use it as a medicine. But since those who hold the power can pursue their own interests by monopolizing governmental authority, they are reluctant to extend the suffrage to a large number of people. Furthermore, the few holding the reins of government feel superior and are prone to look down upon the intellectual and moral standards of the people in general. They maintain that it would be dangerous to give the suffrage to such unenlightened people. Unless the privileged class agreed, it was not possible to revise laws and democratize elections. Thus the expansion of the suffrage was naturally hard to attain. It was the steadily rising political consciousness of the people, and the ardent endeavors of progressive thinkers, that surmounted the deep-rooted obstacles and ushered in the ways of fair democratic government by widely extending the suffrage among the people.

An event of particular significance through the long history of the democratization of government was the process of the gradual removal of property restrictions on the suffrage.

There is no justification for restricting the suffrage to propertied people and excluding unpropertied people from elections. Nevertheless, the suffrage was, in the past, limited to the propertied class on the excuse that the poor were uneducated and uncultured. But this was after all nothing other than plutocracy designed to protect only the interests of the wealthy class. People of low or modest incomes normally form the majority of any nation, and it is largely through the sweat of the brow of the working class that national strength is sustained. Government must indeed be for the interest of all the people. For this purpose, it is necessary that the opinions of the people of the working class will be reflected in elections. They may be unacquainted with the superficial etiquette of the rich, but they have the capacity to consider seriously real problems. Poverty may have prevented them from attending senior grades in school, but, owing to the spread of compulsory education, their schooling is increasing and, above all, they have had precious experience in actual work. There is no reason why their maturity should not be put to good use in government. As the demands of the masses of the people grew stronger, the wealthy class, which had monopolized the decisive powers of government, had to give in by degrees. Restrictions of property



Participation of women in social and political activities has gradually become a worldwide trend. Women's delicate sentiments and thoughtful consideration have done good,--quite beyond the capabilities of men,--in many public activities. For instance, the question of improving living conditions--that is, the three fundamental problems of food, clothing, and shelter--would be difficult to solve without the participation of women in politics. In line with this thought, John Stuart Mill, and many other pioneers, advocated the granting of the suffrage to women. This argument won strong public support and equal suffrage for the both sexes came to be accepted. In England women suffrage was recognized in 1918; while in the United States of America it was recognized by the Constitutional Amendment of 1920.

In Japan, it was not until the latter part of the Taisho era (1912-1925) that universal suffrage for men was recognized. During this period, the trend of politics was gradually moving towards democracy. But soon after the Showa era set in, it deviated into the evil path of militarism and dictatorship. Thus such a thing as women suffrage became simply out of the question. But, as a result of Japan's defeat in the war, militarism and dictatorship were overthrown, and democracy has been adopted as the guiding principle of government. With this turn of events, women suffrage was granted once and for all, while, at the same time, the age limitation was lowered to 20 years for both men and women. This has increased the number of qualified voters in Japan by approximately 23,000,000. In parallel with the above, the age qualification for eligibility to be members of the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors was fixed at 25 years and 30 years respectively. This has brought about the advent of younger men and women Diet members who are now striving to build a new Japan.

The removal of property restrictions and the attainment of women suffrage has meant true "universal suffrage" for Japan. Universal suffrage, however, does not mean that all restrictions on the suffrage have vanished. Those who have committed major crimes and boys and girls under the age of twenty have no right to vote. Therefore, universal suffrage does not mean that "all the people" can literally participate in elections. The voting age of twenty years old is somewhat arbitrary. It is quite possible that there may be many capable persons under the age of twenty who have a reasonably clear understanding of politics. On the other hand there are persons over the age of 30 or 40 who are indifferent to politics. It is, however, not proper to extend the suffrage to children, as the suffrage is different from choosing a star player of a baseball team. So a demarcation line must be drawn somewhere about the age of 20. It may be said that the movement for the expansion of the suffrage has now reached its goal in Japan.

#### The Right and Duty of Voting

Thus, as far as the suffrage is concerned, the democratic government of Japan has acquired as wide a foundation among the people as that of any other nation in the world. But this was largely due to Japan's defeat in the war. It has not been brought about by the awakening of the people to the true meaning of democracy, or by their own successful efforts to expand the suffrage. Therefore, unless we have a true grasp of the ways of democratic government, and strive to be enlightened individuals and cultivate political common sense, the widely recognized suffrage will turn out to be a treasure left to rust. The possibility is not entirely lacking that the people, overwhelmed by temporary difficulties, might blindly follow undemocratic thoughts and unite to back up a dictator.

Germany was a good example. After being defeated in the first world war, Germany decided upon a highly democratic parliamentary form of government and established a new constitution in a town called Weimar, where Goethe died. While numerous parties were formed in the Reichstag and were quarrelling with one another about this and that, the Nazi Party led by Adolph Hitler rose in power. The people of Germany, both men and women,



were gradually removed, until it became possible for all the people, whether rich or poor, to exercise the equal right to vote.

The system of giving the suffrage only to the wealthy and "well-born", enabling them to send their representatives to the assembly and preserve and protect their interests was prevalent in every nation in early days. The expansion of political power, which had been monopolized by the propertied class, to the general public, was partly due to the rising tide of democratic feeling and thought, and the increasing numbers of people who fought for the cause of the working class. Another factor was the growth and expansion in many countries of what is known as the "industrial revolution" from the latter part of the 18th Century to the beginning of the 19th Century. This was an evolution from the agrarian and handicraft economy to the present industrial economy. It had the effect of drawing a great many people away from the farms to the cities and towns, where they worked as industrial laborers. Politically they became increasingly more intelligent and enlightened, and grew to be a powerful political force. The newly-born labor class, joined by the small property owners of the cities and the tenant farmers of the rural areas, insistently demanded political participation. At long last they succeeded in abolishing the property test for voting.

Let us here trace developments in Japan. At the time when the Meiji Constitution established a parliamentary system, people could not participate in an election of Diet members unless they annually paid a direct national tax of fifteen yen. This was later reduced to ten yen by the revision of the election law in 1900. At present, ten or fifteen yen seems like a trifling sum, but, in the 1890's and early 1900's, only those with large incomes could afford to pay as much as ten yen national tax. Later, in 1919, the amount of the tax was reduced to three yen. About this time, an active movement for so-called universal suffrage was initiated, until it culminated in the revised election law of 1925. This law removed all tax and property barriers by providing that all male persons at least 25 years old, with the exception of major criminals and the mentally deranged, should have the right to vote, even though they were poor and could not pay taxes.

#### Women Suffrage

We have just stated that property qualifications for voting were abolished in Japan in 1925. The people at that time said that universal suffrage had been obtained. Alas it was universal suffrage merely for men, and not a single woman was entitled to vote. Not in Japan alone, but even in the more advanced democratic nations, the path to women suffrage was long and thorny. Why was that? For even in Western nations, women were for a long time regarded as inferior to men. Moreover, it was thought that women should devote themselves exclusively to household affairs, and, unlike men, should not participate in political activities. From the standpoint of the division of labor, it was commonly believed that only men should concern themselves with political problems.

However, in the light of the fundamental spirit of democracy--that all human beings are created equal--this type of discrimination could not be tolerated forever. True, democracy does not intend utterly to disregard individual differences in abilities and experience, and uniformly treat every human being alike. In fact, in every nation, an age limitation is placed on the suffrage, and children are barred from voting. But discrimination between the sexes is quite another thing. It was mainly a tyranny on the part of men which first placed the position of women below that of men. If women's knowledge was lower, it was due to the fact that they were not given opportunities to obtain equal education. There is no evidence whatever that the average woman is less intelligent than the average man. Even if such a thing could be said, it is absurd to suggest that women of ability are not qualified for civil rights when many good-for-nothing men are invested with the right to vote.



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who were getting disillusioned with regard to the wavering indecision of party government, exercised their wide suffrage and concentrated their votes on the Nazi Party which hold out many glowing promises to the people. The German people made the Nazis the first Party in the Reichstag and of their own accord, established the foundation for a dictatorship. The dictatorship of the Nazis steadily grasped more and more power, violated international law, and trampled on international faith. They eventually rushed headlong into war, subjecting the German people to a destiny more miserable than that of the people of Japan. This is a convincing illustration that it would be preposterous to assume that the enactment of the new democratic constitution and the extension of the suffrage among the people automatically guarantees a successful democratic government.

No matter how widely the suffrage may be expanded, if the people use the right and vote for a dictator, democracy will be destroyed. But that is still not all. We must not forget that if many voters are not faithful to their rights and neglect voting, they will be playing into the hands of a potential dictator who is seeking to manipulate the masses from behind the curtain.

The reason is that, if the people are indifferent to politics, only those out to achieve certain selfish aims by any means fair or foul will back up an influential candidate and conspire to concentrate votes on their candidate. Even though they are a minority, they can thus succeed in their plot to monopolize power by triumphing over the indifferent majority of the people. Even when the people awaken to the seriousness of the situation it may be too late, for those monopolizing authority might even change the fundamental structure of government so that genuinely democratic elections could no longer be held. Therefore, if there are many voters who sleep over their right, it will not only weaken democracy, but will endanger the very existence of democracy.

Nevertheless there are a great number of people who are politically indifferent. There are two types among these people. First, there are those who are reasonably intelligent and able, but for that reason tend to look down on politics as something beneath them. They are apt to despise persons who are absorbed in politics. And yet they are the first to lament the fact that power is placed in the hands of those whom they regard as lesser men. Secondly, there are those who feel that politics is above them. These people, long accustomed to humble themselves, are convinced that politics is far distant from them. They do not realize that politics has a direct and profound effect on their personal destinies.

Needless to say, neither of the above attitudes is right. In a true democracy, the business of politics should be the business of everybody.

Consequently, serious and intelligent participation in elections is a duty as well as a right. Though it is a duty, failure to perform the duty is not accompanied by punishment as in the case of the duty to pay taxes. In this sense, active and intelligent participation in politics is not a legal, but a moral, duty. Rather than as a moral duty, it may perhaps be better described as essentially a problem of sincere devotion to the common good. Suppose a woman in a farming community stays away from the polls because she feels an election is none of her business. She may think that her abstention from voting would not matter. But if many people feel that way, it will greatly affect the result of an election. It is not only in the realm of nursery rhymes and fairy tales that the beloved baby whom a mother is nursing might one day fall victim to a dictatorial government because she neglects to vote. When individuals awaken to this and conduct themselves with good sense and a strong sense of responsibility, democracy will grow, for democracy is, so to speak, a large massive building made of brick, each brick corresponding to each deed of such politically enlightened individuals.



## Chapter V

## MAJORITY RULE

Democracy and Majority Rule

Men have vast differences in their natural endowments, characteristics, interests, and tastes. An attempt to standardize these differences into a single pattern is not consistent with the fundamental spirit of democracy, which is respect for the dignity of the individual. Therefore, democracy respects human personality more than anything else. Democracy strives to guarantee equality of opportunity and freedom of education, so that all persons may freely develop their individual personalities and, by giving full play to their natural talents may contribute their best to society as a whole. In a society founded on this principle, each person can say what he wishes and act according to his beliefs, and, insofar as his behavior is consistent with the general welfare, he may enjoy the "freedom to be himself".

Therefore, under a democratic government, many people express various opinions which lead to active debate. Because each person is inclined to maintain his own opinion and desires to act according to his belief, and because each presents his views from his own standpoint, it is inevitable that differences of opinion and conflicts of interest arise. This tension and tumult may be considered undesirable and unpleasant, especially to dictators. But herein lies the heartbeat and vitality of democratic government. When it stops, democracy withers and dies.

However, if, during the process of enacting laws and deciding upon political policies, each person insists on the adoption of his own views and never makes any concessions, no final decision can ever be reached. Of course, we must respect the opinions of every individual. Yet it would be impossible to solve any practical problem if the people were to accede to every opinion, saying "A's opinion is reasonable, but B's opinion, too, has justification".

Hence, democracy adopts a device called "majority rule". It is the democratic method that, after open and full debate, the final decision is determined by the vote of the majority. A certain opinion is drawn up as an original draft. Each person is asked to express his approval or disapproval by the raising of hands, standing, or by balloting. In principle, if a majority of voters or representatives shows approval, the draft is adopted. If those in favor of the draft constitute a minority, it is rejected. Once a decision is reached, even those who opposed the draft respect and abide by the decision of the majority. This is majority rule. It is a tenet of democracy that an opposing minority abides by the majority decision. Without this tenet, political opposition cannot be peacefully incorporated in a government and social order cannot be consistently maintained.

Questions Concerning the Principle of Majority Rule

While majority rule is essentially fair, it may also be regarded as a method of expediency. Laws must first of all be just. Government must be based on sound policy. But when opinions are divided and no decision can be reached after lengthy discussions, the majority rule principle must be applied, for no laws or political policies can justly be decided otherwise.

However, does it necessarily follow that the decisions of the majority are always right? May we assume that the opinions of the minority, merely because they are the opinions of the comparatively few, are always wrong? No, of course not. Actually, there are occasions when the opinions of the majority are wrong and those of the minority are right. The conclusions of the few who have given the matter more thought are often more nearly correct than the decisions of the majority, who sometimes echo and blindly follow the opinion of others. In fact, it might be said that the opinions of the wisest man in the nation is the most correct opinion. Then why is it that the opinion of the few or that of the wisest man is not adopted in the first place? Why have many people expressed their own opinions freely? And why is it necessary to go through the arduous procedures of adopting one of many conflicting views by such a difficult method as majority



This reasonable question concerning majority rule has existed since ancient times. Moreover, there have been advocates of doing away with democratic government--"which is like lifting a ship atop a mountain merely because the majority wills it" -- and of leaving the reins of government in the hands of the wisest group of men. The most famous of these views is the "rule by philosophers" advocated by the Greek philosopher, Plato. Plato condemned democratic government as being conducted by many fools by virtue of their sheer numerical strength. He maintained that an organization in which philosophers, who have the most intelligent and critical minds, assume leadership in the affairs of state, is the ideal form of government, which alone can save the souls of "degenerate" people. Plato's theory of the ideal state has exercised profound influence on the political philosophies of posterity.

However, even though Plato's theory of the ideal state may be the ideal of government, it would be doomed to failure if it were put into practice, human society being as it still is. If the powers of government were delegated to the wisest men and if the people were merely required to follow the orders of philosophers, it would be nothing other than a kind of dictatorship. According to totalitarian doctrine, the dictator is the greatest person among the people. Therefore, it is claimed that if the people do as he dictates, there can be no mistakes. But who decides that the dictator is the greatest and the wisest person in the nation? Although his followers may claim that he is the greatest and the wisest person, it does not necessarily follow that he actually is. In fact, he might be, and probably is, an out-and-out fraud. Even though a dictator may be truly a great man, he is human. If one man holds great power for long, corruption is bound to arise. And, since political power is concentrated in a small group of people, this power will work as a poison instead of as a medicine.

To hide the poisonous nature of a dictatorial government, and to propagate only what are supposed to be its good points, dictators resort to all kinds of lies. By pursuing arbitrary governmental policies, they are out to boast of spectacular successes. The succession of lies to hide other lies finally leads the people to the very brink of ruin from which there may be no recovery. The fate of Nazi Germany, which once enshrined Hitler as the peerless hero and boasted that Germany had achieved Plato's state, is a lesson to humanity that dictatorial government should never again be allowed to exist.

Totalitarianism claims that democratic government is synonymous with "popular misgovernment". True, democracy is not entirely free from abuse. But the people today are different from the people of the days of Plato. Education has become widespread and the people as a whole have progressed intellectually. As long as the people have sound political intelligence and morality, the system of discussion and decision by large numbers of people will not result in "too many cooks spoiling the broth", but will have the advantage of "two heads being better than one". If the important goals of government are concealed from the people who are forced to follow the orders of the few leaders, the rich vein of human intelligence cannot be mined. Not only will the people become blind, but the dictators themselves will become blind, because they have no opportunity to hear the criticisms of the people. They thus rush headlong towards ruin like a carriage drawn by a runaway horse. To avoid such a danger, there is no better method than the active and intelligent participation of a large number of people in elections and the adoption of the majority rule in making decisions.

Moreover, popular discussion, in a jumble of wheat and chaff, is not the only thing that is valued by democracy. It also adopts a system of entrusting government to the ablest men elected by the people. Democratic government involves entrusting the enactment of legislation to experienced and qualified persons by electing members to the National Assembly, instead of having anyone take part directly in making laws. It also involves the naming of the Prime Minister by the Diet, the selection of other trustworthy state ministers by the Prime Minister, and the administration of state affairs by a government established through the above procedure. However, if the power of legislation or administration is entrusted to the same person or persons for a long time, it will surely lead to various evils, just as water becomes stagnant and breeds the eggs of mosquitoes if left on one spot for too long. Therefore, in a democratic government, the terms of office of Diet members are limited, general elections are held from time to time and the members of the Cabinet are occasionally changed. It is thus designed that new water may always flow into the pool of politics. Briefly, it may be said that democratic politics have adopted and blended the best points of the "majority rule" and the "representative" systems.



### Snares in Democratic Government

The fact, however, remains that the fundamental method of democratic government is the majority rule. When the people choose Diet members, those who receive the largest number of votes are elected. When national laws are to be enacted, a decision is reached by a majority vote of the Diet. The designation of the Prime Minister depends on the majority will of the Diet. Therefore, democratic government is the "rule by the majority". That is, decisions by the majority (in the Diet) are accepted as reflecting the national will of the people.

However, as mentioned above, we cannot claim that the opinion of the majority is always correct and the opinion of the minority is always wrong. During the middle ages, everybody believed that the sun and the stars revolved around the earth. However, in the beginning of the modern age, the error of the geocentric theory was corrected by Copernicus and Galileo. At that time, the geocentric theory was the absolute majority opinion and only a few "radicals" believed in the heliocentric theory. Similarly, there are not a few instances where the political beliefs of a few progressive people have turned out to be more correct and more far-sighted than the convictions of the many. If the majority have their own way in everything and ignore the opinions of the few, it will be nothing other than a "tyranny of the majority". Democratic government must strive to prevent such an undemocratic abuse of power.

If improperly and unjustly used, majority rule may not only lead to the tyranny of the majority, but may even endanger the very foundations of democracy. If the majority is given almighty power to do anything under the sun, it may, by taking advantage of its strength, enshrine one single political party as the embodiment of absolute justice and, excluding all opposition and criticism, establish a dictatorship at a stroke. Germany may be cited again as an illustration.

Germany, after her defeat in the First World War, enacted a Constitution at a city called Weimar and adopted an advanced democratic system. According to the Weimar Constitution, state powers originated in the people. The center of government was the Reichstag (National Assembly), based on the will of the people. The members of the Reichstag were elected through universal suffrage with equal rights for both sexes. National laws were established by the majority decision of the Reichstag. The Cabinet was formed by the majority party and government was discharged according to the laws. As far as her political structure was concerned, Germany under the Weimar Constitution was as fine a democratic state as any other state in the world.

However, while many parties were struggling with one another for supremacy in the Reichstag, the people of Germany gradually grew tired of the parliamentary system. They began to look for the advent of a strong political party capable of leading the people impetuously in one direction instead of an indecisive, wavering multi-party government. There and then the Nazis appeared. The Nazis, which are said to have had only seven members at first, quickly gained popularity among the people, and became the first party as a result of the general election held in January, 1933. Thus Hitler, who formed the Cabinet, taking advantage of his majority power in the Reichstag, enacted a law which gave his Government not only executive powers, but legislative powers as well. Once it gained legislative powers, the Government could do anything it pleased, and the Reichstag came to have a merely nominal existence. Germany became a completely dictatorial state. Under the propaganda of Hitler, the suppression of free speech, and the oppression of the Nazi party, the German people were driven headlong to war and ruin.

In the world of animals, there is a similar phenomenon. A cuckoo does not make its own nest, but lays its eggs in the nest of the nightingale. The mother nightingale hatches these eggs along with her own, making no discrimination between them. However, the cuckoo eggs hatch earlier than the nightingale eggs. The young cuckoos grow bigger and bigger. Soon they monopolize the nest, and finally they push the nightingales eggs out of the nest, and, dropping them on the ground, break them all.

Whenever a democracy thoughtlessly gives excessive powers to the majority party, it is like the foolish mother nightingale. The dictatorial cuckoo lays its eggs in the Diet which is the nest of democratic government. At first, the eggs of the dictator cuckoo pretend to be gentle. But once they command a majority,



they show their true colors, drive out all opposition, and monopolize the Diet. Thus democracy is destroyed at a single blow, and dictatorship alone survives. Germany was a typical example. There is no guarantee that such a thing will not occur again. The people of a democratic nation should beware of the fact, that there is such a danger of this snare.

#### Majority Rule and Freedom of Speech

To prevent such abuses resulting from the majority rule system, freedom of speech must be highly esteemed. Freedom of speech is indeed the shield, or the safety-valve, which protects democracy from the arrogant ambitions of dictatorship. However dominant a political party may become in the Diet, it should never be permitted to silence the opposition of minority parties, such as is usually the case in the totalitarian countries. Where a few parties exist side by side, and criticize and argue with each other, there is to be found the process of democracy. Conversely, if the opinions of the opposition are suppressed on the ground of "national unity" or "one nation: one party", the nation's government will cease to progress toward democracy. So, even the strongest majority should never be allowed to deprive minority groups of their freedom of speech. True, majority rule is the principle of democracy, but no majority is entitled to make a decision which denies democracy itself.

Freedom of speech means respect for individual opinions and, accordingly, means a respect for minority opinion. If the people are politically intelligent, majority opinion will usually be nearer the truth than minority opinion. Even when majority opinion is correct, it will place the truth on a firmer basis if minority opinion is heard and majority opinion is thereby reviewed. There may be occasions when minority opinion is really correct. In such a case, if the majority forcibly enforces majority opinion and turns a deaf ear to the expressions of minority opinion, the light of truth will shine in vain in the political horizon. The majority would be guilty of voluntarily forsaking an opportunity to correct or of its own mistakes.

Majority rule, therefore, is not based on the assumption that majority opinion is infallible. But, when several different opinions arise, it is, in most cases, difficult for us to judge beforehand which opinion is most clearly consistent with the general welfare. God would be able to decide at once which is the truth. But it is extremely presumptuous and dogmatic on our part when we mortals draw conclusions as if we had the authority of God. On the other hand, if we go on saying that we can never agree on the right path to pursue, the matter will simply never be settled. So we reach a sort of settlement by majority rule. In other words, majority rule does not mean that the solution reached at any given time is absolutely right and final. It is a method of reaching settlements which may, in fact, be temporary, but which enable us to proceed further.

Does this mean that we can never discover which of the many opposing opinions is correct?

No, that is not so. The time will surely come when we can clearly distinguish the right path from the wrong. How? Experience is our teacher. Mortals cannot beforehand distinguish the true from the false with absolute accuracy. But once we settle a problem through a majority vote; we pass laws and apply them in accordance with the policy adopted, the results will reveal the truth before long. In some cases, it will be found that the majority opinion was beneficial to the general welfare. There doubtless will be times when results prove that the majority opinion was wrong, and that it would have been better to have followed the opinion of the minority. In the latter case, it becomes necessary to revise the law in question in the light of the policy previously supported by the minority and so to change the course of government. The people will no longer support the erstwhile majority opinion. On the contrary, many people will come to support the erstwhile minority opinion. The former minority opinion will then become the majority opinion, while the former majority opinion will become the opinion of the minority. By following this democratic procedure an approved law is enacted and the general welfare is enhanced.

Thus laws gradually progress, and government is steered in the right direction. In this manner, results of majority decisions are continuously revised by experience, and government is constantly improved through the criticism and cooperation of minority parties and the people as a whole. Herein lies the genuine strength



of democracy. If we neglect our obligation to listen constantly to the voices of minorities and behave as though the power of a majority party were all in all, it would be little more than a dictatorship, or at least a degraded form of democracy.

"My judgment can never err", the dictator talks bombastically. "The direction I show is always right. People! Follow me silently. No criticism or opposition will be tolerated. Don't shun present sacrifices. Your future happiness I guarantee. Even though you may lead a life full of hardships, your sufferings will bear abundant fruit in the happiness of your descendants. So endure privations, for the prosperity of our race and for the progress of our country!"

Many people are intoxicated by the bombast of dictators. Others are skeptical and have opposite opinions, but, if they express their feelings, they will be arrested or punished. So they are compelled to obey the dictator, until the grandiose prophecy of the dictator turns out to have been a snare and a delusion.

To the arrogant boast of dictators, democracy replies:—"Government is the government of the people. The fruits it bears can be reaped by the people themselves. But, for this purpose, the people must first till the soil, sow good seed, and make endeavors in cultivation, fertilization, and irrigation. In this troubled world, how can we ensure a fine harvest of government? The answer is that the people should think for themselves, express their opinions frankly, and reach independent decisions after adequate consultation and study. But it is seldom that all of the people are of the same opinion. So it becomes necessary to adopt a policy by majority decision and put it into practice with the cooperation of all. If the method adopted by the majority is basically wrong, its effect will become crystal clear in the autumn harvest. Then we should make use of our experiences and apply a different method next year. As we thus proceed, the present difficulties will be overcome one by one, until the day comes when we can reap a rich political harvest which will ensure the happiness of the people. We must not give up majority rule merely because it can sometimes err. Once we abandon the method of majority rule, a dictatorship is almost certain to arise. Whatever mistakes may be committed through majority decisions should be corrected later by the method of majority rule -- this is true democratic procedure.

#### Political Progress through Majority Rule

Mankind of today has infinite treasures. Men operate locomotives and steamboats utilizing the power of steam. Making use of electricity, which our ancestors feared as a prank of the thunder-god, men illuminate the darkness, turn machines in the factories, and run tram-cars. With petroleum pumped from several thousand meters beneath the surface of the earth, they run motors and fly airplanes. The atom bomb, which appeared at the end of the last war, is a terrible weapon which can ruin humanity. But, if the same atomic energy is used for peaceful purposes, it will bring boundless benefits to humanity. These immeasurable treasures of knowledge have been obtained by the long effort and experience of mankind.

Innumerable people have been cooperating with one another to achieve these and other results. Taking a hint from the power of steam pushing up the lid of a kettle, James Watt invented the steam engine, and it was Stevenson, who utilizing the above power, built the first steam locomotive. The toy-like locomotive of the early days has been developed into the powerful modern locomotives of today which pull trains at speeds of 100 kilometers an hour. This progress has been made possible only through the untiring cooperative efforts of countless engineers and workmen. In the process there had been failure after failure. But failure is the mother of invention. If our forefathers had been discouraged by a single failure and refused to toil for further improvements, the progress of humanity would have ceased long ago.

The same can be said of politics. It would be asking too much to expect complete success after one trial. The affairs of human society are far more complicated than natural phenomena, such as steam or electricity. Therefore, politicians engaged in managing affairs of society fail more frequently than engineers who work with natural forces. It is the responsibility of all the people to improve their government bit by bit, learning lessons from each failure. All the people express their opinions freely and establish poli of



government by majority decision. Should any plan fail, mistakes are corrected after open discussion and consultation. This is the way of democracy. If the people shun these pains and efforts and entrust everything to a single person dreaming of spectacular success at a single stroke, it can only result in dictatorship. This is as good as believing that a divine wind will blow if only people offer a prayer at a shrine. God helps those who help themselves. Can politically divine winds blow for those who entrust their government to others?

Therefore, democracy from the beginning takes into consideration the possibility that majority decisions may sometimes err. It is highly desirable, of course, to do without waste in the operation of government. It is desirable that the decision of the majority should be consistent with the right path of politics from the beginning. For this purpose, the first essential condition is the elevation of the political literacy of the people. Those who denounce democracy are unanimous in saying that democratic government operated by the majority rule is "mobocracy" (popular misgovernment). If the people were all fools, the opinions of a great many fools would, of course, add up to a major error.

But, at a time when the intellectual and cultural standards of the people are being gradually elevated, those who still say such a thing are proving that they themselves are the greatest fools. It was these people who opposed universal suffrage on the grounds that giving the right of vote to the poor in the slums and housewives in the kitchens would lead to a decline in the quality of government. It is still such people who prohibit freedom of expression. But nowadays, in most countries, it has been found that the more extensive the people's right to vote, and the freer all people are to express their opinions, the better and more enlightened the government becomes.

What about Japan? As a result of the new Japanese Constitution, the Japanese people have, even before they have become fully awakened politically, been given the most extensive right to take part in their government. Despotism has been purged, and everything now depends on democratic elections and majority rule. From now on, will the government in Japan fare well? There is little hope if the people continue to be as indifferent to political matters as they have been in the past. But, if they all study hard, take a lively interest in politics, and justly operate the principle of majority rule with their own responsibility, a sound society will be built up on our ravaged land. The entire world is watching us. The path to our goal is opened when each one of us proceeds daily, step by step, in the direction set forth in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER VI

## AN ENLIGHTENED ELECTORATE

Democracy and Public Opinion

Democracy is not just a mere form of government. It means far more than that. Real democracy involves the living of our daily lives. There are many desirable things which we cannot accomplish by individual effort. Democracy or democratic government may be the means which enable the people to cooperate to accomplish things they cannot achieve as individuals.

In a democratic nation, political authority resides in the will of the people. In other words, sovereignty rests with the people. As we have stated before, all the people cannot devote all their time to the problems of government, so it has become customary for the people to elect representatives who conduct the affairs of state on their behalf. They elect their representatives, such as village heads, city mayors, prefectural governors, city assemblymen, and Diet members from among themselves. With the support and cooperation of the people, these representatives establish schools, construct highways and dams, prevent disease, fire, and crime, etc.—important things that cannot be done by individuals alone. Therefore, the representatives must constantly endeavor to learn what the majority of the people want and what is most important for them.

The population of a nation, however, is so great that it is impossible for the representatives to honor the opinions and satisfy the desires of each individual. On the other hand, it is extremely dangerous for the representatives to honor only a small minority's opinion and to decide on government policy accordingly. Therefore, the people strive to express their desires and opinions through methods that will make them widely known. The representatives entrusted with government must have an impartial judgment concerning the feelings of the people thus expressed, and endeavor to determine actual policies on the basis of the will of the people. The voice of the people on important current problems is expressed through letters to newspapers or to the radio, contributions to magazines and books, or through utterances in local and national conventions and rallies. The voice of the people expressed in such a general way is called "public opinion".

There are numerous media in present-day society through which public opinion can be communicated. Even though we may not all write in newspapers or magazines, give lectures, or participate in radio broadcasts on the street, public opinion can be ascertained, to a certain degree, by the volume of the sales of magazines concerned with a particular subject, by the attendance at a lecture and the way it is received, or by the type of movies and plays that are most popular. These media enable the people to understand current problems of importance, and provide the representatives of the people with an important index to judge the trend of public opinion.

It must, however, be noted that such media as newspapers, magazines, radio, and lectures, can, depending on how they are used, be a very powerful means of influencing public opinion, of misleading the people into thinking that only one policy is good, instead of correctly communicating true public opinion. If a small group of people, trying to promote their own interests at the expense of the interests of society, as a whole, win over newspapers and magazines by bribery and have them write one-sided views and false information, they can make it appear as if the masses of the people desire things which the people really do not want. In this way, not only the representatives of the people but the people themselves are sometimes fooled. In other words, people are duped by "propaganda".

"Propaganda" through public information media does not always have undesirable results. In a democracy, it is not only desirable but necessary to convey to the people true facts—truths that the people must know—through newspapers, radio, lectures, and other information media. Conclusions and convictions reached by informed people on the basis of these accurate facts constitute true public opinion. However, if propaganda is misused, it can dangerously mislead the people. A small minority, through the power of money and organization, can sometimes move the Diet to enact laws to the great detriment of the people.



It is therefore vital for the people of a democratic nation to be able to understand the nature and be aware of the source of propaganda, and distinguish between the true and the false.

#### What is Propaganda?

The word propaganda was first used in 1622. It was a word used by a theological school created by the Pope to train young men to go out into the world to propagate the Christian faith to non-Christians. Since then, it has become a popular word for the art of organized publicity.

It should be understood, however, that since ancient times, mankind has conducted propaganda. In ancient Japan, when the Daimyo fought each other, the grapevine system of propaganda was used to make military action more effective. For instance, in order to stir up a strong feeling of hostility among the people, the enemy was painted as cruel and inhuman. The people were told that only their side was fighting for the just cause.

This kind of primitive propaganda by word of mouth was almost the only method of influencing public opinion in ancient times. However, with the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, the art of printed propaganda developed very rapidly. With the spread of education in the 19th century, the number of literate people throughout the world greatly increased. This, in turn, became a great stimulus in bringing about a remarkable increase in the number of newspapers, magazines, and other printed matter which became the popular media for propaganda. The printing press and widespread education thus became the major factors that brought about the development of the art and science of modern propaganda.

Broadly speaking, propaganda is the method employed to inform the people of certain facts or ideas through the press, radio, lectures, or other means. Therefore any form of publicity to attain certain objectives by influencing people to think and act as the initiator would have them think, may be characterized as propaganda. However, as mentioned before, propaganda is frequently abused. Propaganda, in a vicious sense, is a device used by people to conceal their selfish aims and propagate only the things which will contribute to the attainment of their objectives.

For instance, let us suppose that certain magazines and newspapers have special connections with a particular political party. These publications may conceal the fact that they are financed by the political party and yet proceed to publish only those editorials and news stories that are favorable to that party. In such a case, they are tools of party propaganda. In other instances, hired lecturers may be dispatched to sway the public to adopt a certain point of view. At other times, great sums of money may be spent for the production of movies, plays, or novels. The people, while seeing or reading them, are unconsciously led to accept this biased point of view.

The tragic Pacific War is an illustration. The Japanese militarists and the government did everything they could to determine public opinion by exercising power and spending vast sums of money. Consequently, even those who, in the beginning, were unwilling to fight, began to feel that war was the only course and came to believe that cooperation in the war was their patriotic duty. Even though the Japanese forces were suffering one defeat after another, the people were deliberately led, by the announcements of Supreme Headquarters, to believe that they were winning the war. After the termination of the war they were amazed to realize the extent to which they had been deceived, but alas, it was too late. The Japanese people have thus had the bitterest lesson in how enormous the power of propaganda can be.

With the development of a parliamentary form of government in a democracy, political parties have come to play a prominent part. It is a fact that many party members are devoted men and women who work for the achievement of such worthwhile goals as economic reconstruction, industrial recovery, and social reforms. It is natural and normal for party members to strive to gain control of the government, and to enact their policies into law, by the most effective use of pamphlets, party rallies, radio broadcasts, and other media. Some parties will clearly and openly define their objectives, while other parties will propagandize with concealed, ulterior motives. Under such circumstances,



the average voter is likely to become bewildered and confused, and led to support the wrong causes. Those who can dispassionately analyze the meaning of the essential issues are "enlightened voters". If an ideal democracy is to be founded, it is an essential prerequisite that all the people participating in elections become politically enlightened.

Let us next see how voters can be deceived by vicious propaganda.

#### Methods to Deceive the People by Propaganda

Advertising commodities, though not concerned with politics, may also be a kind of propaganda. Since the industrial revolution business has thrived and the science of advertising has made remarkable progress. Between good advertisements and poor advertisements there is a world of difference. No matter how good a product may be, it is not likely to sell in substantial volume without some advertising. On the contrary, even poor merchandise or useless drugs are often in great demand as a result of clever advertising. Thus specialists in the field of advertising were born, and advertising became an important factor in business. Though everyone knows how people are sometimes cheated by clever advertising, they still are tempted by pretty pictures and enticing words to purchase worthless things. Political propaganda has a similar attraction.

Demagogues, especially communist demagogues, make it a point to stir up the discontented and the down-trodden class. The people of this class have a mountain of complaints, but they are helpless, being unable to appeal to anybody and having no power to influence the people who are in control. So they have to keep quiet. Having an eye on the situation, the demagogues clamorously advocate the things that may appeal to and curry favor with this class of people. They sway the voters by plausible formulas and make it appear as though their formulas can secure an immediately equal distribution of wealth and promote the status of the so-called proletariat. They promise that they will do this if they are elected. If dissatisfaction explodes into a social and economic upheaval, that is just what they want. Taking advantage of the confusion, they assume the reins of government. They have no scruples about disregarding their public promises and proceed to govern arbitrarily. In the final analysis, those who suffer most are the politically uninformed or misinformed masses.

A political agitator appealing to the prejudice of the masses is called a "demagogue" in English. He is said to resort to "demagogy". In Japan we use the abbreviated form of "dema". To talk "dema" in Japan means to spread unfounded or made-up stories. As long as "dema" is known to be "dema", there is no harm. There is, however, a specious "dema", which misleads most people unless they are extremely cautious. When "dema" favorable to one side and unfavorable to the other, work together, the people are led to accept their words as truth.

If we further analyze the problem, we will find that propagandists deceive the public by the following methods: -

First of all, in order to discredit competitors and opponents, propagandists call them bad names and try to stir up the animosity of the masses. The bad names are such as conservative-reactionaries, right wings, fascists, national traitors, left wings, and what not. In past Japan, it was customary to cause the downfall of liberal-minded progressive people by calling them "reds". When democracy becomes fashionable, men of moderate views are sometimes stigmatised as "reactionaries". Such propaganda will become more effective if truth and falsehood are blended with each other.

The second method is the opposite of the first. Propagandists adorn their cause with beautiful slogans. Noble words like truth, freedom, justice, and democracy are some of the best embellishments. But the sheep who take wolves in sheep skin for their "comrades" will fall on easy prey to the wolves.

The third method is known as the "transfer device". Propagandists start with something the people already admire, and then attach to it their plan or the name of some candidate they wish to support. The people are led to believe that the candidate is perfectly competent and the plan is excellent. For instance, the German people were encouraged by Adolph Hitler to develop a



very high regard for their race. The Nazi Party, trading on this characteristic of the German people, propagated the fiction that Hitler alone could fulfill the aspirations of the German race. In Japan, the people, from ancient times, have had a feeling that they are indebted to the Emperor. The planners of the war, exploiting this feeling, spread the propaganda that it would conform with the will of the Emperor to carry on in accordance with their plan, without regard to what actually was the will of the Emperor. They thus called the Red Conscription Paper an "Order of the Emperor" and sent the people to the front by force.

The fourth method is the writing of articles and the printing of pictures that may favorably impress the masses. Even though a dictator may live in a magnificent mansion and enjoy all the luxuries of life, he is often seen in movies digging the ground with a shovel like a common laborer. It makes the people believe that he is their "comrade". A Prime Minister may drive to the suburbs in a limousine and change to a horse before he enters a poor village. If a newspaper pictures him talking to poor farmers, the people are moved by the action of the kind Prime Minister who, amid his multitudinous duties, is so considerate as to take the trouble to observe on horseback the conditions of the people.

The fifth method is the clever blending of truths and falsehoods. No matter how skillful the propaganda, out-and-out lies are sooner or later detected by the people. So propagandists start out with the truth to win the people's confidence. Then they introduce half-truths and later out-right falsehoods and thus finally succeed in making them appear to be the truth. It is also possible to mislead people by emphasizing only a certain portion of the truth and expressing it in a certain manner. Here is an amusing illustration:

A freight ship was sailing on the Indian Ocean. The Captain and the First Mate of the freighter were taking turns every other day on the watch and each would write the log on his duty day. The Captain was a sober, abstemious man, while the First Mate was a typical weather-beaten sailor who enjoyed his drinks whenever he could. Naturally, the two did not get along very well. One day, as the Captain on duty looked down from the bridge, he saw the First Mate dead drunk and empty whiskey bottles rolling on the deck. The sight disgusted him, so, as he wrote his day's log, he made a brief entry to that effect.

The following day the First Mate was on duty and saw the log. Becoming furious, he protested to the Captain. "It has been understood that we could do as we please on off days. I was not drunk on duty. What would the company President think of me when he sees the log?"

"Yes, I know," answered the Captain calmly. "But the fact remains that you were drunk yesterday and I only noted the truth."

Dissatisfied with the outcome of the interview, the First Mate went back to his post on the bridge. That night the First Mate wrote in the log, "The Captain stayed sober all day today." The following day, it was the Captain who was furious.

"What do you mean by noting that I was sober? It makes it appear as if I were drunk at other times. You know I never touch the stuff. You have written a misleading report to defame my character."

"Yes, I know you don't drink," answered the First Mate in a composed manner, "but the fact remains that you were sober yesterday and I only wrote down the truth."

Neither of the notations in log were false. Do you now understand how the reader can be misled by the way facts are presented?

Another important thing to remember is that, unless the public is alert, various groups vying in a battle of propaganda strive to control public opinion by spending money, and the one with the most money usually wins. For instance, a group may try to defeat a bill providing for the state control of an enterprise which is disadvantageous to the enterprisers. If they do not succeed, they may attempt to have clauses inserted which will tend to mutilate the bill. If such an attempt succeeds through the influence of money, it must be said that democracy, in that particular instance, has given way to plutocracy.



### Propaganda Media

The most popular media in the modern, highly developed art and science of propaganda are newspapers, magazines, and the radio. There are other media such as posters, leaflets, movies, and lectures, but by far the most widely utilized are the aforementioned, especially the newspapers. Newspapers should be the faithful reflection of public opinion. On the basis of true facts, they should also help to mold public opinion. But, too often, they serve to fabricate public opinion.

Because of the great value of newspapers as a propaganda medium, those desirous of using them try to buy over the newspapers by expending vast sums of money. Or else they publish newspapers by themselves. If the individual or political party by which a newspaper is run is clearly known, there is not much harm, for the reader will read the paper making allowance for that. However, if propaganda is cleverly conducted through a newspaper whose party affiliation is concealed or hard to identify, it can adversely influence the thought of the people. If a number of newspapers of different names are bought over, the effect will be still greater. In this manner, a plutocracy can prevail even in an outwardly democratic system. There is a proverb, "Money is the key to open all doors." If money with almighty power can determine or strongly influence public opinion, there can be no real political democracy.

The operation of newspapers requires money. The expense involved is far greater than the income derived from circulation. How, then, can newspapers afford to operate? The answer is simple. Advertisements bring in the needed finances. The readers, too, benefit, since they can read interesting newspapers for a much cheaper price. Over half the cost of publishing a newspaper is often paid for by advertisements. This suggests how important newspaper advertisements are. Similarly effective is a smart, interesting political article published in an attractive style and adorned by an excellent photograph.

An article printed in big headlines gives us an entirely different impression from the same article printed in an obscure spot. A newspaper may slander a person in politics by printing a groundless fact about him. Even if the paper subsequently publishes a tiny column of repudiation, the victim's political reputation may be ruined for good. The press has a mighty power to influence public opinion. In this sense, the social and political responsibilities of newspaper management cannot be too strongly emphasized.

The same thing can be said about magazines and other periodicals. Magazines with a large circulation have considerable power as propaganda media. Accordingly, a considerable portion of the expenses in publishing a magazine is derived from advertising.

Still more interesting is the radio. In Japan all the broadcasting stations are managed by one broadcasting corporation, and the expenses are defrayed from the fees paid by the listeners. Thus, radios are not used as an advertising medium. In America, however, there are over 600 privately owned radio stations. A city half the size of Tokyo may have several stations, which compete with each other by offering different kinds of programs. None of them charges their listeners any fee. Their expenses are met by the income derived from the advertising incorporated in their broadcasts.

Since newspapers, magazines, and the radio are largely financed by advertising, there arises a keen rivalry among them to obtain as many advertisements as possible. There are large newspapers and magazines which do not need to seek or cater to advertisers, since advertisers flock to them of their own accord. However, other newspapers and magazines may be written and edited in a manner pleasing to the big advertisers and will refrain from publishing any article that might offend them. The advertisers can combine to put pressure on these newspapers and magazines to write editorials and other articles in such a way that may prevent a certain bill from being passed by the legislature. They publish articles exaggerating the weak points of the bill or speak ill of its supporters. Through such skillful means, it is not hard to prejudice the innocent and uninformed readers.

Among the smaller magazines and local papers there are some which resort to outright blackmail. They threaten to "expose" influential politicians and force them to pay large sums of money to withhold such stories. On the other



hand there are candidates who donate large sums of money to magazines and newspapers to have favorable articles written about themselves. If there are such unscrupulous publishers and cunning candidates, the voters are likely to be led astray and tend to elect unsuitable candidates.

Since newspapers frequently publish falsehoods under the above circumstances, why not impose a rigid government censorship to detect and prevent such abuses? This question is natural enough. But such a censorship would result in even greater evils, for the government could then use its powers to suppress all articles and news unfavorable to its policies and have newspapers publish only what is favorable to the government. This can be a most dangerous method which can make the people blind and enable the government to monopolize propaganda media. We might as well recollect that the control and censorship of information media was, (and is), one of the most powerful weapons employed by dictators.

Therefore, in a democratic nation, the freedom of speech and the press is invariably guaranteed. It enables the people to criticize their government's policy, and to protest openly against injustice. As long as this freedom exists, there is little danger of political dissatisfaction exploding in the form of revolution. But if the government suppresses thoughts which it deems "dangerous", the thoughts are bound to be driven underground, fomenting growing dissatisfaction and discontent and finally leading the nation to social and political unrest. The fundamental principle is that government should be steered by public opinion. If the government attempts to mold public opinion as it pleases, the spirit of democracy will be trampled on.

Governments must be founded on the truth. That free and open discussions can bring out the truth is a fundamental principle of democracy. Suppose candidates A and B are contesting for the same office. They freely argue their respective standpoints. Through propaganda, A catches the imagination of the people and wins in the election. If A's propaganda is not founded on the facts, how long can his victory last? If the people do not have the ability to discover the truth, then B will forever remain obscure. If the people have that ability, A's popularity will fade in due course and B will come to command the support of the majority. Nay, if the people are really politically intelligent, they could not be misled by A's propaganda in the first place.

Therefore the only way to discover the truth in a society of free speech is for the people to become "enlightened voters." Enlightened voters are the surest "lie detectors". If only the people are politically intelligent, newspapers will be inspired to report only the truth, for newspapers publishing obviously false stories will not sell. Because they cannot beat the just criticism of the people, newspapers, magazines, and similar propaganda media will come to reflect true public opinion. Thus the tread of government will inevitably be led to the right path.

#### The Scientific Study of Information

Seeking the truth is the mission of science. In order to distinguish lies from facts, and false propaganda from the truth, we must calmly consider the information given by newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets, in exactly the same manner that scientists pursue the truth. While propaganda is running riot, we must cultivate the habit of discovering the truth by scientifically studying all the available information.

(1) To be scientific in our thinking, we must first of all clear ourselves of all prejudice. As a cumulative effect of our past experience, what we heard and learned in childhood, from books we remember reading with admiration, and from numerous other sources, we have become accustomed to one mode of thinking and to judge everything in that light. This manner of approach is sometimes right but sometimes wrong. If we never stop to reflect on such prejudices on our part, we may become the victims of grossly biased views. In ancient times, it was believed that the God of Wind caused winds to blow, or that the rage of the underground catfish (namazu) stimulated earthquakes. The first step in the progress of natural science was the removal of such superstitions and prejudices. Even in recent times, while fighting a hard war, many Japanese were convinced that a "divine wind" would blow. They believed that Supreme Headquarter's announcements were infallible. Nothing is more dangerous than such pre-conceived opinions. The first step in cultivating mature and scientific political thinking is to eliminate all such bias from the process of arriving



(2) Next, we must learn to evaluate the sources of our information. It is not only foolish but very dangerous to believe unconditionally all we may read and hear. We had better continuously ask ourselves such questions as: who wrote or said it? What sort of people are they? Are they qualified to make such statements? Where and how did they get their information? Are they free from prejudice? Are they really impartial? Or, do they have some selfish motives behind their plausible statements? Asking ourselves such questions will help us in thinking scientifically.

(3) When reading newspapers or magazines there are a few things we must always bear in mind:

a. Read the editorial and grasp the general idea as quickly as possible. Is it reactionary or progressive?

b. As soon as the trend of the editorial or article is ascertained, read other statements of the opposite view and judge for yourself which most nearly is correct.

c. Do periodicals cater to readers of abnormal interests by printing cheap articles? Are they given to slanderous reports?

d. Compare the essential meaning and effect of headlines with the content of the articles which follow them. Even though the article itself may speak the truth, there may be sensational headlines that are completely misleading. We must not make a hasty conclusion merely by reading the headlines.

(4) International problems are daily receiving a great deal of attention in newspapers and radio broadcasts. At the present time, domestic problems are inseparably related to international problems. Therefore, we must constantly follow international developments and correctly understand their current trends and implications. The Japanese people before the war were indulging in their dogmatic racial superiority, without any regard to what other nations were thinking of Japanese actions. From now on, we must always bear in mind Japan's position in international relations and consider domestic problems in that light. Propaganda in international fields is usually more intense than domestic propaganda. It is up to us to endeavor to discern the real objectives of the nations making various claims and arguments. This is particularly important with regard to nations whose speech and publications are completely and rigidly controlled by their dictatorial type of government.

(5) Problems of society are complex. It is always fruitless and usually dangerous to select only one aspect of a problem and argue. If someone makes a certain assertion, you had better ask him what he thinks about the other side of the problem. It is not enough to read or hear propaganda. We must be inquisitive and seek the opportunity to ask questions. The frequent holding of forums and debates is highly beneficial. In schools, it is very desirable to hold discussions on current problems in all classrooms and assemblies. When organizing research groups, persons of opposite opinions must be welcomed. This is similar to the experimentation of scientists. By going through a series of tests and weighing the results of the researches of others, mistakes are gradually weeded out until the common truth will be discovered and recognized. If you cultivate the habit of critical, scientific observation, it will be of immense help when you exercise your responsibilities as a citizen in a democracy.

In short, democracy will not succeed unless and until the voters become politically intelligent. If the people are wise and think scientifically, false propaganda will be easily detected, and the result will be that no one can say irresponsible things. Good intelligence, the love of truth, the will to defend the revealed truth, the determination to pursue the righteous path, and mutual respect and cooperation among inter-dependent individuals—here, and here alone, is the foundation for the construction of a genuinely democratic nation.



## CHAPTER VII

## POLITICS AND PEOPLE

Politics is Everybody's Business

We have often mentioned that democracy means something much broader and larger than the mere exercise of the franchise at election time. There is, however, no doubt that individual participation in politics is an essential element in the realization of political democracy. The quality of a nation's or community's politics can exert, for better or worse, a profound influence on the spread of education, the progress of transportation, the prosperity of economy, etc. Instead of leaving the political aspects of such important matters to other people, we must do it as our own job. This attitude of mind is the first essential of individual political participation.

Among the Japanese people, there still remains a feudalistic notion that politics is not their concern. There is an old Oriental proverb, "Let people obey, but not be informed". This means that administrators should have the people merely obey orders, and that it is taboo to inform the people of the fundamental principles of government. For if the people are informed of the policies of government, there are bound to be persons who will criticize the government, and the rulers would not be able to govern as they please. The politicians of Japan took this attitude for a long time. Accordingly the people are accustomed to think that they live only to be governed, and can scarcely bring themselves to believe that they themselves are to govern. Although they are told that "Sovereignty rests with the people", they cannot quite grasp the full meaning of the phrase and feel somewhat bewildered about the whole thing. The disposition to leave politics to others springs from this habit of thought.

But may we safely leave politics to others? Was it not very recently that the war was plotted by militarists and politicians without the knowledge and consent of the people? The result was that hundreds of thousands of people lost their husbands and sons, had their houses burned, their property lost, and were reduced to a miserable predicament in which they did not know where tomorrow's bread was coming from. The real victims of misgovernment are always the people. It is also the people themselves who always profit most from the benefits of good government. Therefore it is imperative that the people understand politics. They must take a deep interest in politics. They must have a firm resolve to improve government through their own efforts. Since the people can most acutely feel the effects of good or bad government, the only guarantee of improving their government is for the people themselves to govern. Herein lies the foundation of the political principles of democracy.

In order to improve the fruits of government, it is absolutely necessary for the people to regard government as their own job and to grasp the key points of government. Politics cannot be carried on by the professional politicians alone. No matter how good a political policy may be, unless the people make up their minds to cooperate, good results can hardly be obtained.

In the early autumn of 1947, an appalling downpour swept over the Kanto plains. The waters of the Tone River and other streams overflowed their banks and a great flood occurred. A little earlier, the Tohoku area was also heavily damaged by floods. It is true that these were acts of God, but the severity of natural calamities of whatever kind can often be prevented and always lessened to a certain extent by human efforts. If the Government establishes sound policies, and if the people cooperate as enthusiastically as they do in their own work, it is not impossible to arrest, or at least minimize, the effects of such acts of God.

In the case of the Kanto and the Tohoku floods, much of the fault lay in the rash war-time deforestation in areas close to the sources of rivers. Another cause of the floods was the fact that even the weakened banks, instead of being strengthened, were used as gardens. Although the Government was partly to blame, the people were also to blame for neglecting to consider seriously levee works and afforestation as a part of their political responsibilities. If the conditions of mountains and streams are such that water escapes easily, then severe water shortages will occur in the dry season. There will be



electric power shortages, and the water supply may be stopped altogether. How can this condition be remedied? If the people themselves think, have the government establish appropriate measures, and actively cooperate, the severity of such difficulties would be greatly reduced, and a "government by the people and for the people" would come nearer to being an actual fact.

Even the prevention of natural disasters and the utilization of natural resources require the active cooperation of the people. But the willing cooperation of the people is all the more essential if human society is to be substantially improved. Everyone knows, for example, the danger of inflation. Everyone recognizes the necessity for increasing production. Whatever the policy that may be pursued for the purpose, it will certainly fail to bear fruit unless the people make up their minds to cooperate to put an end to inflation and to increase production. If government is left entirely to professional politicians, the people merely criticize the government behind the scenes, but refuse to accept any responsibilities themselves. In that kind of a situation, honest persons lose and dishonest persons benefit. Under such conditions, society can only go from bad to worse. In order to improve government, each individual must hold himself partially responsible. There must be the kind of government that selfish and venal individuals and interests cannot exploit. Who does the job? Of course, the people. For the people, therefore, government is "their own business." Thus, a democratic government must be a "government of the people".

#### Local Autonomy

You now see why we, as individuals, must consider politics as our own personal business. But the government of a nation is a vast organization, its problems are complex, and its best course of action is difficult to foresee. So it may be very hard for people to regard the governing of a nation as their own business. However, government is not confined to the national government. There is also government in small places quite close at hand. For example, there are governments in towns and in villages. The people are at once citizens of the nation, the state, the city, the town, or the village. Even though the problems of the national government are often very complex, the problems of the town and village governments are comparatively simple. An essential element in democratic government is that the people should consider local government as their first responsibility.

The country of Japan is divided into one TO (Tokyo), DO (Hokkaido), two FU (Osaka and Kyoto), and forty-two KEN (Prefectures). And, within them, there are SHI (cities), KU (wards), MACHI (towns), and MURA (villages). These are called local, autonomous organizations. When Japanese dictators reigned under the Meiji Constitution, the rulers of the central government issued orders from above and controlled local governments, forcing them to do things which were often utterly unsuited to conditions in the towns and villages. Such things are no longer possible under the new Japanese Constitution. Local, autonomous organizations have their own legislative and executive agencies, whose members are elected by the local citizens. The people elect members of the prefectural, city, and village assemblies. They also elect the governors, city mayors, and village chiefs who execute the policies approved by the respective assemblies. Whom should the people elect? What kind of government will be demanded of the elected representatives? Does the government of the representatives come up to the expectation of the prefectural, city, or village citizens? By seriously considering these problems, politics becomes "our own work". This should be a simple thing, easy to understand.

Let us assume, for example, that there is waste land in a village. It is not suited for cultivation owing to poor drainage. Because its cultivation would be expensive and require a great deal of labor, it has been neglected for a long time. Is that right? Is there nothing which would enable the people to obtain financial backing and cooperate in reclaiming the land? If the stream is dammed at its source and drainage improved, several acres of paddy fields might be made available for productive use. The water from the dammed stream might be used for irrigation.

Let us assume that the village people planned to carry out such a project and elected capable men as members of the village assembly. Village finances



might show a deficit for two or three years. However, there could be a small income in the fourth year. In the autumn of the fifth year, the reclaimed land could conceivably yield a rich golden harvest. Of course, everything may not progress as smoothly as this. There might be opposition, and the opposition may have good reasons. So all must think. If the majority are in favor of the project, then they should carry it out. Such an enterprise would eventually contribute to the progress and prosperity of the village. Such is a proper function of village government. It is the same thing when a village is building schools, improving the citizens' public halls, or repairing roads. How can village people leave such projects to others? Just as tilling the family land is the work of the family, so the general welfare of the community must be the villagers' own work.

At the present time there are mountains of difficult problems confronting the nation, prefectures, towns, and villages. If the Japanese people will not solve the problems of Japan, who will solve them? Similarly, the people of a community, be it city, town, or village, must consider their own problems, and endeavor to solve them on their own initiative. "God helps those who help themselves." It is only after their strenuous self-help that the villages may properly seek the aid of the prefecture, and the prefecture may justifiably seek the aid of the national government. The same thing may be said in regard to foreign aid. It is not until the people of the entire nation have exerted utmost endeavors to help themselves that foreign aid and cooperation may reasonably be expected.

The problems of local government must be solved by the people of the communities. But residents of towns and villages, like the citizens of a nation, have their own occupations, so they are unable to devote a great deal of their time to the affairs of town or village government. Therefore, from among themselves they elect representatives who devote themselves to such affairs. However, we must not think that our responsibility is fulfilled once we have elected our local representatives. What are the town and village chiefs doing? What are the members of town and village assemblies discussing? Are they governed by emotional considerations and absorbed in factional strife? The residents of towns and villages must constantly ask themselves these questions. They must encourage when they can, and criticize when they must, the conduct of their representatives and they must also present their own individual opinions in an orderly manner. Every citizen must thus endeavor to build up a fair and just town and village government.

Government must be the business of everybody. But it is the first and foremost necessity to choose honest and devoted representatives who actually do the job. Thus, those who are confident that they can perform the tasks of a mayor or an assemblyman should seek election. Even though you yourself may not seek election, you must elect your representatives with the same kind of conscientiousness that you would feel if you were standing for election.

It would, however, be unfortunate if people become so absorbed in an election as to lose a sense of calm judgment. In America and elsewhere elections are big events in which people show great enthusiasm. They are often held with a flourish of trumpets. Occasionally, there are candidates who, in order to attract public attention and stimulate their election campaigns, employ brass bands and conduct propaganda on a large scale. It is said that, at such times, the people, enamored by the sensational scene, often elect demagogues, with the result that sober and serious candidates are pushed into the background. Although candidates in Japan do not seem to be employing brass bands, the people are often misled by superficial propaganda and vote for the wrong persons. Political problems are not effectively solved by such practices. Good government must depend on the ability of good candidates. Therefore it is desirable that the people should not regard an election as a kind of festival. And it is also exceedingly important for the people not to be fooled by false propaganda and election campaign extravagance.

#### National Government

A basic principle of democratic local autonomy is that villagers conduct village government, citizens of towns conduct town government, and all local citizens conduct local government with their will, and their cooperation and their good sense. However, all problems of village government cannot be solved by the villages alone. There are many local problems which cannot be effectively



solved by local action. Therefore, it is often necessary to consider village problems in terms of the entire local area. With respect to some laws and policies, the solution of local problems must sometimes be considered in terms of the entire nation. At first, affairs of the national government may seem to be broad and too complex to understand, but, as we seriously consider local problems it will become easier for us to have a clearer understanding of the broader political problems of the nation.

Needless to say, one of the most pressing problems facing Japan today is that of food. The farmers of Japan, who are entrusted with the production of food, are engaged in hard labor all the year round, seldom ever taking a rest. In America and other large countries, a large scale industrialization of farms has been achieved. Every process of farming -- cultivating, sowing, harvesting, and milling -- is done largely by machines. At times, even airplanes are used to sow seeds from the sky.

However, in a small nation like Japan, where plots are small and paddy fields are numerous, it would be impossible to introduce the kind of mechanized farming practiced in America. However, if electric power and storage capacity could be increased and more fully and effectively utilized, farm production could be substantially improved. The farmers would have more leisure to devote to culture and education. But, to achieve this goal, greater exploitation of hydro-electric power is needed. Production of coal and live-stock breeding might well be increased. A wider utilization and the improvement of farm machinery should be realized. These problems are not problems of one village, one town, or one local area alone. They can best be solved with the cooperation and technical advice of the national government.

This is just an example, but it shows how closely some of the problems of local government are related to those of the national government. Therefore, those who seriously consider the government of their villages must also give serious consideration to the problems of their national government. Those who consider the government of a village as "their own work" will also come to think of the government of the nation as "their own work".

However, as we progress from the village or town government to prefectural government and from prefectural government to national government, the problems necessarily become more and more complex. Although the people must feel that problems of the national government are their "own work", national problems, unlike village or town problems, are often so complex that the people cannot grasp detailed points of the problems. In villages or towns, people have ample opportunity to get elected as representatives themselves, whereas, in the case of the national government, only a very limited number of people are placed in the position of directly discharging the functions of government as ministers or as members of the National Diet. Accordingly, the most important way by which the vast majority of the people participate in the government of the nation is to send the best possible representatives to the National Diet.

In the case of town or village assemblymen, the people are familiar with the personal histories, characters, and opinions of the candidates and can most easily decide on their choice. However, in the case of representatives to the National Diet, the people often learn the names and professions of candidates for the first time from the official announcements of the candidates. Naturally they find it very hard to make realistic and appropriate choices. This difficulty may be compared with "picture weddings" where the selection of a bride or a bridegroom is made from photographs. Voters listen to speeches over the radio or at public meetings, but they may justly doubt if the announced platforms can be taken at their face value. On the other hand, candidates themselves often feel uncertain, since the voting may be governed by chance. Furthermore, if a few hundred members of the Diet each assert their separate opinions and act according to their own beliefs, the determination of governmental policy might never get anywhere. How, then, can we avoid such confusion?

#### Political Parties

With a view to eliminating or at least reducing the above confusion, political parties have developed along with the progress of democratic government. In fact, one of the basic units of democratic government is the political party. Though it may be difficult for the people to choose individual candidates it is comparatively simple for them to decide which party's platform deserves their support. The members of the National Diet can, by conducting themselves, not as private individuals, but as members of a political party, have their



aspirations forcefully reflected in the national government. Political parties play an important role in local governments, but it would be difficult indeed for the national government in particular to function without political parties. For this reason, party government, according to whether it is operated properly or not, can accomplish excellent achievements or be the cause of numerous abuses.

A political party is an organization formed by individuals who have, or are supposed to have, the same principles and opinions concerning political issues. It is natural for individuals to have differences of opinion on political affairs, but, as far as major points are concerned, they can broadly be classified into several basic shades of opinion. Then, by giving a clear theoretical basis to a common policy and by clearly announcing its principles, each party or group can act openly and squarely with an established policy. Herein lies the chief purpose and function of the political party.

As members of some political party, politicians enter the arena of an election campaign. Individual voters decide which political party has the policy or platform which they can conscientiously support, and, considering the character of candidates at the same time, vote for the candidate who seems to be most reliable. Each party sends the number of representatives to the National Diet that is in proportion to the popular support given to their party. In the National Diet, parties with opposing opinions argue with each other, while parties with similar views cooperate, and so the policies of the national government are determined. The people encourage or criticize the policies, and steer the government towards desirable objectives. In this way too, the national government becomes, for the people, "their own business".

The politics of the nation are complex and difficult. Because they are complex and difficult, there are inevitably varying opinions on what is the best policy to be pursued. Accordingly, two or three, or even as many as five or six, political parties are formed. It is only natural for a few parties to co-exist. Where the policies of only one party are deemed as just and political parties of any other stand are not recognized, it is not democracy but one-party dictatorship.

A dictatorship allows no opposition parties. It advocates "one nation, one party," and controls all by unified power. On the other hand, democracy respects freedom of speech and the free choice of political parties. Even though a majority party takes the reins of government, there is always an opposition party which shows no hesitation in criticizing the policies and actions of the majority. The Government and the majority party are thereby called upon to review their policies, while, at the same time, the people are enabled to learn about the issues that are involved. Even though the opinion of the minority may be defeated by majority vote, if the minority opinion is just, it will gradually win popular support and the minority opinion will eventually become the majority opinion. This is the proper way for a democratic government to function.

However, it is far from desirable that there be too many political parties. If there are as many as five or six parties, it is extremely difficult for any one of them to gain a majority in the National Diet. If the political party with the largest number of members in the National Diet is not powerful enough to form a Cabinet, it will be forced to seek the support of one or more other parties. It is not intended to suggest that two or more political parties should refuse to agree on policies and form a coalition Cabinet, but the political power of such a Government is usually inclined to be weak. It cannot pursue one clear, consistent policy with conviction, and is apt to be divided against itself. If one party should change its mind and withdraw its support, the ministerial party becomes a minority and the political foundation of the Cabinet will be undermined or even destroyed. If the Cabinet is always short-lived, and its policies are faltering and changeable, the people tend to lose faith in parliamentary government. When they tend, as a result, to seek a "strong" government which marches on one path unflinchingly and precipitately, there lurks the danger of dictatorship.

Therefore, division into too many parties should be avoided as far as possible. In Japan a democratic form of government was instituted only recently. So it is somewhat inevitable that representatives elected as members of a certain party may resign from the party, or that "independents" of other factions will combine to form a new party, but such an unstable state of affairs should be corrected as soon as possible. It might be well to consider the advisability of having only two or three large parties with straight-forward and clear-cut political principles and that they pursue parliamentary government in a fair, statesmanlike manner in which there is no room for petty political tricks.



### Abuses of Party Government

As observed in a previous chapter, democratic government is based on majority rule. In elections, candidates with the most votes are elected. The enactment of laws in the National Diet or the designation of the Prime Minister is also carried out by majority vote. Democracy cannot function effectively if the principle of majority rule is rejected. Thus, what matters in democratic government is "numbers". An open, fair campaign to win the largest number of supporters is a motivating force behind candidates for office in a democratic government. But we must note that this is also a source of possible abuses of party politics.

One of the abuses which often accompanies party government is "mud-slinging". Because political parties are so anxious to get the largest possible number of votes, they are often tempted to use any available means to achieve their ends. During elections, in order to weaken their opposition, candidates often criticize merely for the sake of criticism. They try to undermine their political adversaries by making false charges against them. They may even expose the private lives of opposition candidates and stoop to libel and personal attacks. Those attacked cannot remain silent, so they retaliate, employing the same tactics. Although the attacks are primarily intended to harm the reputation of opponents, usually they end eventually in injuring the name and reputation of the attacker. Indeed, this kind of thing, if carried to extremes, could disgrace party politics and even democracy itself.

Mud-slinging campaigns do not always end with the elections. They are sometimes carried into the sessions of the National Diet. One party attempts to undermine the strength of another party. Both seek information that would destroy trust in their political rivals, and resort to exposure tactics. If Diet members feel that they cannot defeat their foes with numbers, they sometimes use such methods as filibusters. They heckle speakers of the opposing side and try to create turmoil in the Assembly. They delay discussions of a bill by prolonged and often irrelevant questioning. If the Speaker tries to curtail discussions, they criticize him as "high-handed". Eventually, they may draw close to the Speaker's table, and even resort to rough-and-tumble. They may attempt by every means to prolong the voting and to have a bill tabled. If the session ends before a vote can be taken, even the majority party cannot hope to pass the bill. It is not rare for a minority party to resort to such disruptive and utterly undemocratic tactics.

Along with mud-slinging, another course of the abuse of party politics is the temptation of money. It is often cynically said that "money is the key that opens all doors". In the political world, also, the promise of monetary gain is too often a tempting lure. Even a very open election requires a large sum of money. A vast sum is needed if voters have to be bribed or if newspapers are bought off. Although a portion of a candidate's campaign expenses may be defrayed from the parties' funds, political parties are not corporations and do not earn money. If the political parties depend upon the Zaibatsu or the very rich for financial support, political power may very easily fall into the hands of the plutocrats.

In days gone by, this type of politics often prevailed in Japan. It even became the common knowledge of the people that the wirepuller of the Seiyukai Party was the Mitsui, while the financier of the Minseito Party was the Mitsubishi. Under such circumstances, there could be no fair and square politics. If the money flows and finally gets into the hands of voters and their votes are bought, it means the end of any genuine democracy. The corruption of party politics was among the principal reasons why dictatorship, centering around the militarists, was rampant in the Showa era.

How then, can such abuses be eliminated?

First of all, political parties must have a deep consciousness of their nature and purposes, and should function as public institutions. The function of political parties is to strive to have the opinions of the people reflected and realized in actual government. They therefore must declare clear-cut policies and endeavor to execute them faithfully. But government is something alive. However, clear-cut policies may be, it would not do to advocate



formulas that do not benefit actual conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to see that policies constantly have freshness and elasticity so as to meet ever changing conditions. If party members observe and practice fair play on the basis of such policies, and the people, supporting the announced policies, place their confidence in the parties, the danger of political parties being influenced by money and private considerations will greatly decrease.

Secondly, parties themselves must be organized democratically. The importance of political parties recruiting outstanding personalities goes without saying. Parties progress when they have good policies and good men and women. If the leaders of a party lack integrity, they cannot hope to maintain unity within the party. However, this does not mean that a capable party leader may issue orders dictatorially. Capable leadership and dictatorship are two very different things. If the party is influenced by money, the most important work of the party leaders will be to collect money. Consequently, an individual who is most influential in this activity will be exalted as the chairman of the party. All knotty problems will then be left to the chairman.

Inasmuch as political parties are the core of democratic politics, it is a matter of course that their internal organization should be democratic. Although party discipline must be respected, it is important that open discussions be respected within the organization and that the most competent and devoted members be recommended as leaders. In addition, the party fund should, instead of depending on Zaibatsu or a few financial magnates, be sustained by donations from among the rank and file of the party membership.

In the third place, it is necessary for political parties to have the magnanimity to understand, or at least respect, the policies of their opponents. Because political parties are usually based on different principles and platforms it is natural that there will occasionally arise opposition and political strife between them. Whatever opposition there may be between political parties, the ultimate aim of all parties should always be to improve the government of the nation and to elevate the life of the people. Therefore all the political parties, in the course of their opposition and strife, must always cooperate in their endeavors to attain the common goal. Thus, political parties must have the generosity to hear the opinions of their opponents and to adopt the policies which promise to contribute most to the common good. Especially, the majority party must respect the opinions of the minority parties. If the majority party, through its strength in numbers, arbitrarily over-rides the minority parties and succeeds in passing bills regardless of whether they are appropriate or not, it will lead to the tyranny of the majority party. Vital problems that may bring weal or woe to the people must be studied from every conceivable angle. Only when there prevails a humble spirit to pursue the truth by keen research and open discussion, can party government blossom forth and bear fine fruit.

Be that as it may, the basis for all the above is good sense and good will on the part of the people. Parties are like a mirror of the minds of the people. If the minds of the people are warped, warped political parties will be formed. If the spirit of the people is sordid, sordid parties will vie with one another in an ignominious manner. Before they criticize political parties, the people should endeavor to elect trustworthy individuals as their representatives. The only way that leads to the prosperity of democratic government is for all the people to become enlightened voters and to strive constantly for the betterment of government as "their own business".



## CHAPTER VIII

## DEMOCRACY IN SOCIAL LIFE

The Democratization of Social Life

After accepting the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, Japan first of all went through a drastic democratization of her government. A new Constitution was adopted, and a revised parliamentary form of government was established. The power and influence of the militarists and privileged classes who had previously sheltered themselves under the influence of the Emperor was dispelled. The bureaucrats who were once part and parcel of a dictatorial government have come to be regarded as public servants. Local self-government has been reformed, and, accordingly, the important officials of such governments are being elected by the people. So far as its structural organization is concerned, present-day Japan is, politically, a democratic nation. From the standpoint of political structure, it may be said that there is not much room left for further democratization.

Democracy, however, is by no means a mere system of government, as we have purposely pointed out several times in previous chapters. It is also a way of social living -- a spiritual attitude of all the people toward all other people. If it were merely a political system, it would not necessarily be difficult to achieve democracy. Of course, as we saw in Chapter Two, it was only through a long and bitter struggle of centuries that democratic systems grew to their present stature. But, in the case of Japan, where the old political structure suddenly collapsed with her military defeat and where the newly introduced form of government was greatly influenced by the governments of the progressive Western nations, the democratization of her political structure has been relatively easy, for there were many models to serve as examples.

In contrast, the fundamental democratization of a nation's social life is something that cannot be accomplished overnight. It requires extraordinary determination and training to uproot age-old thoughts alien to democracy and to have the democratic spirit pervade every aspect of daily life. The mere democratization of a nation's political structure is a far cry from the achievement of real democracy.

Before the development of democracy, feudalism existed not only in Japan but also in Western nations. Barons and other nobility held large land areas and governed the people in their respective areas. The lords had many retainers and, although these retainers were faithful to their lords, they arrogantly wielded power over the people. In this manner there was a stratification of human beings according to their social status, and individuals received vastly different rewards according to their status. This was a characteristic of feudalism. In Japan, feudalism lasted throughout the period of military ascendancy. On the top, the Shogun exercised immense powers, and there were Daimyo (feudal lords) in the local domains. However idiotic a lord might be, the people had to kneel when he passed by. The retainers of the Shogun and the Daimyo were called Samurai (military class). There were various classes, or levels, of the Samurai, but they were all regarded as superior to the common people. Classes in society were clearly defined by the term SHI-NO-NO-SHO (Samurai-Farmer-Craftsman-Merchant). Even though a Samurai wearing two swords put a commoner to the sword for a trifle, he could go scot-free and remain secure. (Kirisute-gomen). Although the formal feudal system was abolished with the Meiji Restoration, many of its vestiges still remain. The privileged class -- the peers -- was revered, and the meaningless practice of writing shizoku (gentry) or heimin (commoner) on personal history forms was continued until quite recently.

It is true that such practices have now disappeared altogether. But, in the minds of the Japanese people, there still remain traces of feudalism. It is feudalistic, for example, to respect or despise a person according to his family lineage, instead of considering his true worth as a human being. It is also feudalistic for superior officials to domineer over their subordinates, or to patronize only their favorite followers. Parents often fail to respect the individual characteristics of their children. A husband looks down on his wife



as an inferior creature. These are all vestiges of feudalism. A tendency to discriminate against individuals in disregard of their personal worth is an expression of Japanese feudalism. Unless such an inclination is done away with there can be no true democratization of social life.

Of course, there are differences of ability and experience among men. There are men of high and low character. It is only natural for men of high character and intelligence to command the respect of society. It is also natural for men of eminent ability and much experience to be placed in responsible positions and receive greater compensation. The democratization of social life never means disregarding such individual differences. Far from being true equality, it is "bad equality" to give men with 100% efficiency exactly the same treatment as men with 10% efficiency. However, the difference in position and treatment should always be determined by the true value of men and women. A person is not great because he is in a high position. But rather he should be entrusted with an important responsibility because he is a person of intelligence and integrity. For instance, the teacher of a school is respected not simply because he is a teacher. He has earned the responsibility for supervising and guiding pupils because he is learned, has a good character, and has had wide experience.

There are many aspects of social life in Japan, but, among them, our family life needs first to be considered. There is no valid reason why a father should impose unreasonable restrictions on his children, merely because he is a father. Nor should a husband demand submission and one-sided service from his wife merely because he is a husband. To have particular respect only for the eldest son, when the younger brothers and sisters are all children of the same family, is an absurd custom which contradicts the spirit of respect for the worth and dignity of individuals as such. Parents do not have great worth and dignity merely because they are parents. Pigs, for example, are parents. When the parents take tender care of their children with parental love and elderly wisdom and experience, children naturally love, respect, and trust them. If the husband and wife and brothers and sisters respect the personalities of one another and a peaceful, harmonious order prevails at home, this is indeed a miniature of a good society. In this sense, the practice of democracy in social life must first of all start in the home.

#### Respect for the Individual

The fundamental obligation of democracy in social life is to respect human beings as individuals. Who are to be respected? They are "You" and "I". Some people have a habit of saying, "I am such a worthless person." Not only do they say it but they actually believe it. We should not be conceited, so this humble feeling is desirable in some degree. But suppose there are selfish or arrogant persons who, taking advantage of this humble feeling, treat humble people as they please and attempt to use them. Would it still be right to remain silent? Even when their lives are trampled upon and their efforts are brought to nought, must the humble continue to say "unreasonable but justified" (*Gomuri-gomottomo*) and let them have their own way? That sounds anything but reasonable. In the feeling that such unreasonableness should not be tolerated there is the awakening of the dignity of man. Whether it is "I" or "You", our dignity as human beings should be valued more than anything else. A democratic social life begins with such an awakening of man and his respect for individuality.

There is a saying, "You may as well reason with a crying child as contend against authority". There is another saying, "Where might is master, justice is servant". Nothing better expresses the Japanese mind that is still permeated with feudalism. A society in which no one is allowed to express his conviction and all must submit silently to authority, how can justice and fairness prevail? There is nothing more unbearable than a servile, gloomy society in which people speak ill of others behind their backs. Are the homes and schools free from such an atmosphere? Is there no such tendency in government offices and factories? If there are such traces left, who is going to remove them? There is no one to remove them except family members, teachers, students, workers in government offices and factories -- in short, all of us. There is no other way of building a bright, pleasant society than for every individual to have his own personal awakening and "do unto others as you would have them do unto you".

Every human being has the right to live. Each individual has the right to build up a happy life for himself. The attainment of the greatest happiness for the greatest number is the ideal of a democratic society.



In a feudalistic society, the happiness of the great majority was sacrificed for the welfare of a small minority of the privileged class. In autocracies, faithful vassals and good citizens were sent to wars and killed like insects to satisfy the desires of the autocrat. When dictatorships reigned, millions of lives were lost in wars which they deliberately planned.

There is nothing so precious as human life. Human happiness is as beautiful as a garden of flowers. Men must learn to share happiness equally. For that purpose, the forces of democracy overthrew feudalism, conquered autocracies, and fought with dictatorships. They will always continue to do so. The peoples of the advanced democratic nations of the West are determined to defend to the last their human freedoms and individual rights, for these are spiritual treasures which they won by their blood, sweat, and tears. The Japanese people are not yet inclined fully to appreciate their newly acquired freedoms and rights as something truly precious, for they did not themselves struggle to win them. Nevertheless the fact that human freedoms are infinitely precious remains true whether in the East or the West. The nightmare of the past fearful war is still fresh in our memories. This is the time for us to lay to heart the profound meaning and infinite value of human freedom.

Human beings have equal rights to pursue happiness. Happiness, however, is not something that rains down from heaven, nor is it something that springs up from the earth. Happiness is built up through human work and endeavor. Therefore, every member of society must work diligently and assiduously. He must be proud of his own work, and, at the same time, he must respect the work of others.

True, there are various contradictions in human society. For instance even though the essential principles of democracy may be practiced, the livelihood of the working people may not become easier, while those who do not have to work may be rolling in wealth. This is primarily a problem of democracy in economic life and so will be considered in the next chapter. Apart from the problem of economic structure, if the spirit of respect for the individual is genuinely practiced, many of the contradictions in economic life will be automatically solved. The system in which non-working people exploit the working people is traceable to the fact that thoughts inconsistent with the fundamental spirit of democracy are still deep-rooted in our society. A philosopher named Kant once declared, "Whether it is oneself or any stranger, man should always be treated as an end, and should never be treated merely as a means to an end". Those who are utilized by others as only a means to selfish ends are slaves. Using others as tools of one's selfish aims is a sin, trampling, as it does, on human values. Democracy must expel all traces of slavery from social life. It must censure the sin of grasping the fruits of others' labor and making money by exploiting others.

#### Individualism

The philosophy of respecting human beings as individuals is "individualism". Therefore, the fundamental spirit of democracy is founded on individualism. Japanese politicians and thinkers during the era of militarism oppressed democracy and denounced individualism as synonymous with a despicable egoism. Nothing, however, could be a greater mistake. Individualism maintains that the full development of the individual is the goal of all the activities of society and therefore the full growth of the individual is the basis for all social progress. The cultivation of the social maturity and decency of individuals automatically leads to a better society. When the social and economic lives of individuals are elevated, society naturally becomes brighter and happier. Therefore, persons, to be respected, are not the privileged few, let alone "myself alone". All the individuals who live on this earth must be valued and rewarded on the basis of what they are and nothing else. How on earth can this kind of thing be associated with despicable egoism?

The doctrine opposed to democracy is dictatorship. Hence dictatorship rejects individualism and advocates "totalitarianism".

Totalitarianism does not respect individuals as such, but respects them only as members of a totalitarian society or state. It believes that the entire nation or the state has the superlative value. The nation or the state,



transcending individuals, has its own life and makes its own progress. Totalitarianism goes on to say that the aim of all social and economic life should be the development and prosperity of the precious whole. To regard the whole as of the first importance is to subordinate the value of the parts to the whole. The parts of which the whole society consists are individuals — individual human beings. Thus, totalitarianism does not recognize the intrinsic value of individuals, but teaches that individuals must devote their lives, and, if necessary, sacrifice their lives, for the whole. In Japan during the war, what was known as "self-abnegating services to the state", (Messhihoko), was vigorously advocated. It meant that the people should forsake individual happiness, even individual life, for the sake of the state. Demands were made of the people to compare the worth of their lives with "the lightness of a goose feather". The Fascism of Italy adopted a similar extreme nationalism. The Nazis of Germany also enshrined their nation and system as supreme and absolute. Moreover, among the leading communists of present-day Russia and elsewhere, there appears to be a similar totalitarian way of thinking.

It is true that states are important. But, how can there be prosperity for the state as a whole without the prosperity of the individuals who compose it? How can the State as a whole progress when the welfare of the individual is sacrificed? One may talk about the prosperity of the race or the state, but there can be no such thing except through the prosperity of the individuals who compose it. To deny the value of the individual and inculcate the absolute value of the whole society is therefore nothing other than tricks of dictatorships.

Dictators, through such teachings, attempt to induce the people willingly to sacrifice themselves. They then impose on the people the policy of "self-abnegating services to the race and the state". In the meantime, they plan and prepare for war. Nothing requires greater individual sacrifice than war. Therefore, those who plot a great gamble of a war persuade the people that it is a noble thing to sacrifice their lives for the state. Ethics, religion, and education are all utilized for the purpose of carrying out such a policy.

Advocates of totalitarianism try to discredit democracy by claiming that, because democracy is based on individualism, the people of a democratic nation lack the spirit of nationalism and patriotism. And, because they lack patriotic spirit, they are weak in war, despite all their warships and airplanes. The last war proved how preposterous a notion this was.

Democracy fully realizes the importance of the state. The people of a democracy know how to love their father-land. But it emphatically opposes any attempts to trample on the sacred rights and freedoms of individuals under the cloak of national interests. The state should be esteemed because it is an institution necessary to maintain order and to enhance the happiness of the people. The state is worthy of our love because it is the father-land built up through the united work, mutual help, and the cooperation of the people. Democracy values more than anything else the perfection of individual life, and a social life that progresses through the solidarity and cooperation of all the individuals. A democratic government is nothing more than a political organization designed to protect and promote the development and enrichment of the lives of the people.

Totalitarianism is dangerous not only because, internally, it tramples on the fundamental rights, or even the lives, of individuals, but also because, externally, it does not scruple to transgress the rights and interests of other nations. Instead of paying equal respect to the integrity and sovereignty of all nations, totalitarianism believes that "Our Nation" alone is the best and the most august state in the world. If only "Our Nation" becomes strong and great, totalitarianism does not care what becomes of other nations. The conclusion to which this concept leads is national egoism, which will adopt any means whatever which will strengthen the nation. Another destination is an aggressive policy. One nation intimidates other nations by means of armed force. It invades and plunders neighboring territories. In this way, totalitarianism is likely to breed war. In other words, in order to exterminate fearful war, the policies and practices of totalitarianism must be rejected.



In contrast, democracy is based upon a deep respect for the worth and dignity of the individual. It respects not only the people within its own boundaries, but the peoples in all other lands as well. Thus a democracy prays for the prosperity of all the other nations as well as the prosperity of its own. There grows a sincere attitude of international cooperation, and the lofty desire of defending world peace. Through democracy alone, the world will gradually become "one world." Each nation, while developing its characteristics and discharging its functions, works together for the creation of one world which will bring security and happiness to every living soul.

### Rights and Responsibilities

Democracy and individualism respect all human beings -- whether oneself or others -- as individuals. To respect oneself means to hold your individual personality precious and to protect your legitimate rights. Those who respect personality must strive to develop their personalities. Those who assert their legitimate rights must respect the legitimate rights of others. If we have low characters, how can we expect anyone to respect us? If we do not respect the position of others, how can we expect others to respect our own position? Therefore, individualism emphasizes the responsibilities, as well as the rights, of the individual. Only when each individual awakens to his own responsibilities may we look forward to the smooth functioning of a democratic society.

In a democratic society, each individual must hold himself responsible for all his actions. Taking all the credit for success and placing all the blame on others in case of failure is a most contemptible attitude. Social life can hardly be improved unless each individual fulfills his duty, cultivates his individual character, and discharges his social and political functions and responsibilities.

Let us consider a baseball game. The pitcher throws and the catcher receives the ball. The batter hits the ball to the shortstop, who scoops it up and throws it to the second baseman, who, in turn, throws it to first base for a nicely executed double play. Or, perhaps, a fly ball is hit between the right and center fielders and both fielders move towards the ball. If the right fielder is a step closer to the ball, the center fielder, instead of attempting to capture all the glory, lets the right fielder catch the ball. In any good baseball team, nine men act individually, each displaying his individual skills. But, at the same time, they act in perfect unison, cooperating smoothly for a common goal, as though one man were moving his arms and legs. It is good when a democratic society conducts itself like a first-class baseball team.

Social life, however, is different from a baseball team consisting of a selected nine members. In one village alone, there may be a few thousand villagers. Hundreds of thousands of people may reside in a city. The total population of a nation may reach tens of millions. Among them there are bad men who act arbitrarily, causing great trouble to other people. There are thieves and robbers. If they are left alone, orderly and decent social life cannot operate. Here is one of the reasons for laws. Crimes are punishable. Bad men are controlled. The legitimate rights of good citizens are protected. When the rights of ownership are violated, property is restored to the rightful owner. If undue losses are sustained, one can appeal to the lawcourt, and demand compensation. If there are people who are scared of law, and regard a judicial case as something objectionable, it is because they still retain the mentality they cultivated during the authoritarian age. The people of a democratic state must not sleep on their rights. Just rights should be openly fought for by recourse to laws. Laws and courts are established by the people and must serve as the guardian of the rights of the people.

On the other hand, it goes without saying that the people must not be so insistent on their legal rights as to neglect to discharge their obligations. It would be a gross misuse of laws to bully the weak by virtue of laws or to gain undue profits by forcing unfair contracts.

In ancient times, in the Italian city of Venice, there was a good citizen named Antonio. Faced with the necessity of lending money to a friend, he borrowed three thousand ducats from an usurer named Shylock. In the bond it was stated that, in case Antonio could not repay the loan, the loan shark would cut one pound of flesh from his body. Antonio could not repay the loan, so



Shylock brought the case to court and threatened to cut off one pound of flesh, according to the agreement. Portia, the wife of Antonio's friend who owed Antonio a debt of gratitude, turned up in court disguised as a judge. Declaring that the bond, while providing for the forfeiture of one pound of flesh, did not mention a word about blood, Portia passed the judgment that Shylock must cut off exactly one pound of flesh without causing even one drop of blood to flow. Thus Shylock was at last silenced. This is a tale in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice." In present-day society, there can be no such absurd contract. Property, however, can still be used as a powerful weapon, depending on how it is used. Legal systems which give one-sided protection to the interests of the wealthy alone should be reformed in accordance with the will of the people.

Property is indispensable for the maintenance of orderly human life. Therefore, the New Japanese Constitution guarantees the people the right to own property, and laws protect the right of ownership. However, if an unequal distribution of wealth among the people increases, the rich will become increasingly rich, while the poor will become increasingly poor. If things should come to such a pass, the ideal of democracy -- to let all the people share happiness -- will not be attained. In order to eliminate this danger, it is exceedingly important to democratize economic life. At the same time, the people must reconsider their ideas about property. The right of property should not exist solely for the benefit of the propertied. The greater the property, the greater the responsibility the propertied have to utilize their property so as to enhance the general welfare. It is clearly expressed in the modern concept of the right of property that the protection of rights is accompanied by a commensurate measure of social responsibility.

#### Social Ethics

It is a human code of ethics that the members of society should have a keen sense of social responsibility, discharging their duties and cooperating with one another. Both laws and ethics are indispensable to maintain social order. Even though the purpose of laws and ethics may be the same, laws are designed to force the observance of responsibilities, while the fulfillment of moral responsibilities is dependent on the self-awakening and initiative of individuals. Naturally, it is necessary for all individuals to fulfill their legal responsibilities without being forced by the state to do so. Yet legal compulsion often becomes necessary in the treatment of those who refuse to fulfill these responsibilities. Therefore, laws are not fully effective unless founded on morality, whereas morality is not thoroughly effective unless backed by laws.

For instance, the motorman of a streetcar is constantly called upon to watch for signals and is held responsible for operating the streetcar. If, through his carelessness or talking with a friend, he should cause an accident or run over a pedestrian, he is punished by law. In operating the streetcar, most motormen take utmost care to avoid accidents, not because they fear legal punishment, but because they feel grave responsibility in being entrusted with many lives. They are morally observing legal responsibilities.

It is a moral obligation to return borrowed things. Most of us try to return books borrowed from friends. If we borrow money in case of need, we try to return it as soon as possible without being asked. But there are some who try to evade the paying debts by making excuses. In such cases, it becomes necessary to force payment through legal action. In other words, it becomes necessary to compel fulfillment of moral obligations by legal measures.

In this manner, laws and ethics are closely related, as wheels on vehicles, and together maintain order in our cooperative life. There is, however, nothing like a just order being maintained in ordinary social life by moral force, without resorting to laws.

In Japan "vertical morality" among men has been greatly respected since ancient times. For instance, retainers would respect their feudal barons, while the barons would favor their retainers. Among other things, loyalty to the lord and filial piety toward parents were considered the basis of national morality. In contrast to this, "horizontal morality," which regulates the mutual relationships of the people, made hardly any progress. There is a saying in Japanese, "Tabi no haji wa kaki sute," which means that a person traveling to a place where he is not known could lose all his inhibitions and



act shamelessly with impunity. There were also people who did not scruple to commit any manner of wrong as long as it was not punishable by law. This has occasionally given rise to the belief that the Japanese are rude and unsociable to strangers and do not observe social amenities.

The emphasis placed on "vertical morality" alone and the overlooking of "horizontal morality" is evidence that there are still remnants of feudalism in Japanese society. The first and foremost necessity in a democratic society is that each individual cultivate the spirit of respecting everyone else as an equal human being. Those who do not recognize the sacredness of individual freedom, and who are not awakened to the dignity of the individual, think nothing of infringing upon the freedom of others or damaging others' characters. This weakness is especially true of the Japanese. They tend to interfere unnecessarily in the private lives of others. So far from thinking it wrong, they even believe that they are thereby doing others a favor. They have a habit of being immoderately inquisitive about the affairs of others. They are prone to revel in a vainglorious sense of superiority by speaking ill of others. If such a state of affairs should prevail even though political and legal institutions are democratized, it can scarcely be said that the people have the social morality worthy of a democratic nation.

No human being can live alone. Men are born in an interdependent society, work for one another, and can lead comfortable lives, thanks to the work of others. It is therefore our mutual duty to endeavor to make our society a pleasant and comfortable place to live in. For that purpose we must each recognize the individual personality of one another, and learn to respect the freedom of others, while seeing to it that our own freedom is not impaired by the unfair acts of others. At the same time we must have the sincerity always to speak the truth and to translate our idea of truth into action, and the firm courage always to defend justice. The success or failure of democracy in social life will depend on whether the people generally have the sincerity and good will to devote themselves to the general welfare.



## CHAPTER IX

## DEMOCRACY IN ECONOMIC LIFE

Advantages of Free Competition.

The spirit of democracy must pervade and dominate not merely the political and social, but also the economic life of a community or state. Apart from the economy he is exposed to, man cannot live, and without progress of economy, there can be no real human happiness. The object of the economy of our nation is to enrich our lives in terms of such things as food, clothing, and shelter. In particular, the mission of democracy in economic activities is to foster respect for the mutual right of all to live as dignified human beings, to guarantee fair economic distribution, and, by raising the standard of living of all individuals to the highest possible level, to build up a comfortable society in which to live.

Modern economy has developed through a system called capitalism, or free enterprise. To put it very simply, capitalism is a system of economy in which individuals, corporations, and cooperatives etc. privately own the means of production. For instance, land, mines, and factories have the capacity to produce goods. A system of economy in which anybody may own such means of production as private property and operate various enterprises making use of them, is capitalism. In an ordinary form of capitalistic economy, therefore, there are, on one hand, capitalists or management who own capital and manage enterprises, and, on the other hand, there are laborers who are employed by them and work for wages. Using their property as capital, capitalists manage enterprises as they like, while the laborers are employed by them and work for wages. The goods produced are brought to the market as merchandise, and are bought freely by the people who desire them and who can afford to buy them. That is how a capitalistic economy is operated.

Accordingly, capitalism originally developed in the form of a comparatively free economy uncontrolled by the state. Free economy eventually became closely tied with political liberalism. In feudal and despotic ages, people had no political freedom. When there was no political freedom, there was little or no economic freedom. In feudal ages, workers and farmers were oppressed under the power of feudal lords. In subsequent ages when the centralization of the authority of modern states was established in the form of autocracy, the state exercised a strong influence in the economic life of the people. However, as the political consciousness of the people rose and first feudalism and then autocracy declined, such state interference and pressure was removed, with the result that economic activities came to be left more to the discretion of individuals and corporations. That was the trend of economic liberalism in the 19th century. Capitalism of the modern age has made great strides toward economic liberalism.

It goes without saying that capitalism as a living system of social economy, developed with the ages. The 20th century capitalism is not the same as 19th century capitalism. The "laissez faire" economy of the 19th century had its virtues, but it also had many weak points. Such weak points of a free economy must be rectified by appropriate controls. It is a fact that uncontrolled capitalism gave rise to serious evils. The principles of democracy in economic life aim at rectifying these evils and having the economic activities of capitalism accord with the general welfare. This will be explained later. Let us here consider in what form capitalism, based on the free economy pattern of the 19th century was operated, and what theoretical interpretation was put on it by economists.

The most conspicuous manifestation of the economic liberalism of the 19th century was "freedom of enterprise". Capitalists invest in an enterprise which they like and think profitable, and manage it freely. Because other capitalists wish to share in profitable enterprises, competition will arise. Where there is competition, producers strive to make better articles at the lowest possible cost, and sell as much as they can. However, if production far exceeds demand, goods will not sell. Thus capitalists turn to production of other goods which have a greater demand and so start another enterprise. In this manner, production and demand tend to be regulated properly, as if guided by "an invisible hand." Seeking profits, capitalists produce goods and the people can purchase whatever the need and can afford to buy. Thus, production is greatly increased. The



happiness of the people is promoted, and it becomes possible to maintain a high standard of living which can satisfy at least the basic needs of every individual. Adam Smith, a famous British economist, thus stressed the importance of freedom of enterprise, laying particular emphasis on the advantages of free competition.

In fact, in an ideal sense, free competition is the motivating force of a capitalistic economy. The value and significance of capitalism depend upon whether free competition is successfully carried out or not. Let us therefore consider a concrete instance of the smooth operation of free competition based on the above-mentioned theory of Adam Smith concerning a free economy.

Let us suppose that a man, with his own or borrowed capital, employs workers, sets up necessary equipment, purchases raw materials, and engages in the production of merchandise which he considers profitable. As another man becomes interested in the production of the same merchandise and starts a similar business, free competition arises. Consumers can freely choose the articles they like. Naturally, purchasing power is concentrated on the purchase of good and cheap articles. Accordingly, the producer of goods of superior quality who sells at a cheaper price can sell his merchandise more readily than other producers, and gains great profits by selling his goods. On the other hand, the producer of goods of inferior quality and high prices cannot sell his goods since he cannot please the consumers. As a result, he cannot even recover the cost of production. So he tries to compete with the producer of superior and cheap goods by reducing costs of production, improving techniques, or inventing new designs. Consequently, good articles are supplied to society in general at cheap prices, and the benefit to the consumers is so much increased.

When such keen competition takes place and goods in excess of the demand of society are produced, the producer of inferior goods cannot continue the production of his goods at a profit. He will thus turn to the production of some other goods. The balance between demand and supply will thus tend to be adjusted automatically, and the waste of raw materials and labor will be avoided or at least minimized. Moreover, the advent of a new rival in the other field of production will cause each producer to become still more assiduous. In the competition, the production of inferior goods at higher prices will be discouraged. Through the repetition of this process, capital, labor, equipment, and raw materials will, theoretically, be utilized most efficiently and with a minimum of waste. Accordingly, say the advocates of capitalism, productive capacity will be elevated to the highest possible standard.

From the consumer's point of view, economic liberalism means "freedom of consumption". Each individual can freely select goods. So everybody tries to purchase goods he desires as cheaply as possible. Since high-priced goods do not usually sell in substantial volume, prices tend to go down to a level that is within the reach of consumers. Accordingly, freedom of consumption stimulates free competition, and free competition in turn leads to a level and quality of production that will satisfy consumers.

If free competition is conducted smoothly, it has such advantages. The economic liberalism of the 19th century had a very high estimation of the benefits of free competition, and believed that free competition was sure to have successful results. In other words, it believed that if individuals conduct themselves in the pursuit of their own interests, the interests of many individuals would, in consequence, be naturally harmonized, the economy would prosper, and the welfare of society would be enhanced. In the soil of this kind of free enterprise capitalism made sturdy progress.

#### Abuses of Monopoly

It is true that a free economy has many advantages. Economists of the 19th century liberalism were right in thinking that sound free competition had the power to stimulate and liberalize the economic activities of society. But, if economic activities, carried on by each individual seeking his own selfish interests, are left entirely to take their natural course, would it enhance the interests of the society in general? Actual results showed that things did not turn out so satisfactorily. Why was it?



History has proven that a completely uncontrolled economy gives rise to various abuses. There are many reasons, but the most important reason is the development of "monopolies." Monopoly means that one or a few producers, instead of continuing competition, conclude an agreement or are amalgamated in the course of competition, and decide on prices, the amount of production, and markets in a manner advantageous to them as producers. In other words, in order to prevent competition from dealing heavy blows to them, producers cease competition at a proper stage, and agree to place markets under their monopolistic control. The greater the number of enterprises which monopolize markets through compromise or agreement instead of competition, the stronger their monopolistic power. Cartels and trusts are the main forms of monopolistic enterprises.

Monopoly has extremely strong power. As long as its power is well utilized, it can be made to contribute to the welfare of society. For, as monopoly develops, enterprises are run on a large scale. The larger the scale of industry, the less the cost of production in most cases. The adoption of excellent techniques, the introduction of new inventions, the establishment of independent laboratories, etc., facilitate the mass production of superior goods. In this sense, mass production by monopoly is potentially capable of supplying consumers with good articles at cheap prices. Accordingly, whether in capitalism or in socialism, industries tend to become large-scale enterprises. Moreover, even if monopoly develops, there still remain the benefits of free competition unless the production of certain commodities within a country becomes entirely controlled by a single enterprise. When a number of large-scale enterprises compete with one another in providing good articles at cheap prices, society will be greatly benefited thereby. This is especially true of such basic industries as steel, railroads, and public utilities. In the public interest, it is desirable that the number of such large-scale enterprises be limited.

If, however, those monopolizing an industry misuse their power instead of making good social use of it, various evils ensue therefrom. For instance, if industrialists, despite the fact that mass production has reduced the cost of production, mutually agree to fix prices and thus take advantage of their monopolistic position, consumers will still be obliged to purchase expensive things. If the absence of competitors causes them to neglect the improvement of their production techniques, the quality of goods can scarcely be improved. Furthermore, when new competitors attempt to enter the field, monopolistic industrialists could, if they so desire, undersell goods temporarily by using their strong financial resources as a weapon, and oust competitors. Under such conditions, the benefits of free competition vanish, due to monopolistic practices. Such practices constitute a grave obstacle standing in the way of the development of democracy in economic life. Therefore, if monopoly is an unavoidable trend and had its merits, it becomes a big task of economic democratization to prevent such abuses of monopolistic power so that there may prevail free and fair competition.

An effective way to remove the evils of monopoly and to make it possible to carry on free and fair competition is the prohibition, or restriction, of monopolies by law. When the state orders the dissolution of monopolistic enterprises given to abuses, or supervises their operations and prohibits their unfair practices, the menace of monopoly can be considerably reduced. The dissolution of Zaibatsu organizations, which have hitherto occupied a dominant position in the economy of Japan, was due to the fact that they were monopolistic entities which formed the economic backbone of the militarists' power. The enactment of a law prohibiting monopolistic practices will contribute to the establishment of a system of fair transactions.

#### Capitalism and Socialism

In a smoothly operating capitalistic society, there develops a free enterprise system based on economic liberalism on the one hand, and, on the other hand, steps are taken to prohibit monopolistic practices and thus curb the excesses of a free enterprise system. Middle and small industrialists often form cooperatives, consumers form consumers' cooperative societies, and laborers form labor unions. They can thus promote the elevation of their respective status and more effectively stabilize their economic life. Furthermore, the state can, by means of executing various social policies, prevent or at least reduce, unemployment, poverty, and unrest. These steps will be discussed later. In advanced capitalistic states, undue suppression of the free activities of private enterprise is avoided, while abuses accompanying the excesses of a free



economy are rectified. Democracy in economic life is thus being steadily realized through the operation of political democracy. It may be said that the United States of America has developed her economy largely along this line.

Capitalism has gradually progressed and improved with the times. It is now developing towards the direction of economic democracy without altering the basic character of capitalism. But in the advanced capitalistic states of Europe, for example in England, the free economy was in an impasse towards the end of the 19th century. Consequently there took place a gradual conversion from capitalism to socialism. What, then, is socialism?

In a capitalistic society, individuals and corporations privately own the means of production, and private enterprises operated by capitalists occupy a central position in the economy. Many of those who have no capital are employed by the former, and maintain their living by wages obtained by their labor. Laborers can freely choose their occupations, and are not chained to a certain occupation according to tradition and their social position as was the case in a feudal society. In this sense, economic liberalism implies "freedom of labor". Therefore, capitalism, in this respect, also has been considered consistent with the demands of democracy which respects freedom.

Have laborers, then, real freedom?

In capitalism, the living expenses of laborers are paid by the wages obtained by their labor. Laborers, in a wide sense, include farmers and ordinary salaried people, but here we shall mainly consider the problems of laborers who work in factories, mills, etc. If these laborers cannot find employment or if they lose their jobs, their lives would immediately be reduced to dire straits. Accordingly, in any case, they would look for some kind of job which would provide them with a livelihood. They may have various desires or complaints concerning wages etc., but, unless they are employed at some kind of a job they could not live. So they have to put up with the terms proposed by the management. However, as labor unions developed, laborers have gradually been enabled to conclude agreements on labor conditions on an equal basis with management. Prior to the development of labor unions, however, what was called the freedom of occupation and the freedom of contract was only nominal. That is to say, the so-called freedom of economic life was used primarily in favor of the capitalists alone. Thus capitalism, by means of increased productivity, tended to lift the living standard of the people, but the benefits accruing therefrom weighted one-sidedly towards the capitalists.

True, capitalism guarantees the freedom of enterprise. Therefore, opportunities to become capitalists are not closed to laborers. But even if there are opportunities, laborers cannot become capitalists unless they have capital. Accordingly, under uncontrolled capitalism, there grows a clear economic distinction between those who own capital and those who have to be employed by them. Under such conditions economic inequalities will inevitably increase. Inasmuch as laborers constitute the vast majority of society, capitalism, left to take its natural course, will run counter to the fundamental spirit of democracy -- the ideal to promote the happiness of the greatest number.

We can consider two methods to rectify such shortcomings of capitalism.

One is "social policy", designed to alleviate the gap between capital and labor without essentially altering the capitalistic structure itself. In other words, we can protect the position of laborers by taking such steps as establishing minimum wages and maximum hours by law, instead of leaving the problems of minimum wages, hours, and other labor conditions to agreements between capitalists and laborers. But that alone is not sufficient. So a plan is devised to enable laborers to organize, and, as an organization, to negotiate with capitalists. The organization of a great many laborers can have enormous power. If they negotiate collectively with management, their competitive position can be greatly improved. Thus, laborers organize unions and, through the power of unions, strive to improve their living conditions and prevent unemployment. In post-war Japan, the laborers' right of organization and collective bargaining were guaranteed by the new Constitution, and the Labor Union Law and the Labor Relations Adjustment Law were passed, accelerating the growth of various labor unions. Furthermore, with the enactment of the Labor Standards Law and the establishment of the Labor Ministry, various measures to



protect the interests of the working people have been instituted. The enactment of the Laborers Accident Insurance Law and the Unemployment Insurance Law also shows that efforts are being made to remove the unrest which accompanies laborers' living. If these social policies are fully carried out, and if the development of the productive cooperatives and consumers' cooperative societies (to be explained later) enables middle and small industrialists, farmers, and consumers to protect their own interests with their own strength, it will be possible to attain the aim of democracy in economic life without altering the basic principles of capitalism.

Another method proposed as a means of removing the shortcomings of capitalism is the adoption of socialism. According to those who advocate socialism, the social policies stated above are lukewarm and ineffective. The socialists insist that as long as the fundamental principle of capitalism, which recognizes the private ownership of the means of production, prevails, the position of laborers will never be fundamentally improved, and the conflict between labor and capital will continue indefinitely. Therefore, the socialists argue that the only way to attain true economic equality is to abolish capitalism, which recognizes private ownership of the means of production, and to transfer such ownership to the state or public bodies. The socialists thus conclude that the antagonism between capitalists and laborers will thereby be eliminated, and productive power will be increased through public enterprises.

Socialists thus insist that the most advanced method of securing equal economic distribution is through a radical alteration of the economic system. But the advocates of capitalism argue that, if all production is transferred to state management, it is doubtful whether production can be as substantial as in a capitalistic society, for there will no longer be the stimulus which causes capitalists to seek profits by free competition. If production declines, and the enthusiasm for full utilization of resources and the curtailment of expenditures cools down, there is a danger that the living standard of laborers will, as a whole, be lowered, however equal the distribution of goods and services may be. In addition, since the smooth, automatic adjustment process under free competition is lacking in a socialistic economy, there would be no effective means of determining the kind and amount of production. Consequently, say the friends of capitalism, there is a danger of great waste in productive power in any socialistic system. Besides, so-called bureaucratic control and state-managed enterprise may conduct enterprise management that is unsuited to actual conditions. Herein, according to the capitalists, lies another weak point in socialism.

Apropos of this criticism, advocates of socialism, insisting that such fears are groundless, argue as follows:

Even though the stimulus to seek profits is lost, the workers will feel their duty and responsibility to the people and strive for greater production. Since competition within state enterprises can be encouraged by various means, socialism does not necessarily bring about the elimination of competition and a consequent decline in production. Besides, in a socialistic economy, the state works out an over-all plan for the entire production of a nation and conducts a rational operation of the economy, in the place of the automatic adjustment of supply and demand supposed to operate in a capitalistic economy. There will be no waste or extravagance, say the socialists, and the necessities of national life will be produced in accordance with actual demand. In this respect, they say, greater waste of productive power results from the free competition of capitalism, for more emphasis is laid on the production of luxury goods than on necessities, and great expenses are incurred in advertising and storage in order to meet competition. Such waste can be eliminated only by a planned socialistic economy. So runs the socialist argument.

Thus, there is a major divergence of views between advocates of capitalism and socialism. In arriving at a conclusion regarding this problem, however, we must not fall into the error of thinking that capitalism or socialism exists in its pure form anywhere, as is so often asserted in books and unrealistic discussions. Between clear-cut capitalism and socialism there are a number of intermediate forms, showing very considerable difference in degree.

In other words, as far as formula are concerned, capitalism is an economic system operated on the basis of the private ownership of the means of production, whereas socialism does not admit the private ownership of the means of production. What kind of ownership does socialism refuse to admit? If the private ownership of all the means of production is prohibited and all industries are nationalized, it is complete socialism. But even if only the land is nationalized



and mines and the basic industries are state-managed, this is popularly regarded as sufficient to constitute socialism. But, in such an event, the private ownership of the means of producing other goods may be admitted, and therefore capitalistic methods of production are pursued in what is regarded as an essentially socialistic system. Conversely, even in a society adopting a capitalistic economy as a whole, if state control is exercised over a few enterprises closely connected with the welfare of the people, it can be said that socialism is present to that extent. It therefore serves no practical purpose to ignore such realities and compare the uncontrolled, cut throat capitalism of previous decades with extreme socialism alone, and proceed to argue their merits and demerits.

Therefore an important thing from a practical point of view is to consider what system, or combination of systems, is best suited for the purpose of the democratization of economic life, out of all the variety of methods of operating a nation's economy. We must ponder over the economic conditions in which our society is placed and the international environment in which our country finds herself. Nothing is more profitless and dangerous than to ignore realistic, practical conditions, and make decisions on the basis of academic theories alone. In the present complicated world, we cannot reconstruct our economy or promote the elevation of our national life in disregard of relations with foreign countries.

Where democratic government prevails, we can, in accordance with the principle of majority rule, avail ourselves of the merits of capitalism, carry out more or less socialistic policies, or do both. If the political party which attaches importance to the benefits of free competition becomes a dominant political power, it may achieve economic democracy without shaking the fundamental structure of capitalism. If the majority party in the Diet passes a bill providing for the nationalization of important industries, that is, to that extent, an approach to socialism. Therefore, we must have a dispassionate grasp of the situation within and without the country, closely observe the moves of the political parties, and judge for ourselves what policy to support.

We must, however, be particularly careful of the attitude of communism, which attempts to realize socialism by totalitarian methods. Communism, to start with, aims at making socialism thorough-going. A characteristic of communism is its assumption that capitalism is essentially and inevitably an evil system and is doomed to perish as history develops. Accordingly, communism is not content with adopting policies befitting the actual condition of the time by the method of majority rule. Instead, it tends to lean towards undemocratic methods such as violent revolution and so-called proletarian dictatorship. In accordance with the principle of majority rule, a basic principle of political democracy, we can benefit from the advantages of free enterprise by eliminating the abuses and curbing the excesses of a free economy and so realize a high measure of economic democracy. Therefore we must be deeply cautious lest we should become skeptical of this dynamic method of government and fall into the totalitarian error of imposing minority opinion by violence or dictatorship.

#### The Necessity for Controls and the Democratization of Controls

In order to realize economic democracy under capitalism, there are various steps other than the aforementioned social policies designed to contribute to the growth of economic democracy. We must first see to it that constructive economic controls are imposed and that these controls be democratically exercised.

Even in a capitalistic society there is the necessity of a certain degree of state control and intervention in a nation's economy. Of course, in a capitalistic society, free enterprise must be respected in principle. But this does not guarantee an unrestricted freedom of private enterprise. Controls of private enterprise sometimes become necessary in order to prevent evils of the free enterprise system, and to protect the interests of the people as a whole. It is true that controls limit and restrict economic freedom, but, as previously stated, freedom in a democratic society is never intended to mean license. Therefore, the establishment of certain controls for the benefit of society is not contrary to the democratic principle. The question lies in the nature of the controls and the manner in which they are imposed.



During the war, economic controls were vigorously enforced in Japan, as they were in all other nations at war. The purpose was to increase the production of war materials by reducing to the barest minimum the production of goods to meet the needs of the people. It goes without saying that, in the future, there can be no controls for such aims. If controls are to be enforced, now or in the future, they should be for the purpose of stabilizing national life and elevating the general standard of living. Controls designed to contribute to the general welfare and controls set up to meet economic fluctuations, are two that are generally recognized as necessary, or at least desirable.

As stated before, various social policies are executed to improve the position of workers, with a view to achieving democracy in economic life. Among the social policies, the establishment of minimum standards of wages and other labor conditions by law must be regarded as forms of economic control, in the sense that these matters are no longer left completely to the free agreement between employers and employees. Besides, the state must enforce a heavy tax burden on the rich, and seek other sources of revenue such as the issuance of bonds, and give relief to the less fortunate through such measures as unemployment allowances, social insurance, and subsidies. The greater the gap between the rich and the poor because of a defective economic structure, the greater the need for social policies and the more important their mission. Accordingly, the need for government economic controls increases.

The other economic control is enforced in order to curb economic fluctuations often consequent on a capitalistic economy, and especially to overcome unemployment and other difficulties of livelihood caused by depressions. In an uncontrolled free economy, sudden economic depressions may occur owing to overproduction, under-consumption, or sharp fluctuations in domestic or foreign markets. As a result, many men and women are suddenly thrown out of work and are reduced to straightened circumstances. Monopolies formed through agreements of industrialists will, to some extent, ease the danger of depression by expanding or contracting industries according to economic fluctuations.

But such autonomous controls may be followed by the above-mentioned evils. Therefore, it becomes necessary to add governmental control, and regulate industries according to business fluctuations from the standpoint of the public interest. At the same time, during depressions, the government often undertakes public works in order to give work to the unemployed, and stimulates industrial activity by lowering the rate of interest. The New Deal Policy of the United States of America may be said to have set a fairly typical example of this kind of control. At any rate, unemployment deprives the people of their right to work and is a menace to their right to live. Therefore, the government must always contemplate counter measures and make all endeavors to achieve the goal of so-called "full employment".

In a capitalistic economy, emergency controls to overcome certain crises are conceivable. When severe inflation occurs, or when production is destroyed by war, it becomes necessary to implement drastic controls in order to recover productive power, stabilize prices, and tide over the crisis of national life. This is the very condition of present-day Japan. As long as its aim is the reconstruction of national life, control is not contrary to the spirit of democracy, although free enterprise may be restricted thereby. If controls are not fully carried out for the sake of the general welfare, and consequently the people are driven to more miserable conditions, that would defeat the aim of democracy.

Now that we realize the desirability of certain controls, the next problem is: How should such controls be conducted? How can controls be democratic?

This is a most difficult problem. If controls are left completely to the autonomy of management, the evils of monopolistic practices will be unavoidable. Thus there is no other way than to leave controls to the state. This, in turn, leads to the evil of so-called "bureaucratic controls." That is to say, there is the danger that public officials who lack a knowledge of the actual conditions of national life and the problems of industry may impose impractical controls, adhering only to the letter of the law. At the same time, state controls may be accompanied by irregular practices of public officials and black market operators who evade control. Then, however proper a system of controls may be, they can hardly attain their objectives.



In order to uproot these evils, various methods may be devised. Firstly, it is necessary to strengthen the supervisory powers of the National Diet, instead of leaving controls to government officials alone. If this is properly done, excessive or improper controls will be eliminated and controls befitting actual conditions will be enforced. Secondly, it is also important to appoint capable, learned, and experienced men from among the people to official posts in order to put their experience to practical use in a partially controlled economy. Thirdly, it may be appropriate to establish supervisory organizations to see that state controls are properly enforced throughout the country and to have the people in general, especially representatives of the consumers, participate in them. Thus, the most essential condition of a partially controlled economy is to make the necessity of controls known to the people, and to have them supervise and exercise these controls democratically.

This principle also applies to the state-managed enterprises. In many essentially capitalistic societies, public utilities such as railways, telegraph, and telephone services are operated by the state. If further steps towards socialism are taken, iron, steel, coal, and electric industries may gradually be transferred to state management. These are particularly important industries. If the state monopoly brings about the double evils of monopolistic practices and bureaucratic controls, the adverse effects will be far and wide. Therefore, in this case also, it is necessary to establish an organization which will enable capable men and representatives of consumers with a strong sense of social responsibility to express their opinions freely, and to see that state enterprises are properly managed. The principle of democracy — that the people participate in their government for their own benefit — must be deeply rooted in this field.

#### Industrial and Agricultural Cooperation.

In order to offset some of the economic advantages of great cooperations and large land owners, many countries have developed industrial and farmers' cooperatives. Some of these are organized in the form of companies, but, in most cases, they are managed by individuals. The importance of small and medium enterprises has considerably increased with the dissolution of Zaibatsu organizations and the decentralization of capital. But there still remains the danger of pressure from large enterprises. Even among small and medium businesses, the weak are apt to fall a prey to the strong as a result of free competition. This gives rise to the abuse of having small and medium enterprises drive their employees hard. How can this abuse be eliminated?

The most effective counter-measure is for those engaged in a small or medium enterprise to organize "cooperatives", and thus balance out some of the weaknesses of small and medium business. This enables them to compete with large capital and to rationalize their enterprises.

For example, cooperative unions composed of small and medium manufacturers of the same product can purchase raw materials and sell the manufactured products jointly. They can provide various facilities which members cannot individually acquire, and let members use them jointly. When individual members lack funds, the union of small producers can make loans from a bank. On a higher level, the cooperative union can jointly use the factories of the individual members, centralize production, and jointly calculate and distribute the profits or losses. If cooperatives thus come to exercise considerable control over the individual members, the thrill of free enterprise may be lost, but, to compensate for this, such unions will give small and medium manufacturers considerable strength to vie with large-scale enterprises. In the past, small and medium enterprises were at the mercy of the commission-merchant, and were placed in an unfavorable position in borrowing money, in purchasing raw materials, and in the sale and distribution of their finished goods. This condition can be considerably improved through cooperative unions, which will serve to promote the sound progress of small and medium enterprises.

Even though the position of small and medium businesses may thus be improved, it is still a long way from the goal of democracy if a feudalistic control of employees continues in the management of such businesses. The reason why many small and medium businesses have survived to this day despite many disadvantages is that they have often been able to gain profits by using cheap labor. From now on, the state and society must exercise sufficient surveillance



over small and medium businesses in order to protect workers employed by them and to elevate their working conditions. As a result of the high cost of labor, the management of small and medium businesses may become more difficult, but this can at least partially be made good by the development of industrial cooperative unions.

The necessity of the sound development of cooperatives is not confined to commercial and industrial fields. In agriculture, which directly sustains national life, it is also important to promote the democratization of economy by the organization of cooperatives.

In the economy of any country, agriculture holds a unique and important position. Agriculture plays the part of supplying the whole nation with food. In Japan, where nearly half of the total population live on farms or in rural communities, agrarian problems attract our profound concern. Moreover, labor for industry is largely supplied by agricultural communities. Accordingly, if the standard of living in rural communities is low, the wages of factory workers will be affected and will not be raised above a certain level. Therefore, improvement of the living standards of farmers will indirectly improve the position of workers in the cities.

The most controversial problem in rural communities is the relationship between landowners and tenant farmers. In the past a few landowners owned vast tracts of land, and, with little effort of their own, extorted high rents. On the other hand, the tenant farmers, though engaged in hard labor, had to pay a big portion of their harvest as farm-rents, and that in kind, and had to content themselves with an undesirably low standard of living. Nothing could be a more unnatural state of affairs. There is a proverb, "the magic power of ownership turns sand into gold." If tenant farmers are turned into independent farmers who till their own land, they will naturally put more heart into farming. Therefore, the basis for the democratization of rural communities is to turn tenant farmers into independent farmers as much as possible. Therefore, the agrarian land reform which recently came into force provides that the Government purchase land from the landowners and, in turn, sell it to tenant farmers. This has brought about a great change in our agricultural communities, and certainly promises an improved living for the working farmers.

Under the recent agrarian land reform, however, tenant-farm land of not more than about one cho (not more than four cho in Hokkaido) is recognized. To that extent, tenant-farmers still remain.

In order to stabilize the position of such tenant farmers, it is necessary either to extend independent farming or to clarify tenant-rights and farm-rents. Since ancient times, farm-rents in our country were paid in kind, and that at extremely high rates. This is a relic of an old custom in the feudal past when farmers paid a land-tax in kind to their lords. It was a major factor ~~of~~ of agricultural feudalism. The payment in kind was, by the recent agrarian reform, changed to payment in money, and the rent was substantially reduced. In this manner the agrarian system is going through a great reform. But this does not cure the fundamental weakness of agriculture of Japan. The average tillable land in Japan is barely one cho per family, while the majority of farmers till from five tan to one cho (tan: one-tenth of a cho, or 0.245 acres). When acreage is so restricted, there is a natural limit to the expansion of agricultural productivity even under independent farming. Under such conditions one can hardly hope for a complete stabilization of agricultural management. Therefore, in order to improve the position of these small-scale independent farmers, it becomes very desirable to develop "agricultural cooperative unions."

Agricultural cooperative unions are voluntary organizations of working farmers. Under the union, individual farmers maintain an independent management of their own farms but jointly cooperate in purchasing seeds, fertilizer and farm tools, borrowing funds and selling agricultural products, and so forth. When farmers separately manage agriculture, their interests are apt to be adversely affected by the industrial, commercial, and financial circles of the cities. Not infrequently, farmers are compelled to pay high prices for industrial goods and sell agricultural products cheaply to merchants, and suffer from debts with high interest rates. With their small farms and meager profits, they cannot dream of making full use of mechanical equipment. - However, if the



separated, individual farmers collect their strength, manage financial enterprises themselves, conduct joint purchases and sales, and jointly utilize machinery and irrigation facilities, then their economic position will be greatly strengthened. This is the function of cooperative unions. The cooperative unions are not only democratic organizations, but play a very important role in stabilizing the position and life of the farmers.

Be that as it may, the real headache of Japanese rural communities is the scarcity of tillable land in proportion to the population. If, as in the past, rural communities are overflowing with population, there is a likelihood that farmland will be further divided into smaller plots, and rents will rise proportionately once again. Therefore, in order to assure a better life for the farmers, there must be some outlets for the dense rural population. For that purpose, it is necessary to develop industrial and mining industries in order to absorb the excess population of the farms. At the same time, farm villages themselves must promote farm industry (manufacturing agricultural products) to absorb the surplus population. This may be a difficult task, but must surely be accomplished if a healthy agricultural economy is to be developed and maintained.

#### Protection of Consumers.

From the standpoint of production, people are divided into capitalists, laborers, merchants, salaried workers, farmers, etc. But, from the standpoint of consumption, all persons have common interests. The protection of consumers' interests is an exceedingly important problem in the stabilization and improvement of national livelihood. Its importance is especially pronounced in the cities. In rural communities, farmers enjoy a measure of self-sufficiency in many consumer goods, and farmers' cooperatives are already playing an important role in the purchase of necessary supplies.

For the benefit of the consumers, it is most important to grant as much "freedom of consumption" as possible. The person concerned usually knows best what is most needed and what he wants most. Every person has his individual tastes, and the living conditions of individuals also differ. Therefore, we should not try to make each individual's taste and desire conform to a single pattern. Of course, when goods are scarce, it is necessary to ration and restrict consumption, but the spirit of free consumption must be respected as far as circumstances permit.

In order to maintain freedom of consumption, it is better to leave sales to free competition in shops, so that the people may buy anything from any shop they please. But the presence of merchants who make great profits between the producer and the consumer is often detrimental to the interests of the consumer. Therefore, it is desirable, in such a case, to develop consumers' cooperative societies and directly protect the interests of the consumers. Consumers' cooperative societies can function with minimum fees, since they are non-profit making agencies. Further, the development of consumers' cooperative societies will cause merchants to cut their costs and prices to a minimum to meet competition. Thus, it will conduce to the benefit of the consumers. Consequently, it is often desirable to have both private shops and consumers' cooperative societies exist side by side. There is no need to do away with either of them.

If consumers' cooperative societies develop from small local units to a regional or a national federal organization, they will become extremely powerful. In England, America, Sweden, etc., cooperative societies own large factories, operate their own steamships, and transport their manufactured goods. There is indeed a long way to travel to reach such an advanced state, but the development of democratic cooperative societies will do much to brighten the life of the consumers.

The function of consumers' cooperative societies is not limited to cooperative purchases of daily necessities. When they have a large-scale organization, they can establish hospitals, barber shops, baths, nurseries for children, and manage community kitchens. Further, with the development of consumers' cooperative societies, they can send their representatives to various conferences. Since the representatives have the backing of powerful organizations, they can well reflect the will of the consumers and their opinions will carry great weight. This has no small significance for the advancement of the economic life of the people. With the strength of cooperation and organization,



cooperative societies can solve matters that cannot be effectively dealt with by individuals acting alone. Here is the important meaning of cooperative societies whose function is to protect the interests of consumers.

But, fundamentally, it is production that supports the consumers' life. No matter how complete the organization of cooperative societies may be, the consumers' life cannot improve unless production increases. Then how far will production of our country develop? Can it give employment to all the workers of our eighty million population and maintain their living? Upon this, in the long run, depends whether the economy of Japan can be effectively democratized. If, due to inadequate production, the living standards of the people are lowered and the streets are flooded with jobless persons, democracy in economic life can hardly be realized. That is not all. Economic depression and confusion would, in due course, endanger political democracy and imperil our progress as a democratic nation. What then are the future prospects of the Japanese economy? None should look to the future with too much optimism.

Firstly, all the Japanese people are now concentrated in the narrow confines of four islands, further intensifying our population problem. Secondly, the recovery of production is anything but smooth, owing to the destruction of our internal facilities and the lowering of our industrial techniques. It is, of course, no easy thing to rebuild the structure of an economy that has crumbled by war damages, reparations, and inflation. In the third place, although the position of laborers and the standard of living of farmers may be improved, this does not necessarily mean the immediate improvement of our national life. The matter is not so simple. The future economy of this country must be supported more than ever by foreign trade. In exporting Japanese goods in competition with foreign goods, we must anticipate far greater difficulties than in the past, for the higher the wages of laborers, the higher the cost of production, and thus the harder the competition with European and American products will become. Moreover, markets for our manufactured goods may be reduced, since those Asiatic nations which once depended upon Japanese goods are likely to develop their own industries. If our export trade does not flourish, we shall be unable to import raw materials. This will further impoverish the industry of our country with her meager natural resources.

Considered in this light, it is anything but easy to provide employment and livelihood for a people of more than eighty million. But we must do our utmost to surmount these difficulties with the benevolent help of the Allied nations. For that purpose the revival of productive power and the stabilization of economic life must be promoted by an appropriate operation of economic controls. Then we must strive for the development of a peacetime industry and trade by applying science to practical use, and making good use of the fine crafts and skills characteristic of the Japanese people. Furthermore, with a view to alleviating the excessive over-population and living hardships, the problems of raising the marriageable age, and birth control, should be seriously considered.

The Japanese Constitution, in Article 25, provides:

"All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living."

How the spirit of this article can be translated into reality, and to what level the so-called minimum standard of living can be lifted, depends largely on the efforts of the Japanese people themselves. Until our living standard can be elevated, all the people must lead hard, austere, lives, - but this is what the people of a defeated nation must endure. Our conclusion is that, if the economic life of our country does not improve, the realization of economic democracy will be no simple matter. But, for that very reason, it is all the more important for us to emphasize democracy in our economic life, and to strive for its attainment.



## CHAPTER X

## DEMOCRACY AND LABOR UNIONS

The Reason for Labor Unions

In a capitalistic society, as long as the principle of democracy is established and each individual has the freedom and right to pursue his own happiness and lead his own life, the daily lives of the people are likely to be enriched. Actually, however, this has not always been the case. Especially before capitalism made its present social gains, the economic position of laborers left much to be desired. Capital tended to become gradually concentrated in the hands of a comparatively small number of capitalists, and their economic power tended to be used one-sidedly in their own interests. On the other hand, the majority of working people often had to be content with unreasonably low wages, unreasonably long hours, and disadvantageous living conditions.

In an economic society in which capital has almost unlimited power, laborers are obliged to engage in labor under conditions largely designated by capitalists. A disproportionately large part of the value of the production obtained by labor is, under these circumstances, absorbed by the capitalists. Even in such a society the law usually guarantees the terms of contracts freely entered into between employer and worker. But, if the content of a contract concerning the conditions of labor is decided one-sidedly by capitalists, the contract entered into cannot be said to be truly free. It would be against the principle of democracy to let such a state of affairs take its own course.

For the fundamental spirit of democracy is respect for man. All human beings whoever they may be, have the right to enjoy the essentials of a good life. It would be a serious matter if hard working people should lack the things essential to maintain life--i.e. food, clothing, and shelter. Thus, all human beings have the right to work for the welfare of themselves and their families, and should have an equal right to demand incomes sufficient to support their families by their work. This is a "fundamental human right", equally recognized for all people. It is only natural that democracy, which respects fundamental human rights more than anything else, should strive to root out various evils and irrationalities of economic life.

This is, after all, a question of democracy in economic life as explained in the previous chapter, but, considered especially from the viewpoint of improving the position of laborers, it becomes a so-called "labor problem". Although there are various measures taken to solve labor problems, the major effort should be aimed at the elimination of the unfair disadvantages to workers. From this point of view, "labor unions", built up by the unity of laborers, are significant organizations.

The industrial workers of today are dispersed throughout many factories, mills, and shops. Without a labor union, even those who work together in the same shop must be employed individually and must arrange their wages and working conditions individually with the management. They have no means of knowing the value of the labor which they perform, of the places where their labor is in greatest demand, or what is an appropriate wage. If the manager of the company dismisses them at the company's convenience, individually they cannot protest, or else they usually protest in vain. If they lose their jobs, they may not know where tomorrow's bread is coming from. Therefore, they may be forced by necessity to sell their labor for a mere song and under any conditions, wherever they can be employed. It is thus most disadvantageous for laborers to be separated and isolated.

Furthermore, as the scale of an industry becomes larger, there is an increasing tendency toward the division of labor. The laborer working at a certain place takes charge of simple, stereotyped work such as striking a nail with a hammer or putting oil on machinery, and repeats it all the year round. In the process there is little opportunity for the cultivation of a wide variety of skills. Men become little more than machines. The creativeness of their spirit becomes dwarfed from lack of exercise. Herein lies the essential difference between the factory workers of today and the handicraft workers of the past. Under such dull, routine conditions, men feel all the more a yearning for recreation, entertainment, and cultural diversion. But if they work most of the



day in the factory at low wages, and return home exhausted only to go to bed, these yearnings can hardly be satisfied. When laborers are separated and isolated, few can dream of implementing measures for cultural elevation by means of their own limited individual resources.

Such disadvantages, however, can be at least partially overcome by the power of the united organization of many workers. The greater the scale of the organization, the greater the power of its unity. Laborers working separately in their respective posts have come to realize the disadvantages of dispersion and isolation, and, by becoming united, strive to establish proper working conditions. As big enterprises developed and their economic powers became greater, labor unions also developed from small-scale units to powerful local and national organizations.

The betterment of working conditions and the improvement of the living environment of laborers often depend largely upon the activities of such labor unions. On the other hand, democratic states have recognized labor's "right of organization" and have come to promote the development of unions by law. This may be said to be a great stride towards the goal of economic democratization.

#### The Functions of Labor Unions

Labor unions are thus autonomous organizations of the working masses, created to secure appropriate labor conditions. In the light of their spirit, therefore, labor unions constitute a democratic movement to protect the workers' fundamental human rights from the possible abuses of the power of management. In other words, labor unions are, or at least should be, popular organizations dedicated to the realization of economic democracy.

If the autonomous organizations of the workers called labor unions did not exist or were prohibited, it could be stated that the principle of modern democracy could not in reality be fully realized, even though it may be recognized in a legal form and established as a system. Therefore, labor unions embody, or should embody, in our modern industrial organization, the principle of democracy, and are valuable factors in developing democracy as a living and moving principle instead of merely a legal system.

Accordingly, the primary mission of labor unions is to secure appropriate working conditions. The mere betterment of working conditions, however, might be accomplished even by dogmatic bureaucrats or "benevolent" autocrats. For example, Hitler won the loyalty of many workers through an organization called "Strength Through Joy". But the improvement of working conditions realized in this manner is not a wholesome one, for it ignores the independence of the workers. The principle of ruling the masses in feudal days was, "Let people obey, but not be informed." In contrast, the ideal of modern labor unions lies in the autonomous realization of proper working conditions by the power of the laborers' own organizations. It is the great mission of labor unions to endeavor to develop economic democracy, not by dictates from above, but by organization and spontaneous power growing from the rank and file.

Can you now understand how closely the spirit of labor unions is tied in with the principle of democracy? Democratic government is government for the people, but it does not follow that as long as it is government for the people, any means is justified. Even though the happiness of the people may be promoted by orders from above, it is not democracy. True democracy is a government for the people, which is conducted by the people themselves. Similarly, the true function of labor unions is for laborers themselves, and not political or labor bosses, to elevate living conditions by their own strength and organization. Through the activities of such autonomous unions, laborers can educate themselves socially and politically. In this sense, labor unions should strive to become autonomously organized schools of democracy.

Therefore, the function of labor unions is not by any means limited to the economic objective of increasing wages, lessening hours, and generally improving working conditions. They have other important social and cultural functions.

As mentioned above, workers in large, modern factories, on account of their stereotyped work not only have difficulties in cultivating a harmonious development of knowledge, but may easily become spiritually immature persons. This is almost inevitable in any large-scale enterprise requiring an extreme division of labor, whether it is capitalistic or socialistic. In order to protect the fundamental human rights, it is exceedingly important to prevent the atrophy of the



intelligence and knowledge of laborers, and to enrich their spiritual lives. Men does not live by bread alone. Everyone has the equal right to obtain spiritual food. At a time when economic organizations revolving around large-scale enterprises tend to retard spiritual growth, it certainly is a very important mission of labor unions to see that the laborers may, by means of their autonomous organization, be enabled to acquire culture and enlightenment which they could hardly hope to acquire individually.

#### The Realization of Industrial Peace.

The attainment of fair, appropriate labor conditions and the improvement of the position of the working people through the activities of labor unions, contribute greatly towards the realization of a so-called "industrial peace". When free enterprise is left entirely alone to take its own course, there is always the danger that the gap between management and labor may become wider, giving rise to an irreconcilable opposition of interests and feelings between them. This obstructs increased production and is detrimental to the general welfare. In contrast, if labor unions make healthy progress and succeed in promoting understanding and cooperation between labor and management, it will be possible to prevent the above unfortunate consequences. Industrial peace is, and always should be, the goal of a mature union movement. Although this object is not always realized, it is most desirable for labor unions to enunciate it as a lofty aim and strive constantly for its realization. Strikes should always be regarded as a last resort.

In order to attain industrial peace, it is necessary on the part of management to have a realistic and objective understanding of the position of labor, and also for labor to have a realistic and objective comprehension of the problems of management.

In a capitalistic economy, the operation of a private enterprise is in principle aimed at profit, no matter what other aim it may have at the same time. But if capitalists and management think of nothing but profits, and, in complete disregard of the interests of laborers, try to make them work as hard as possible at the lowest possible wages, it is almost inevitable for laborers to utilize their power of union primarily as a weapon of strife. In that case, the management will view the labor movement with increasing hostility. But the operation of factories, production, and profits are largely due to the power of labor. Therefore, it is natural and right for management to respect the value and position of labor. If the management has an objective appreciation of the fundamental rights and just demands of laborers as human beings, there is all the more reason why various problems can be settled through peaceful negotiation. In this manner, the way towards industrial peace can be opened.

Secondly, in order to attain the object of industrial peace, both management and labor should realize that they are standing on common ground.

It is true, of course, that management and labor have different interests. But the successful operation of an enterprise requires their mutual cooperation. It cannot be accomplished by either one alone. Therefore, both management and labor must avoid any collision of sentiments and political beliefs and must think in terms of cooperation for their mutual benefit. If management and labor find common interests in eliminating evils and in improving the enterprise itself, there is no need for them to indulge in profitless struggle. In particular, production should not be regarded as something for the sole benefit of the producers, but is indispensable for the enrichment of the lives of all the people and the promotion of their welfare. Viewed in the light of the primary aim of production, it is crystal clear how essential it is for management and labor to find a peaceful reconciliation of their views.

If the production of a private enterprise is improved and increased through harder work, greater efficiency, and a mutual sense of responsibility on the part of all concerned, larger profits are almost certain to result. In such a case, the increased profits obtained through such mutual efforts should be shared with the workers by granting them increased wages. This is not only enlightened and socially minded capitalism. It has also proven time and time again to be far sighted business policy. Higher profits and higher wages create an upward spiral of prosperity and security for everybody, and so the ideal of economic democracy under capitalism is realized, or at least approached.



Socialistic management, on the other hand, claims to meet the demand of social justice by treating management and labor equally, but the adherents of capitalism insist that there is always a possibility that the drive for increased production will decline under such a system. If full use is made of capitalism's strong point that the pursuit of mutual interests stimulates production, and laborers are enabled to share in the increased profits through higher wages, management will be able not only to increase production, but also to meet the demands of social justice. Then, and then only, there grows harmonious cooperation between management and labor, which will pave the way to the realization of industrial peace.

### Collective Bargaining

We have referred to various missions and ideals of labor unions but, needless to say, their fundamental function is the attainment of proper working conditions. The most important method used by labor unions to achieve this objective is "collective bargaining."

Before the growth of labor unions, working conditions as a rule were determined by the one-sided will of management. But, as labor unions developed, wages, working hours, holidays, and other conditions came to be determined by collective bargaining between management and representatives of unions. Formerly, since laborers individually negotiated with their employers, they were obliged to be satisfied with the conditions largely specified by the employer. Under collective bargaining, however, the main points of working conditions are reasonably determined, or should be so determined, according to generally established standards. Therefore, the laborers' "right to unite" and right of "collective bargaining" are indispensable premises for the realization of a labor union's purposes. It is for this reason that the new Constitution of Japan solemnly enunciates and guarantees these two rights.

In order that proper working conditions may be determined through collective bargaining, management must fully understand that the elevation of the living standard of union members is essential for the healthy operation of the enterprise. On the other hand, union members must thoroughly understand that, without the rationalization of management and the expansion of production, the management of the enterprise itself will be unable to make both ends meet, with the result that proper working conditions and mutual prosperity will turn out to be an empty phrase.

When collective bargaining progresses smoothly as the result of mutual understanding, "labor agreements" will be concluded between management and labor. In the case of the handicraft and small-scale enterprises it is, of course, very hard to find general standards of working conditions, inasmuch as there are differences in the kind and nature of labor. On the other hand, with the progress of large-scale enterprises, the living conditions of laborers tend to become more standardized. Hence it becomes possible to determine general standards of proper working conditions from a wider standpoint. If minimum labor standards are universally prescribed by national law, the objectives of collective bargaining will become still more clear. "The Labor Standard Law" was enacted for the purpose of guaranteeing a decent living to laborers by proscribing minimum standards of labor conditions.

Labor agreements concluded by collective bargaining usually determine working conditions for a fixed term, preferably for a year. In this manner, working conditions are stabilized at least during the fixed period, so workers can plan their living accordingly. Management, too, finds it easier to estimate costs, since personnel expenses are clearly known. This is extremely important for both management and labor. In this respect, too, collective bargaining by unions contributes to the rationalization of management.

Collective bargaining, however, cannot always be expected to result in harmonious agreements. It is proper that unions should make reasonable demands in accordance with the real conditions of business, and management should sincerely strive to grant them. If not, negotiations may approach a breakdown. Even when there is a danger of negotiations breaking down, the parties concerned must always make the utmost efforts to avoid a profitless conflict through the use of such methods as mediation and arbitration. If, however, their efforts fail and collective bargaining finally breaks down, labor unions, with the usual exception of unions of government workers, have a right to strike as a last resort.



Socialistic management, on the other hand, claims to meet the demand of social justice by treating management and labor equally, but the adherents of capitalism insist that there is always a possibility that the drive for increased production will decline under such a system. If full use is made of capitalism's strong point that the pursuit of mutual interests stimulates production, and laborers are enabled to share in the increased profits through higher wages, management will be able not only to increase production, but also to meet the demands of social justice. Then, and then only, there grows harmonious cooperation between management and labor, which will pave the way to the realization of industrial peace.

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Strikes may be regarded as a means to protect the laborers' legitimate demands. However, to misuse the right to strike--to use it as a mere weapon of strife, or to strike for the sake of strikes, should be avoided under any and all circumstances. Obviously, economic and social losses caused by strikes are immeasurable. Today, the various industries of a nation are inter-related and united as in an organism. Accordingly, if production in a certain area or industry is stopped, it may paralyze the functioning of the whole national economy. Reckless strikes by certain labor unions sometimes result in threatening the economic life of the whole nation. Union leaders must therefore act wisely and prudently so as to prevent by all means the misuse of the right to strike. This has to be particularly emphasized with regard to public utilities industries such as railways, and the mining of coal.

In order to prevent strikes as far as possible, it is important for management, as mentioned above, to make every effort to respect the legitimate demands of labor unions, and for the unions to propose reasonable demands consistent with the actual conditions of the industrial and national economy. When management and labor arbitrarily insist on their claims and refuse to yield an inch, a compromise cannot readily be effected by the parties themselves. Thereupon, it becomes necessary and desirable to adjust labor disputes from an impartial and objective standpoint. In other words, "Labor Committees," composed of representatives of management and labor, and third parties representing the general public, are established in order both to prevent strikes and to mediate or arbitrate in the event of strikes.

The words "mediation" and "arbitration" mentioned here may seem to mean the same, but actually they signify considerably different procedures. "Mediation" means examining the facts of the dispute, hearing the claims of both sides, proposing conditions likely to be accepted by both the management and unions, and thus bring about a settlement of the dispute. In contrast, when a dispute cannot be settled by mediation, the dispute is "arbitrated" on the request of the parties concerned.

In the case of arbitration, the parties must abide by the decision of the arbitrator. The Labor Committee also mediates or arbitrates the dispute, but the parties can by agreement entrust mediation or arbitration to others. Procedures for mediation and arbitration are provided for by the "Labor Relations Adjustment Law." This law, together with the "Labor Union Law" and the "Labor Standards Law", which clarifies the minimum standards of labor conditions, aim at the settlement of labor problems, the maintenance of industrial peace, and economic prosperity.

We have stated above the general methods of solving labor disputes. But we must understand that there are important limitations. One is the restrictions imposed on the disputes in public utilities work. When a dispute arises in connection with public utilities work, it must necessarily be referred to mediation of a labor committee in accordance with the law. Moreover, strikes are not allowed unless and until full 30 days have elapsed after the dispute is referred to mediation. As public utilities work has a most direct relation to the welfare of the people, it is but natural that the law thus prohibits strikes without warning. Another limitation is the restriction on the collective bargaining rights of government workers.

Public officials are often in a position of still greater public importance than those engaged in ordinary public utility work. Therefore, considering the nature of their duties, their freedom to bargain collectively, in the usual sense of the term, and their right to strike, are prohibited or restricted, so that the general welfare of the people is thereby protected. In the case of such public officials and workers as policemen and firemen even the right to organize is prohibited.

#### Labor Unions of Japan

Labor unions must be autonomous organizations inspired by the awakening of laborers and operated by the will and reason of the rank and file of laborers. However, in a country like Japan, where the labor union movement was for long suppressed by a militaristic government, the independent progress and operation of labor unions has been anything but easy. True, the militarists and special service police have vanished and the Zaibatsu has been dissolved, but it would be an absurd mistake to jump to the conclusion that labor unions in



Japan have immediately grown to be spontaneous and independent in character. A man who has carried a heavy stone on his back for a long time cannot walk upright immediately when the stone is suddenly removed by another person. In the same way, labor unions of this country have been given true freedom of organization for the first time following the surrender. Consequently, they are as yet far from being able to exercise their freedoms and rights intelligently and independently. That being the case, it is most important for the unions of this country to strive to exercise, autonomously and with responsibility, the freedoms and the rights they have thus suddenly acquired with comparatively so little effort.

Labor unions should not be oppressed by either the state or by employers. At the same time, unions should not depend upon their support either, for, although assistance may seem for a time quite helpful in the development of the union movement, such support will, in the long run, deprive labor unions of their independence and reduce them to government or company organs. Therefore, in order that labor unions may develop democratically, it is necessary for them not only to maintain independence in personnel, but to refrain from requesting or accepting outside financial assistance. However poor a union may be, if it is operated through the united powers of its members, it will make slow but steady progress because the members consider it "their own union". Like any other democratic organization, it is not until a labor union becomes a "union of its members" and a "union by its members" that it can truly become a "union for its members."

If union members are eager to create a good union by their own spontaneous strength, union activities will prove to be a source of salutary training and education for union members. On the contrary, if they are members in name only and leave the operation exclusively to bosses, a few members of the union will arbitrarily hold the real power and control the union in an autocratic manner. This will invite bosses to engage in secret and selfish maneuvers,--all, of course, in the name of democracy.

As a result of a time-honored feudal custom, the people of Japan have a tendency to be cowed by those who assert strong opinions unsparingly. They tend to assume a "let sleeping dogs lie" attitude, and refrain from voicing their own opinions. If such a tendency is present in a union, it will soon be at the mercy of its bosses. The motivating force of a union must be the spontaneous will of the rank and file membership of the union. All union members must lay to heart that it is their great responsibility to organize a union suited to fulfill its inherent economic and spiritual mission without turning it into a tool of venal bosses or a mere weapon of strife.

In the short three years since the end of the war, the number of labor unions in Japan came to exceed 28,000, while the number of union members totaled over 6,000,000. Numerically, the union movement has made astonishing progress. But, from the standpoint of quality, it yet leaves much to be desired.

The rapid outward development of the labor movement in Japan is due to the fact that the government which has the responsibility to realize thorough-going democratization of the national life of Japan has abolished all laws and regulations which prevented the organization and growth of labor unions, and, at the same time, gave various kinds of assistance to them and asked for the cooperation of management. Of course, none of this was intended to make government organs out of labor unions. But, when a union's progress is accelerated by outside help, there is always a danger that the union members will have no real awakening, even though the unions may outwardly and numerically expand. Labor unions in Japan are progressing under such conditions. If the laborers of Japan are to make such organizations "their own", it is supremely important for each individual member both to understand and practice the democratic spirit of labor unions.

#### Political Activities of Labor Unions

The immediate task of labor unions is directed at the economic objective of improving the working conditions of the laborers. But this economic objective is not easily attained by mere economic activity alone. The settlement of the economic problems of a nation is always partially determined by political action or inaction. Therefore, in order to secure proper working conditions, labor unions have a natural concern with politics. The fact that the number of union members in this country already exceeds 6,000,000 indicates how big a



stake labor unions have in politics. Especially when unions are independent organizations of working people, if they use their power of organization properly, they can exert a strong and constructive influence on the development of democratic government. We should be able to look to labor unions for sound constructive political activities striving for the realization of economic democracy.

It is very important always to remember, however, that labor unions are not political parties. Therefore, there must naturally be a certain limitation to their political activities. We must always lay this clearly to heart. Political parties have, or should have, fixed political platforms. Individuals who support a particular platform can join the political party which advocates it, while those who are dissatisfied with the program of a party are perfectly free to resign and join some other party. Therefore, a political party can require its party members to act according to its platform.

Labor unions, on the contrary, are independent organizations composed of those who have common interests in improving their working conditions and in lifting their living standards. Accordingly, union members must have the freedom to sympathize with any political platform and to support any political party which most clearly promises to contribute to their interests as workers. But, if union members are not fully enlightened politically, a few persons with biased political thoughts and dictatorial methods are likely to gain control of the unions, exercise autocratic powers, and use the united power of the union to attain their own political ends. All of this is diametrically opposed to the basic aim of democratic labor unions. They should never permit themselves to be utilized as mere tools of a political party. Union members should constantly guard against these undemocratic tendencies.

Therefore, the political activities of labor unions must be carried out in accordance with the inherent mission of labor unions themselves. Even within these limitations, the activities of labor unions should always be fair and open.

In short, the mission of labor unions is to protect the fundamental human rights of the laboring masses, to secure proper working conditions, and to elevate the spiritual and cultural standards of the working people. Therefore, labor unions should desire the National Diet to pass laws designed to attain these objectives. At the same time, they should endeavor to arrest legislation that would stand in the way of the attainment of these objectives. A law designed to protect the workers' position may be enacted. Should the government be reluctant to implement the spirit of the law in its administration, labor unions must keep in touch with the government and encourage it to carry out labor legislation properly. To have the voice of the working people reflected in the national administration through the labor unions will contribute to the realization of economic democracy.

As mentioned above, a labor union is, as it were, a school of democracy with a self-governing organization. But the word "school" here does not mean that it has teachers specializing in the teaching of democracy. Nor does the mere preaching of a sermon on democracy suffice to make union members grasp and practice the spirit of democracy. Democracy will not become part and parcel of their lives unless and until they build it up with their own strength, practice it themselves, and realize by experience how much it can elevate their lives. In this sense every member of the labor union should be at once a teacher and a pupil. If the teacher is bad, the pupils are likely to become bad also. As long as union members regard the union as a mere instrument of strife, the spirit of democracy which should be based upon peaceful cooperation will be lost or destroyed. If most of union members are so passive as to be led by the nose by a few bosses, forgetting that they are themselves teachers, they will be learning the politics of dictatorship instead of democracy. Let labor unions be organizations which are created by the members and for the members. Then the democratization of the social, economic, and political life of Japan is all the more likely to progress and prosper.



## Chapter XI

## DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

Three Phases of Democracy

If the preceding chapters are reviewed, it will be found that, though the fundamental spirit of democracy is always one and the same, it is manifested in various forms and phases.

Democracy's basic principle -- to respect all men as individuals, and therefore to ensure freedom and equality for all -- is both universal and immutable. Democracy, however, is a product of long historical development. Its outward form has changed through the ages, and will continue to change. At the same time the scope of its application is steadily widening. Consequently, in these modern times; we have come to consider democracy in terms of its three aspects, namely, democracy in political life, democracy in social life, and democracy in economic life.

Democracy in political life may be said to be the most basic form of the three. Historically, liberal-minded men first became conscious of political democracy, and advocated it strongly from the early days.

The idea that all men are born free and equal has an ancient origin as an idea, but, since the beginning of modern times, the idea has, in democratic countries, gradually become a political fact. Men strove for political freedom and equality with might and main. The fruits of their endeavors steadily materialized with the advent of two great events towards the end of the 18th century, namely, the Declaration of Independence by the United States of America and the French Revolution.

The aim of a genuinely democratic government is to promote the general welfare and to give all the people equal opportunities to pursue happiness. Such a "government for the people" can be realized only when the people themselves determine the fundamental political policies, with the largest possible number of people participating in the election of their own representatives. If there is a difference of views among the people, or among the representatives of the people, as there is almost certain to be, majority rule should determine the plans to be adopted. This is a basic principle of political democracy. The various political structures of democracy are nothing other than differing methods of realizing this fundamental concept.

Developing side by side with political democracy was democracy in social life.

It is a denial of the fundamental principle of democracy to grant special privileges to persons because of the race, color, or station to which they are born. A social system under which persons of "nobility" or high birth are automatically given high places while others are discriminated against because they are poor, or because of racial or religious differences, conflicts with the ideals of human freedom and equality. Democracy in social life not only rejects such social discriminations, but also rejects concepts which would make women subordinate to men merely because they are women. It excludes a family system in which husbands have automatic dominion over their wives, where fathers demand an abject submission from their children, and where the eldest son alone is given preferential treatment. To be sure, it is natural and right for individuals with superior abilities or wide experience to assume positions of leadership. Even so, it is a basic concept of democracy in social life that all individuals should be given equal opportunities to develop their abilities and personalities without distinction as to race, sex, faith, age, or status.

Following the development of democracy in political life and democracy in social life, democracy in economic life has come to assume increased importance.

Democracy aims at a society in which all the people may pursue and build happiness and security. Needless to say, happiness in this sense is not by any means confined to mere material happiness. If the majority of the people are in straitened circumstances in terms of such bare necessities as food, clothing, and shelter, even spiritual happiness can hardly be realized. It is therefore only natural for democracy to seek the elevation of the economic life of all the people.



In the beginning it was considered that the most appropriate method of achieving this objective was to avoid any government interference or participation in economic activities, and, as far as possible, to pursue a laissez-faire, or "let alone", policy. As one result of this policy, there gradually developed in the early days, an increasing measure of the monopolization of capital, giving rise to a wide gap between the wealthy capitalists and the working masses. Economic democracy aims to narrow the extremes of this gap by increasing the measure of equality of economic opportunity for all. Consequently it may be said that, of the three phases of democracy, the most urgent, and the least completely solved, problem of the day is economic democracy.

Economic democracy, however, cannot be easily realized. As long as the poor revere the wealthy as men of high position and the wealthy, taking advantage of this feeling of the poor, think it a matter of course to have the poor work at unreasonably low wages, unreasonably long hours, and under disadvantageous working conditions, the vast gap between the very rich and the very poor will remain. What should be respected is not wealth, but the man and the labor necessary to construct a good life. If, in a capitalistic society, big businessmen deserve to be respected, it is not because they are millionaires, but because of their demonstrated abilities as managers and their endeavors to put their whole heart and soul into their enterprise and the general welfare. In order to realize equal opportunities in economic life, the inclination to measure human value by the amount of wealth a person may possess must first of all be abolished. In this sense, economic democracy is inseparably tied in with democracy in social life.

The most important means of realizing economic democracy, however, is political democracy. If wealthy people alone were allowed to vote and elect representatives who will protect only their own interests, the working masses would be reduced to an increasingly more disadvantageous position. Even if universal suffrage for both men and women is in force, the evils of plutocracy would still persist if voters are swayed by the power of money, or if political parties are bribed by Zaibatsu. Therefore, unless everyone fully grasps the objectives of democratic government and all qualified voters become "enlightened voters" and elect competent representatives, and unless these representatives earnestly consider the welfare of the entire nation and administer a democratic government, it will not be possible to build up an economic life which is genuinely compatible with the essential principles of democracy. Thus, the fundamental solution of the problems of economic democracy largely depends on a pervasive prevalence of political democracy.

Moreover, a most controversial problem prevails as to how economic democracy should be realized. Which is better -- capitalism or socialism? To eliminate the evils of monopolistic capitalism, what methods and policies should be pursued, and to what extent? What steps should be taken to guarantee the rights of labor and reduce the number of the unemployed? It is said that all the people have the duty to work, but what is to be done when there are people who can live without work? Should the duty to work depend on the moral and social responsibility of each individual, or should it be enforced by legislation? There are numerous other problems. It is unavoidable that there arises a wide, and, occasionally, violent, divergence of views on such problems.

In its consideration of such problems, a democratic government adopts the view of the majority. For example, in a representative democracy, the political party with the largest number of parliamentary seats plays the biggest role with regard to economic or any other type of legislation. The government supported by the votes of the majority of the members of both houses carries out economic policies based on these majority decisions. Therefore, so long as the paramount objective of a political democracy is a "government for the people" and the "general welfare of the people", the method of choosing the path to reach that goal must be "majority rule". It should therefore be obvious that, if the principle of majority rule is disregarded, there can be no real political democracy. In other words, no matter how much the banner of "government for the people" may be waved, a government which ignores majority opinion cannot possibly be democratic. We heard about that in Chapter V.

#### Criticisms of Democracy

In a real democracy, all men are respected as individuals. All have the freedom to cultivate their personalities and have equal opportunities to develop their abilities. All are free to live together in peace and happiness both culturally and economically. These are exceedingly lofty ideals of democracy to which none can object. Before these ideals are completely realized, however,



- there still lies ahead a long, thorny road which mankind has to travel. Over a period of centuries, democracy has endeavored to realize this goal and already very substantial progress has been made.

On the other hand, we must not forget that, historically, democracy has not always been supported or admired. On the contrary, in the course of its progress democracy has been made the target of all manner of criticism.

In the period of the democratic reform in England, the War of Independence in America, and the French Revolution, those who, until then, had enjoyed special privileges hated and bitterly denounced democracy. Subsequently, vigorous criticism of democracy was made by many thinkers and commentators. When political conditions were stormy in Europe after the first World War, the phrase "crisis of democracy" became almost a catch-word. Facism in Italy and Nazism in Germany arose and began all-out attacks against democratic government.

The point which, perhaps, was and still is, most strongly criticized by the opponents of democracy is the principle of majority rule. In a democracy, if there are divergent views as to which is the superior political policy, or how best to promote the general welfare, the majority view is adopted and put into effect. By broadening as much as possible the rights of individuals to express their views and to vote freely on political matters, democracy strives to have the greatest possible number of people participate in politics. However, the opponents of democracy -- the dictators -- contend that majority decisions obtained in this manner result merely in having political policies determined by the views of a large number of ignorant, shortsighted people. The masses, they say, are moved by mob psychology and are concerned only with their immediate interests, and therefore tend to dispose of important political matters arbitrarily by the sheer force of numbers. In such a situation, they say, the views of persons with a "superior" outlook are shelved, merely because they constitute a minority. This, according to the opponents of democracy, is a "government of number," or "mobocracy." Thus the opponents of democracy denounce democratic government in an exultant manner.

The conclusion intended to be drawn from such a criticism of democracy is that some form of totalitarianism is essentially superior. Those who denounce the democratic government of majority decision as "mobocracy" advocate the "leadership principle" as the alternative political principle. According to the leadership principle, policies which the leader or dictator believes are contrary to the interest of the whole should be abandoned, no matter how great the majority which support those policies may be. In case the government desires to carry out its own idea of "constructive policies," if opposition parties obstruct them through the exercise of majority rule, it would be impossible for them to meet any political crisis in their own way. Thus, it is maintained that the best thing instead of majority rule, is to rally to the support of a single man who is gifted with the greatest ability, wisdom, and resolution, give him absolute political powers, and have the people unite under his orders. In this manner, dictatorship is enabled to block public criticism against the government, forbid the operation or even the existence of opposition parties reject parliamentary government, and entrust everything to the leader who has absolute powers.

Another criticism which dictatorship levels against democracy is its "individualism." Democracy respects all men equally as individuals, and guarantees the freedom of each individual in so far as the exercise of this freedom does not infringe upon the freedom of others. According to dictators, however, if each individual is permitted to assert his freedom and pursue his own kind of happiness the unity of the whole society will be disturbed and the interests of the state or nation will suffer. They maintain that what should be valued is not the individual but the entire state and the entire nation. To them, the individual is but a portion of the whole and has value only as a portion of the whole. By such a theory, dictatorship attacks individualism and liberalism, and expounds totalitarianism. The demand that each individual should be willing, under any order of the dictator, to relinquish his interests or even his life for the sake of the whole, is but a logical conclusion of totalitarianism.

Just as democracy originated in ancient Greece and Rome, so dictatorship, too has a long history. In the age of Classical Greece, there were autocratic kings. Towards the latter period of the Republic of Rome, martial dictators appeared and established absolute monarchies. Dictatorships of the present age, as everybody knows, arose in Italy and Germany after the first World War. They brushed aside



democracies founded on a weak basis in those nations and seized the real political power. It was at the time of the Manchurian invasion in 1931 that a similar trend grew to ascendancy in Japan. This trend toward dictatorial politics was given impetus by the Sino-Japanese war of 1937 and was further spurred by the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941. While advocating totalitarianism of the Nazi pattern, Japanese militarists embellished their fascism with ultra-nationalism. They attacked democracy and liberalism, and imposed on the people the moral of "self-abnegating service to the state" (Messhi Hoko). Their attitude was not essentially different from the dictatorships of Italy and Germany.

#### The Answer of Democracy

What, exactly, has this kind of dictatorship brought to the destiny of our nation? It is too vivid a recent event to require analysis here. Nor is it necessary to elaborate on how mistaken were the theories of the dictatorships which denounced democracy. They have been explained in various preceding chapters. Let us just sum up only the important points as material for reflection so that we may never again fall into such evil ways.

Dictatorship denounces the method of majority rule employed by democracy. It is true, of course, that the decisions of the majority are not always correct. Often, as repeatedly emphasized in previous chapters, the view of a minority or a single progressive thinker is nearer the truth. But who on earth can guarantee that a dictator's decision will be in the best interests of all the people? In the summer of 1939 Hitler judged that it was high time to conquer Poland with armed might, and ordered the advance of the German army. Was his judgement then correct? Was it not this dictator's outrageous action which disregarded international faith, that plunged the German nation into a abysmal depth of misery? If democracy is mobocracy, is not dictatorship an arbitrary type of government which can make irreparable errors?

Men are not Gods. Their ideas are far from infallible. The strength of man's reason, however, is that he can rectify the wrongs into which he may fall. But dictatorship invariably tries to hide its failures and stifle the voices of rational criticism by the use of its concentrated power. Therefore dictatorial government, unlike democratic government, cannot easily right its own wrongs.

In contrast, democracy can constantly rectify mistakes of government by means of its guaranteed freedom of speech. If a majority decision turns out to be wrong, then, at a later time, the correct minority view can be supported by the majority of the people and put into effect. In the course of such a process, the people are gradually enlightened and politically trained. Consequently, decisions of the majority eventually tend to pursue the right way. As education becomes increasingly widespread and the culture of the people is elevated, the political policy supported by the majority is inevitably more likely to accord with the welfare of the people as a whole. The greatest merit of the principle of majority rule, supported by freedom of speech, consists in the fact that it can constantly steer government policy in the right direction. This is the convincing reason why democracy is the only path that promises hope and bright prospects for all mankind.

Dictators attack individualism, denounce liberalism, and, instead, advocate the totalitarian philosophy, whose supreme imperative is the strengthening of the entire state or nation. But what on earth is meant by the strengthening of the state and the prosperity of the nation? The state or the nation, after all, is composed of a great number of individuals. Accordingly, apart from the cultural and economic upliftment of all the individuals who compose the nation, there can be no fundamental development of the whole state or the nation. And yet dictatorship expounds "respect for the whole" and demands the sacrifice of individuals for the sake of the whole. This is nothing other than a device to direct and control the people by dictatorial orders issued under the cloak of authority for the whole. There lurks the hidden desire of a dictator to enforce his own plans, even by depriving the people of their individual freedom and happiness.

Democracy respects the individual and values the freedom of the individual. It stands for "individualism" in the right sense of the term, but it is anything but "egoism". The spirit of democracy which strives to realize the greatest happiness for the greatest number of individuals is the exact opposite of egoism, which seeks only one's own interests without caring a fig for the rights of others. Happiness built by the efforts of each individual is the true human happiness.



Hence democracy recognizes the equal right of all people to pursue happiness, in so far as the pursuit does not interfere with the happiness of others. If the standards of living of the people are lifted by the efforts of all individuals, the state will develop. If each individual of the nation builds up his well-being with due regard for the general welfare, the nation as a whole will prosper. If all the nations thus prosper and cooperate peacefully, the general welfare of mankind will inevitably be advanced. It is just as though, if fine cars hang down from each rice plant, the vast stretch of golden fertile plain is sure to bring forth an abundant harvest.

### The Stand of Communism

By the end of the second World War, Fascism of Italy, Nazism of Germany, and militaristic dictatorship of Japan were completely crushed by the nations which fought it out to defend democracy. These dictatorships were swept away from the postwar world. Has dictatorship, then, disappeared altogether in our time?

No, this is not the case. Even in the world today, another unique form of dictatorship remains. This is the so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat" or the "dictatorship of the laboring classes." Unlike Fascism and Nazism, this dictatorship is based on a system called "communism." Theoretically, communism is a thoroughgoing form of socialism. As long as socialism, by itself, is not inconsistent with the spirit of democracy, it may be considered that communism also is not contrary to the spirit of democracy. But communism, based upon the so-called "proletarian dictatorship," has a character exceedingly different from democracy, which comprehensively embraces a variety of intermediate forms between capitalism and socialism and abides by the majority will of the people in determining the system to be adopted. Therefore, in order to clarify this basic problem, we must consider what communism is when it is based upon the so-called "proletarian dictatorship."

Simultaneously with the gradual expansion of democratic political systems from the end of the 18th century through the 19th century, the economic system of capitalism made rapid progress. On the basis of the freedom of enterprise guaranteed by democracy, the capitalistic system stimulated a most active, large-scale production, and greatly contributed to the upliftment and enrichment of the economic lives of the people. On the other hand, the fact that capitalists tended to monopolize the means of production brought about the result that the benefits of capitalism became increasingly concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, while the workers were often reduced to the brink of poverty. It is, of course, possible to remove, or at least to lessen, this evil by practicing economic democracy and continue to recognize the basic principles of capitalism.

But those who think that such means cannot bring about a sufficient realization of economic equality advocate that the private ownership of the means of production, such as land, factories, and raw materials, should be prohibited, and that they be transferred to state ownership or state management. This is socialism. It was stated in Chapter IX that between these two economic systems, there is actually no such clear distinction as is argued theoretically. But, so long as the system suitable for any particular nation is adopted and carried out as a consequence of fair, open discussion in the Diet in accordance with the freely expressed will of the people, there is nothing in this process which is inconsistent with the principle of democracy.

Communism, which we will discuss here, can be said to be a kind of socialism. It is socialism carried to a further point, in the sense that it completely rejects capitalism and advocates the transfer of all the means of production to state ownership and all enterprises to public management. When Marx and Engels released the "Communist Manifesto" in 1848, introducing the popular use of the word "communism," it was thought that, between communism and socialism, there was a basic difference, transcending a mere "difference in degree." Where does the difference lie? It lies only in the means adopted by socialism and communism to transform a capitalistic social and economic structure into a "Classless" society of workers, that is, of proletarians.

In order to clarify this point, it is necessary to reflect upon these problems: In what manner did Marx and Engels advocate the theory of communism? What methods were devised to put their theory into practice? What course was actually followed?



The foundation of the ideology of Marx and Engels was a unique interpretation of history called "a materialistic interpretation of history." According to this interpretation, human history always moved on to a new age by means of class struggle. And some change in the method of production always underlay this class struggle which influenced history. For example, agricultural production was predominant in the feudal age. Feudal lords ruled over extensive areas of land and lived luxuriously by imposing a severe land tax on the farmers. But, as steam engines were invented and mechanical industry became prosperous, the wealth of society was concentrated in the hands of those who managed industry by using the new methods of production and selling manufactured goods. Then, inevitably, according to Marx, there arose a new class which possessed the dominant economic strength. This new class challenged and struggled against the class that had ruled since the feudal age. As a result, revolution took place and the old ruling class declined.

The new so-called capitalistic class, which succeeded in overthrowing the old ruling class of the feudalistic age, introduced a social system which served to protect their interests and property. Very roughly speaking, this system became known as capitalism. According to Marx and Engels, as any capitalistic economy develops, class struggle begins on a larger scale than ever before. For, in a capitalistic society, a great many laborers work in factories, mills, etc. and are engaged in the production of goods. But, under this method of production, the value of goods and services created by labor are absorbed one-sidedly by the capitalist class. Consequently, the number of the "exploited proletariat" increase. These so-called "proletariats" were at first controlled under the rule of capitalists, but, according to Marx, they will, in time, gradually become conscious of their oppression, and come to unite in their stand against the capitalist class. If countless "proletariats" thus unite and resort to class struggle, it is inevitable that the citadel of capitalism will eventually be demolished. In the long run, there will be revolution, and the foundation of the capitalistic system will collapse. This was the doctrine of Marx and Engels. They predicted the approaching proletarian revolution and the eventual conversion to communistic society.

According to the Marxian theory, however, the accomplishment of the proletarian revolution will not immediately bring about a communistic society. In order that the transition from a capitalistic society to a communistic society may be completed, society must first go through a stage of socialism. Even in this stage, inasmuch as capitalism has collapsed, the private ownership of the means of production must be entirely abolished. All production must be conducted in the form of public enterprise. At first production is likely to be far from abundant, so all people must work, and receive incomes in accordance with their labor. At this stage, private ownership is recognized with regard to such possessions as food, clothing, and other daily necessities.

The promise of Marxism, of course, does not end there, but goes on to give a forecast of a more advanced future. That is to say, as socialism is further advanced, it will, in due course, reach a more thoroughgoing stage, namely a pure communistic stage. In a society of pure communism, private ownership of not only producers' goods but also consumers' goods is abolished altogether. In a socialistic society, one can obtain an income in proportion to one's labor, but, in a communistic society, incomes from personal service would altogether vanish. As long as he works, a communist society promises each "comrade" all the necessities of life. The Marxists contend that, through a rigidly controlled economy, the productive power of society will expand and wealth will overflow to such an extent that there will be no need for the "comrades" to worry about their livelihood. So Marx, in his work "Critique of Gotha Principles," asserted that, in the event of the realization of such a condition, human society can write on its banner: "Each individual works according to his ability and receives according to his needs."

This is a brief outline of the theory of communism as expounded by Marx and Engels. What then should be done to translate this theory into practice? As to this important problem, the Marxists were, (and are) divided into two camps.

According to the first camp, the initial stage leading to communism is socialism. The conversion from capitalism to socialism would be realized by revolution, but, as they saw it, revolution need not resort to violence. Rather, this conversion would be carried out by taking advantage of the parliamentary system which is a political institution typical of a capitalistic society. True, there would be, in the National Assembly, a number of influential political



parties in favor of capitalism. But, under a parliamentary system, what counts is "number." Accordingly, if a socialistic political party is formed and has the support of the proletarian masses, and if their representatives are sent to the National Assembly, the socialist party can gradually occupy many parliamentary seats. If a socialistic political party holds a majority in the National Assembly, it can peacefully abolish capitalistic legal institutions, and implement socialistic institutions instead. It is thus better to promote the conversion from capitalism to socialism gradually. This was the way of thinking and the contention of those who, among the believers in Marxism, took a comparatively moderate stand.

The second camp severely criticized the stand of the above moderate camp. It maintained that those who advocate the gradual implementation of socialism by taking advantage of the parliamentary system did not realize the vigor and fertility of the soil from which capitalism grows. The bourgeoisie class which had acquired political power by means of their wealth would surely strive to arrest the development of socialism by fully exploiting their money and power. Therefore the attempt to change capitalism by parliamentary legislation, through the process of majority rule, is like waiting for pigs to fly. Those who advocate taking advantage of parliamentary government are regarded by this group as mere opportunists who compromise with capitalism. The only thing that can liquidate, once and for all, the bourgeoisie rule, must be violent revolution. Those belonging to the second camp thus emphasized the necessity of violent proletarian revolution.

When the Russian revolution broke out in 1917, there was a conflict between these two major camps. The revolutionary government was first established by the Mensheviks who had comparatively moderate thoughts, but this government, led by Kerensky, soon fell, and was replaced by the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin. The Bolsheviks adopted socialism as the first stage in the transition to communism, as set forth in the Marxian theory, and established a governmental system necessary for the achievement of that purpose. The system prevalent in present-day Soviet Russia is socialism in this sense. Moreover, the political system which Soviet Russia has adopted with a view to propelling socialism of this sense is nothing other than the so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat."

It should thus be understood that socialism, when compared with communism, has two meanings.

One is socialism which is the first stage leading to communism. Between socialism, in this sense, and pure communism, there is only the difference of degree. Accordingly, communism is a kind of socialism, or socialism in its thoroughgoing form. Article 12 of the "Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" has a phrase "From each according to his ability, to each according to his labor." In other words, each individual has the obligation to work according to his ability, and each is given remuneration according to the value of his labor. This shows that the society of present-day Soviet Russia is in the stage of the above-mentioned socialism.

There, socialism, in the above sense, is being strongly propelled by a governmental system called "the dictatorship of the proletariat."

On the other hand, socialism in the moderate sense has nothing to do with the so-called "proletarian dictatorship." A socialism which abolishes the private ownership of the means of production can be peacefully achieved through parliamentary government and majority rule. It does not require a violent revolution.

Socialism as advocated by the moderates of the Marxian camp is more or less the same as the above socialism. Between socialism of this sense and the communism advocated by Lenin, there is not only a difference in degree, but a vast difference in the means of achieving its ends. For communism rejects the policy which strives to realize socialism through parliamentary government, and regards violent revolution as an unavoidable means of achieving its goal. Moreover it needs the so-called "proletarian dictatorship" even after the revolution is an accomplished fact.

Therefore, although communism in Soviet Russia may be regarded as a kind of socialism, their socialism is, unlike socialism in the usual sense, inseparably tied with the political system called the "proletarian dictatorship." This point must be clearly understood if one is to compare communism with democracy.



### "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat"

Why does communism require the political system of "proletarian dictatorship"? Communists give this question the following answer: Proletarian revolution cannot be completed at one stroke. Even in the Soviet Union, where a so-called "proletarian dictatorship" has been achieved, the class struggle with the bourgeoisie must be continued. Therefore, the communists believe that the proletariat must grasp dictatorial political powers and propagate a revolutionary spirit until the time comes when their society is composed of only the proletarian working masses and class rivalry vanishes altogether.

According to Marx and Engels, the State was created and developed in order that rulers could exploit the ruled and grow rich through the labor of the ruled. Hence, the legal and political organizations of modern states are also said to be nothing more than enormous tools of the ruling class, established in order that the bourgeoisie could oppress the proletariat and absorb the economic values accruing from the labor of the proletariat. Accordingly, if the existing state systems collapse by means of a proletarian revolution, then society, through the transition of socialism to communism, will emerge as a "classless" society of proletarians. Consequently the time is sure to come, the communists say, when there will be no need of the state as a tool of the ruling class. Marx and Engels thought that the state then would naturally "wither away". In other words, they predicted that a system by which a government rules the people by exercising power would turn out to be useless and needless.

Communism, however, differs from ordinary anarchism as discussed elsewhere in this book. Communism considers that the society which can thus do without government must wait for some far distant future. Therefore, even if a proletarian revolution should succeed, there would still be the necessity of maintaining a strong central government for an indefinite time. After the revolution, political powers, which were previously in the hands of the bourgeoisie, would be transferred to the proletariat. It is considered unlikely, however, that the bourgeoisie would be immediately exterminated. They would probably erect strongholds in various parts of a country and seek opportunities to rise again. Therefore, the proletariat, in whose hands the powers of government is supposed to have been placed, must further strengthen their powers and oppress and exterminate the bourgeois remnants. This is the communist way of thinking. It was Lenin who most violently expounded this theory of strife. It may be said that the political system of the so-called "proletarian dictatorship", which was established by the Russian Revolution of 1917, was a translation of this theory into practice.

By the revolution in 1917, the Bolsheviks constructed a political system in which the political power resided with the laborers and the farmers. This was indeed the "sovereignty of the proletarian class." Russian communists claim that this kind of a political system is true democracy. They say that, in non-communist states, sovereignty is supposed to reside with the people, but the real political power actually is in the hands of the bourgeoisie minority. In contrast, they say that, in the Soviet Union, the vast number of workers have sovereign rights, and a government for the vast majority of the people is in force. This is genuine democracy, so they contend. Consequently, the phrase "Soviet democracy" is much in vogue, in contrast to the democracies of the rest of the world. On this assumption the democracies of America and England are severely criticized.

Is the so-called "proletarian dictatorship" actually a government that the laborers and farmers, who constitute the vast majority of the Russian people, conduct by their own free will?

To judge from facts obtaining in Soviet Russia, what is called the "proletarian dictatorship" by communists is in fact nothing but a "dictatorship of the Communist Party". According to close observations, it is not even a dictatorship of the Communist Party but is actually a "dictatorship of the leaders of the Communist Party." In Soviet Russia there is the "Politburo" of the Party Central Committee consisting at present of 14 members and member candidates. All of the important policies of the Communist Party are decided by this Politburo. Accordingly, the decisions of the Politburo become the decisions of the Communist Party and determine the basic policies of the government of the country.



Under a "proletarian dictatorship" of such a form, can freedom of speech in any correct sense be recognized? Communism, whose method is clearly distinct from that of moderate socialism, is an absolutism. Absolutism is a way of thinking which holds that one's own position alone is absolutely just. It does not permit the existence of an opposite or different stand. Accordingly, if there is any "freedom of speech" in a society where absolutism reigns, it is merely the freedom to assert the prevailing "line" and to boycott any opposition. Therefore, once the so-called proletarian dictatorship is established, people are no longer permitted to oppose communism or criticize government policy. If a person's speech or conduct exceeds the bounds of communism or is antagonistic to its theory, he will immediately be branded and boycotted as an "anti-revolutionist", a "diversionist", or, maybe, a "gangster".

Under a political system which has the character of an absolutism, political principles and assertions are coordinated into one doctrine. There is no room in which two or more political parties may be permitted to exist side by side, compete for political power, and criticize one another. There can therefore be no democratic parliamentary government, under which there exist two or more political parties, with the people free to choose and support one of them, and political parties, supported by the people, exchanging argument and deciding on matters in accordance with majority opinion. The only political party that can exist under the so-called proletarian dictatorship is the Communist Party. All political parties other than the Communist Party are banned as "bourgeoisie", "imperialistic", "fascist", or, perhaps "gangster".

Whenever there is government by the so-called "proletarian dictatorship", what is the manner by which political leaders are elected? If we once again refer to the actual situation in Soviet Russia, the people, even though they are not members of the Communist Party, have the complete freedom to vote for, or to be elected as, public officials. Not only the members of the Supreme Council of the Union, (which corresponds to the National Assembly in truly democratic countries) but the members of the important central and local legislative, administrative, and judicial organs in Soviet Russia are elected by the direct or indirect votes of the people. But, as a rule, only one candidate is nominated in each electoral district, with the result that voters can vote only for the recommended candidates. Even though there may be men for whom they would like to vote, the voters are not permitted to write in their names. If such names are written in, the ballot becomes invalid. Therefore, although the people of Soviet Russia are given equal voting rights regardless of such conditions as sex, education, race, or residence, it may be said that the freedom of the franchise, in the usual sense, is very restricted.

There may be various reasons why there prevails such a form of government in present Soviet Russia. Unlike a free economy, a socialistic economy, even when it is in a comparatively low stage, necessarily requires a considerable degree of state control. So, the economic system now operating in Soviet Russia, while at present in a low communistic stage, is socialistic to a high degree, without parallel in other countries. In order to implement such a high degree of socialism without hitch in a country like Soviet Russia, with her vast territories and complex historical and social background, tremendous political power is necessary at the center. In order to meet opposition or criticism, it is explained that such a dictatorial government will remain in force only so long as the necessity remains. In other words, things will be quite different when communism becomes an actual fact instead of a mere theory.

But our problem is not the reason why such a form of government prevails in Soviet Russia, but whether such a form of government can be consistent with democracy. As stated before, communists claim that a high degree of socialism, tied with the "dictatorship of the proletariat", is true democracy. Is this true? Here is our problem.

#### Communism and Democracy.

Communism, carried out through the dictatorship of the Communist Party, lays greatest emphasis on economic equality. Modern democracy gave freedom to men who had been bound by despotic governments, and granted equality to men who had been discriminated against by a feudalistic society. But, originally, all of this amounted to little more than a legal freedom and equality. In the past, when freedom and equality was little more than a legal formality, there grew a



tendency for a capitalistic economy to take on the character and adopt the practices of monopoly, with the result that the economic inequalities among men became increasingly great. Thinking that it can rectify such economic inequalities, communism violently repudiates capitalism, and, by the so-called proletarian dictatorship, strives to realize economic equality for the working masses by revolutionary means.

True, a greater degree of economic equality should be stressed. Yet, however valuable the ideal of equal economic opportunity may be, the renunciation of political freedom is not the way to achieve it. Communism strives to attain equality even at the cost of making political freedom a nominal thing. Democracy, on the other hand, strives to realize equality on the basis of freedom. It strives to conduct politics according to the free will of the people and a society in which individuals may pursue happiness equally. Therein lies a vast difference between dictatorship and democracy.

In a genuine democracy, the choice of the best method to bring about the greatest measure of happiness to all the people is left to the free will of the people. Hence, all the people may vote for the political parties and persons whom they feel they can rely on as their representatives. Even after their representatives have been chosen by elections and a government has been formed the people can constantly criticize the policies of their government by saying freely what they believe to be correct. Of course, there will be conflicting views among the people as well as their representatives. At such times, democracy adopts the views of the majority as the basis for governmental policies. As previously stated, the principle of majority rule, tied with the freedom of speech, is a vital element of democracy.

In contrast to this, under communism, tied with the so-called proletarian dictatorship, only the doctrine of communism is regarded as correct. Hence there is actually no freedom of speech in any true sense of the term, especially with respect to criticism against communism. True, the majority rule system is formally respected, but, in reality, it is denied, because the orders of the dictator have absolute authority. The people have but silently to obey orders from above. When they silently follow, where are they led? According to the communists, the destination is indeed a paradise which promises, at some indefinite future time, to bring equal happiness to all the working people. They thus claim that their destination is a real "government for the people." True, the goal may be a "government for the people." But, unless the people are free to seek and explore the path that leads to their destination, it is neither "government of the people" nor a "government by the people." When the freedom of speech, the freedom of voting for candidates of diverse views, and the majority rule principles are mere formalities, can there be a true democracy?

Moreover, the aim of communism is not by any means a proletarian revolution within a single nation. Marx and Engels claimed that the communist revolution should not be confined to a single nation, but should be world-wide. In the "Principles of Communism" written in 1847 -- as the original manuscript of the "Communist Manifesto" -- Engels predicted that revolutions would break out simultaneously in Britain, America, France, and Germany. This prediction did not come true. On the contrary, the communist revolution was carried out only in Russia which was then a comparatively backward nation. In view of these developments, Lenin said that proletarian revolution cannot take place simultaneously in all nations. Stalin, Secretary General of the Communist Party, also stands for socialism within one nation at a time.

It is, however, apparent from the past tendencies of Communism that its aims for the future include the establishment of its own economic system throughout the world. Today, Communist parties exist in practically all the nations of the world. In countries where communist parties are numerically strong they compete with other parties for a parliamentary majority. In nations where they are numerically weak, their usual strategy is to resort to tactics of confusion and obstruction.

From the democratic standpoint there is no reason to prohibit or eliminate communistic parties as long as they act in a fair, open manner and try to realize their aims by the majority rule procedure, in accordance with the principles of parliamentary government, for democracy respects the freedom of speech and the freedom of political faith of each individual. As to communist parties in various countries, if they observe the discipline and order of



parliamentary government and carry out their policies in case they might ever legitimately gain a majority in the National Assembly, and also follow the majority when they are a minority party, this would indicate that they had returned to the stand of the moderate Marxian camp which was harshly criticized as a group of opportunists by Lenin and his followers. Conversely, if they merely compromise with parliamentary government while they are a minority rule, and if they have a secret intention to deny the very principle of majority rule by majority vote in the event of winning a majority, and so convert the present system into the so-called proletarian dictatorship, it must then be said that they are trying to lay cuckoo eggs in the parliamentary system. (See Chapter Five)

It is the goal of economic democracy to realize an increasingly more satisfying measure of economic equality for all the people on the basis of political freedom. To be sure, it will take time to bring about economic democracy by the people's own will, to have the people exchange views freely as to method, and to determine political policies by majority decisions. Impatient with this roundabout attitude, communists are out to solve the problem at one stroke by the "proletarian dictatorship".

If the people should relinquish their political freedom and submit to the control of the indisputable orders from above, would it be a rational thing?

In the light of the principles of democracy as set forth in the previous chapters, it is clearly evident that the only path for a wise, democratic nation to pursue is to respect freedom, to love peace, and to create, as soon as possible, a generous measure of economic democracy together with political and social democracy.

This is the path which all enlightened human beings on earth want to pursue. We must choose the path. Dictatorship is based on the philosophy of violence. In contrast, the philosophy of democracy is based on peace, order, and security. The ideal of democracy is to strive, not by strife and destruction, but on the basis of peace, order, and understanding, to build a society not merely for a privileged few, but one which will bring happiness to all the human beings who inhabit the earth. This ideal is not a rosy picture painted in a world of the far distant stars, but is shining on this every earth on which we live. If we lay this ideal to heart and make constant efforts for its realization, the ideal will not forever remain an ideal but will one day become a vital reality, enriching and ennobling the lives of men and nations.



STANDARD FORM NO. 64

# Office Memorandum •

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

*Stephenson, Leeming  
Mildly interesting, but no  
ideas for use ... or are there?*

DATE: 24 February 1949

TO : INP - Mr. Dunning  
FROM : POS - Miss Donovan *EDA*  
SUBJECT: "Primer of Democracy"

*ED*  
*file*

This is the "Primer of Democracy" about which we talked on the phone this morning. I hope it will be of some value. We would appreciate its return when you have completely finished with it.

Attachment:

"Primer of Democracy"  
with memo to Mr. Schuler  
dated 31 January 1949.

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PRESS AND  
PUBLICATIONS DIVISION (INP)  
FEB 25 1949  
Department of State



STANDARD FORM NO. 64

*Office Memorandum* • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : POS - Mr. Schuler ✓

DATE: 31 January 1949

FROM : POS - Miss Donovan ✓

SUBJECT: "Primer of Democracy".

This volume represents a real achievement, the result of eighteen months of work on the part of Dr. Howard Bell of CIE, GHQ, SCAP, Professor Odaka of Tokyo National University and twelve Japanese scholars in the fields of education, journalism, economics and political science. As the despatch from Tokyo indicates, the first 770,000 copies are for use in the tenth grade (the first year of the new Japanese "shinsei koto-gakko" -- upper secondary school - grades 10, 11 and 12), but the demand has been so great that it is to be made available to all teachers, adult education groups, citizens public halls, and all groups interested in either political or social education.

It is of interest to note that the Japanese edition contains many cartoons which convey clearly some of the concepts described.

The book opens with Bell's excellent (in my opinion) essay "The Essence of Democracy" in which he stresses that democracy is more than a political system but is the spirit of respect for man.

The section "The Story of Democracy" opens with a discussion of the over-use of the term and its meaning, and traces the evolution of democracy from ancient times to England, the United States and France. The section "The Structures of Democracy" examines anti-democratic structures to determine in what way democracy differs. The British, American and Swiss democratic structures are compared and evaluated. "The Suffrage" investigates all aspects of that subject from the methods of election to the reasons for voting. "Majority Rule", the following section, discusses possible snarls in a democratic government, and fully explains the priceless bounty of freedom of speech. In the section "Enlightened Electorate" propaganda per se is defined and a method of scientific study of information is suggested.

The section "Politics and People" has a first paragraph which begins: "Politics is everybody's business" and strikes a keynote of the necessity of applying the practical to the theoretical. Sections following are concerned with democracy in social life, economic life and labor unions, - the latter particularly pertinent for Japan today.

The final chapter entitled "Democracy and Dictatorship" places these two enemies side by side and evaluates them. Particularly well done is the analysis of the development of communism from socialism to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It occurs to me that Dr. Johnstone of OEX might find this copy interesting and we might send it along to him to be returned to our files when he has finished.

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*Johnstone*  
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*Primer of Democracy*  
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J:ERDonovan:rk 1/31/49