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STATE FUNCTIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE STATE

KARL W. DEUTSCH

A typology of states classified as either enforcement or service states leads to further distinctions among regulation, laissez-faire, planning, welfare, revolutionary and adaptive states. The typology provides a base for speculations about the long term future of the State.

STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE STATE

It is useful to distinguish the state and the political system. The state can be seen as a combination of two basic functions, each of which must rely on three structural elements. The first of the two basic functions is the *enforcement state*, which I shall call State A. Its three major structural elements are, first, its enforcement machinery, that is, the armed forces and the police with material appendages, buildings, and equipment, which were the well known apparatus of force of interest to Marxist writers. The second, or decision-making part, consists of the high-level decision makers, legislators and rulers in full-time roles, because a machinery that is capable of enforcing must know what to enforce, and this, of course, will change with differing situations. The third or implementing part of this enforcement state consists of the middle-level civilian managers and decision makers in the service of directly enforceable legislation, administration and coordination. State A is the enforcement state/decision state that produces enforceable decisions, or those decisions which are expected to be enforceable. Talcott Parsons used to call them "binding" decisions.

The second basic function characterizes what I shall call State B, the *service state*, producing desired goods and services. These include the many millions of public employees working in the modern states today. In many countries these persons are involved in the building and management of roads and railroads, run postal services, conduct

or support scientific research, and operate systems of public health, education and pensions and other forms of income maintenance. State B also could be called the *production state*.

The notion that the state mainly lives as a kind of parasite upon the production of the private sector is dear to the hearts of many apologists for private interests who would like to keep taxes down. But this view is one-sided. It omits the fact that State B, the public sector, today produces a substantial body of goods and services. If a private firm builds a road, and charges for its use, it may be neither more nor less productive than if a public agency built the road. In most cases, the roads would be very similar. The public sector is not necessarily parasitical, even in a market system. The very large public sectors we now have—up to more than 60% of the work forces in Sweden and the Netherlands—are largely due to the performance of services by those public sectors. In any case, it turns out that the budget of the service state in highly industrialized countries now is usually about twice as high as the budget of the enforcement state. In the United States, Mr. Reagan is trying to increase the enforcement budget and to decrease the health, education and service budget. However, the changes he will produce through these measures are likely to be marginal. Unfortunately, one can now buy more killing power at reasonable prices, therefore the amount of damage the enforcement state can inflict, particularly through its armies and air forces, is increasing faster than the budget that corresponds to it. Even so, many armament budgets increase in very disquieting ways.

ELEMENTS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The political system includes the counterparts of the decision-making and service sections in quasi-governmental agencies. This can be seen in western market economies, for instance in the case of the central bank, which often is not a direct government agency but an organization that responds to a financial community of private bankers and investors. In socialist countries, the central bank is a government agency, but the main political party may largely run the civil and military government, rather than being run by it. In earlier centuries, the church could have tremendous influence on the state but was not a state agency. Even in Franco's Spain, or today in Poland, the church is in some ways a quasi-state organization that fulfills some public-sector functions, but it is a non-state organization with interests of its own.

In political systems, we find not only the state and quasi-state organizations, but also élites and interest groups, including social classes and strata, and we find—importantly—the mass population with its compliance habits. This population may or may not comply with the laws and commands of the government; it may be willing to work fast or slowly. There is an East German proverb: “Work is very valuable, therefore it has to be rationed carefully.” One finds similar expressions in other places. On the other hand, the willingness of the population to support the government and to increase its efforts in an emergency is something Hitler discovered when he invaded Russia. This is a major variable of the political system. Consider how Guatemala defended its revolution in 1954—practically not at all—and how Vietnam fought during the Vietnam war, and one can see the difference between the two political systems and the habits and political culture of their populations.

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

The first main function of the state, historically, and for most states, has been *pattern maintenance*, including the preservation of social patterns such as inequalities, class rule or strata (privileges as they existed at any particular time). Here it is useful to distinguish classes from strata. A class is hereditary, it has an observable sub-culture, and is sharply distinct from other classes. A stratum, however, could be defined by observable criteria as in the Soviet Union’s *nomenclatura*, which creates a certain degree or rank but usually is not hereditary, and in many ways is not a class. According to the views of many scholars in the socialist countries, strata differences are real but not irreconcilable. That remains to be seen—but in my opinion it may well be correct.

The second function of the state is *power*, both over its own population and vis-à-vis other states, used for whatever leaders of the state, or even public opinion, may wish to bring about. A power state could be oriented toward conquest in the short term, or slower and prolonged conquest in the longer term. The third function is the *pursuit of wealth*. Here the state is mainly organized toward making the population richer, not necessarily in equal measures. Some strata may get more wealth than others but, on the whole, the country gets richer. This might be brought about by three different methods that produce five essentially different types of state.

STATE TYPES AS COMBINATIONS OF FUNCTIONS

Combinations of functions produce five different kinds of state. The first is the *government regulation state*. We may think of mercantilism and Jean-Baptiste Colbert. It is still based, however, on a market economy.

The second is the *laissez-faire state* that relies on market automatisms, for example, the England of Queen Victoria. This type of state defends property relationships and contracts but gives free rein to the market economy, subject only to relatively minor controls in matters such as public health.

The third is the *planning state*, usually organized on the lines of centralized planning, as in the case of the Soviet Union's transformation from an agricultural to an industrial state from the 1920s onward, reducing the market economy to a more or less marginal role. (On the proportions of planned versus market sectors, see Pigou, 1934, and Von Beyme, 1983.)

The fourth type of state aims not so much at increased wealth, but at more widely distributed *welfare*, within the framework of a market economy, usually with a public sector of 30% to 60% of the gross national product. A low mortality rate for children would be a more characteristic measure than an increase in wealth. (Its opposite might be a non-welfare state such as Brazil, which increased per capita income in the last 20 years but has had a very poor record in public welfare.)

The fifth is a state that follows a specific major goal, usually a *revolutionary state* aiming either at national independence or at a new social order, or a combination of both.

These five types of states are all observable in history.

I suggest, for the purposes of discussion, two other types of state that are largely speculative, although historical literature exists concerning them. One type is the *adaptive state*, that is, a state or political system that sees as a primary task adaptation to some major problem in its environment. This may manifest itself as a problem in the physical, economic, social, military or politically international environment. An example of a tremendous adaptive performance would be that of imperial Japan around 1868. During this period, Japan was emphatically a non-industrial country with no Western technology and was in danger of becoming a colonial or semi-colonial country, perhaps like the China of that time. But by tremendous effort at adaptation, Japan modernized within about 30 years. This effort included substantial changes

in that country's political and economic structure but preserved its main cultural and national identity. Until the present time, however, such cases have been rare.

It is probable that in the future most states will have to move toward much more adaptive learning. They may have to learn how *not* to destroy their environment. They will have to learn how to *avoid* international wars and civil wars with weapons of mass destruction. They may also have to learn how to break through the vicious cycle of poverty whereby increases in the birth rate put strains on already strained resources and the resulting poverty increases the mortality rate in children. These are learning tasks against situations not invented or created by the state or its population, but which already exist as more or less objective or quasi-objective changing conditions, or existing conditions.

The prominent role of adaptive learning, what I would call the *adaptive learning state*, might become a major type of state from about the mid-1980s until the middle of the next century as a direct result of the many problems concerning population growth, scarce resources—such as raw materials, energy, food, capital—and their effective investment.

There is a second future type of state. Its primary concern will be *initiative learning*, through which a state mobilizes major resources to start something not forced upon it by the environment and not an adaptation to conditions in which one has no choice, but something which the state has chosen to do. An example would be that of Spain financing Christopher Columbus. The rulers of Spain did not have to do it, but they did, and their decision changed the course of history for Spain and for the whole world. The Portuguese, for their part, backed Vasco da Gama and profited from his discovery of the sea route to India, as well as from Brazil.

A more recent example of initiative learning concerns space transportation and navigation initiatives taken by both the United States and the Soviet Union. The first space walk was performed by citizens of the Soviet Union, and Americans first walked on the surface of the moon. Neither state had to make this effort at that particular time; each might have waited 30 to 50 years, but they found it prudent to take initiatives sooner. Competition played a major role. When one of the two countries embarked on this project, the other country felt obliged to follow suit. The fact remains that between them these countries took an initiative.

Chances are that after the year 2050, and perhaps for 100 years thereafter, states may take major initiatives such as conscious and deliberate genetic engineering, a move expected by scientists in many countries.

STATE TYPES AS COMBINATIONS OF THESE BASIC FUNCTIONS

I propose that we think of state types as combinations of major functions. One can characterize many state types by the rank ordering of at least three of the functions. Every state tries to follow all the functions as outlined previously, but not with the same intensity, nor with the same priorities, nor with the same proportions of its budget, its manpower and the attention of its leaders. The traditional state, beginning in the thirteenth century, after or even during feudalism, aims at pattern maintenance first and foremost and only secondarily at power. A modern version of the pattern-maintaining state may arise when at least some major patterns of society are so seriously challenged that their maintenance becomes an overriding priority for the ruling élites interested in self-preservation. An extreme priority on maintaining some patterns may lead to drastic changes in other practices and institutions, and those changes may produce the *garrison-police state*, in which all other public functions are subordinated to this one all-important task. In small countries, this type may remain relatively pure but, in large ones, it may be combined with the task of foreign conquest and the promises associated with it.

The *conquest-and-power state* that emerged around the fifteenth century in Europe aimed primarily at power. Machiavelli wrote a handbook, so to speak, for such a power state. An earlier conquest state was the Norman state that conquered England. Hitler's Germany was an effort to build a modern conquest state.

The third type of state would be *mercantilist*. It aims primarily at the development of wealth through regulation, then at power, and then at pattern maintenance. This was typical for the period between 1650 and 1850 in many countries.

The *laissez-faire state* began with the growth of emphasis on pattern maintenance, protection of property and class privilege, with power in third place. It predominated from 1850 to 1900 in many countries. All of these outlines, of course, are only very approximate sketches.

The modern *welfare state* tries to distribute welfare more broadly, and to treat people as more nearly equal with regard to their basic needs, health, protection from starvation, and homelessness. It began about 1900 and quickly became predominant. It aimed foremost at welfare and maintained a market system in most cases, but also aimed at pattern maintenance, although with some modification intended to reduce extreme social inequality. Even so, it maintained a good deal of inequality, particularly in the western welfare states. In the third place only, it aimed at power.

But there also arose another type of state, the *mobilizing state*. Such a state tries to mobilize all the resources of the population, that is, to disengage them from previous habits and commitments and to make them available for new commitments to a specific goal. This goal may be national independence, or more typically, the construction of a new social order. The mobilizing state often operates in a climate of emergency, racing against time and against external and internal threats, and it is often quite unscrupulous in its choice of means. The French revolution in 1793, the Russian revolution of 1917, the Chinese revolution of 1949, the Yugoslav revolution, the Cuban revolution of 1959 and others have typically given rise to mobilizing states. These revolutions were not imported from the outside, but grew out of the forces within the societies. Each of these mobilizing states, however, was only a passing phase. Its very success led to its replacement by another type of state. "Permanent revolution" and permanent mobilization were impractical.

The *post-revolutionary state* aims at consolidating the system that the revolutionists created. It is increasingly interested in pattern maintenance, attempts to develop wealth through planning, often central planning, and finally it builds up power. But initially, planning has priority over power. The unscrupulousness and lack of inhibition in the choice of means may carry over from the mobilizing or revolutionary phase to the élites of the post-revolutionary state for one or more generations, even when they become increasingly incompatible with long-term political stability.

From 1950 to the present, and probably beyond the year 2000, there may be a good many of these post-revolutionary states in the world, and in some countries mobilizing states of one kind or another may also temporarily arise. The mobilization, by the way, may not always be for something feasible. The Russian and Chinese revolutions had feasible goals. We do not know whether a perfect Islamic

society, as the Ayatollah Khomeini has envisaged it, is feasible or not. We do know, however, that he has mobilized many Iranians in support of his goal, at least for a time. Israel is also, in some ways, a mobilizing state.

The *adaptive-learning state* is a speculative construction. One may expect that it will see its foremost task in some specific act of adaptive learning, and that it then will need power to apply the results of adaptive learning and put them into effective operation. Then, and only then, will such a state attempt to maintain continuity of many other basic patterns so that as the society learns, it also maintains its identity.

The same holds for the *initiative-learning state*. In this type of state, which one would expect to evolve and grow by about the year 2050, initiative learning will become more important and adaptive learning will continue to be important. For instance, adaptation to the growing side effects of other processes and power will still be important. Such large-scale initiatives may involve tangible common enterprises such as interplanetary transportation and settlement, genetic engineering, control of the climate, conquest of the deep ocean floors, or things we cannot even conceive now. But there could also be common enterprises of culture, thought and feeling, such as large-scale efforts to abolish brutality and unbearable loneliness for children and the old, or the major causes of the currently prevailing forms of mental and emotional disease, or to raise society and the individuals in it to new levels of sensitivity and awareness, new levels of mutual consideration, as well as of individual spontaneity and imagination.

THE FUTURE OF THE STATE

What does all this suggest for the future of the state and for the problem of the "withering away of the state"? A number of Western writers have described visions of a stateless future. One can find it in Rudyard Kipling's story, *The Night Mail*, and in H. G. Wells's novel, *Men Are Like Gods*.

Marx, Engels, and Lenin tried to lay down a more scientific pattern. This is how they saw it in 1847: The vast majority of the population of any highly industrialized country would become proletarians with common interests but with no major antagonistic ones. Revolution would make these proletarians the ruling class; the state would be required only to coerce the remnants of the old capitalist or feudal

classes, and then become superfluous. Anarchism would follow after socialism, not before. On the way to this state of affairs, the state would become smaller and simpler. Lenin said in 1917 that the state would become so simple that any scullery maid could run it. As in the case of the young Marx and Engels in 1847, this was largely a vision of sociology, not economics. It was an analysis of classes rather than an analysis of economic resources.

In 1875, toward the end of his life, Marx, in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, drew a different picture. This critique is a piece of writing that will become increasingly important for understanding the problems of the present and future as these can be seen from the Marxist tradition. Marx wrote of a first stage of socialism, based on the principle of "each according to his ability, each according to his work." This concept, in Germany, is called *Leistungsprinzip*, that is, the principle of performance. It involves inequality and material incentives, and as Marx said, it involves injustice. The vigorous young bachelor can produce more units of production than the harassed father who has given the bottle to his baby in the middle of the night. There are many other ways in which injustice will be perceived, because everyone's needs will not be served to the same extent. If the wealth of society is to grow quickly, one must offer incentives and rewards to people for study, learning and qualifications, otherwise too few would take the trouble to acquire them. This means inequality which in turn means the need to defend unequal distribution.

Inequality in the property of consumer goods, both perishables and durables, is intrinsic to this "first stage of socialism." This stage cannot get along without the state and its powers of enforcement. Marx knew it, and he said so.

The second "higher stage of socialism" that Marx imagined was to come "when the springs of wealth will flow more abundantly." Then the main principle would be "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." And it was assumed that people would voluntarily work according to their ability. Whether everyone has the ability and motivation to be diligent has been an old and anthropological argument and is increasingly a question of empirical observation. It seems plausible that people who don't work may get so bored that they want to start working again. It is doubtful whether we have reached this situation yet in any country and under any social system. The "new type of person" that was expected has not yet appeared in sufficient numbers to change the major operating patterns of any econ-

omy in any country. The emergence of new types of persons may easily be on a time scale that is much longer than was first anticipated.

What is meant by the word "needs," in Marx's time and in ours? Here is a possible definition. A need is an input to prevent observable damage. A person needs to eat. If he does not, the damage of malnutrition will become visible. The same holds true for many other things. The damage a social system inflicts on people in the form of child mortality is one of the most revealing facts about its limitations and failures. In this respect, socialist countries have given high priority to the reduction of mortality, particularly among children.

What is "abundance"? I would propose this definition: Abundance occurs when the average marginal utility (a term Marx never used, but I think he would not have objected to it in this context) of the material goods one can buy for the earnings of one hour is less useful to a person than the leisure of that hour, so that free time becomes more important than material goods. For that to happen, one must have a good many material goods, and that is the whole idea of marginal utility. A person who is very thirsty would walk a long distance for a glass of water. But someone who has drunk plenty of water is likely to prefer to stay where he or she is.

The degree to which workers prefer leisure time to more material goods is only partly observable today but to some extent it has already happened. Unions and workers in many countries may prefer shorter working weeks, and earlier retirement. Many workers in boring and repetitive employment would like to retire at the age of 55 years. On the other hand, some people involved in interesting and rewarding work are happy to work until 65 years or even later. Of course, these wishes also depend on the type of labor performed. In many countries, we are now approaching discussions suggesting that people want more leisure and less work. In different forms, this desire plays a part in socialist countries.

Another way in which people prefer leisure to work is by slowing down the tempo of work. In a modern, highly technological society, the worker has to make more decisions per minute or per hour than did the craftsman of the eighteenth or nineteenth century. We also have new kinds of popular illnesses, high-tension diseases, such as circulatory diseases, heart attacks, and nervous breakdowns, just as tuberculosis, malnutrition and rickets were popular diseases 100 or 150 years ago.

A vague foreshadowing of this change is a related ratio. Is the marginal utility of a human life greater or less than the marginal utility of a wage increase? One can answer this by asking how long ago it was that striking workers were killed by the police, and accepted the risk of being killed. For most countries, this watershed was crossed in the 1930s. In the United States, the last spectacular killing of picketing strikers was at the Republic Steel Company near Chicago in 1936. If one compares the way in which the British act toward coal miners, and the protests that ensue when they kill someone, even unintentionally, with a hard rubber bullet in Northern Ireland, one can see that human lives have become more valuable. The political culture has changed. The inequalities that are still at stake for most people and for most of public opinion no longer excuse or justify the taking of human life in highly industrialized countries. An example of the earlier practices occurred on the streets of Radotin near Prague in the early 1930s, when 10 unemployed workers were shot down, and again at Freiwaldau in Czechoslovakian Silesia and at Adalen in Sweden. In the early 1930s people were killed because the police forces were accustomed to shooting into crowds.

In colonial areas this was even worse, for instance in 1920 at Amritsar in India. It is an interesting measure of what happens to the state when people begin to realize that these quarrels are no longer worth being killed for. Under exceptional conditions there could be a sliding back to more bloody-minded periods. But on the whole, the value, or the marginal utility, of lives has gone up and the readiness to kill for economic or political reasons has gone down, not everywhere, of course, but in many advanced countries. Usually this effect is correlated with a degree of industrial development and informational development. Perhaps this shift in marginal utilities will be completed only in the next centuries.

SOME INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

Now we come to an important problem that Marx did not stress. For Marx, the fate of the world was determined by a few highly industrialized countries such as France, Germany, Britain, and the United States.

The whole non-western world, the Third World, was not in Marx's focus. But the Third World consists of three quarters of mankind living

far below the standard of the industrialized world, both East and West. The populations of these countries are growing, and the doubling of world population will occur largely within the Third World. This problem also exists among the socialist countries. China is a collectivist country ruled by a Communist Party and is far poorer than the Warsaw Pact countries, although its population is much larger. Accordingly, the per capita incomes in the highly industrialized Communist-ruled countries are much higher than in the less industrialized ones, such as China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, and the state machinery of the various socialist countries is also defending and maintaining these differences.

There seems to be no clear idea among socialist theorists as to what should be done about these problems. The second, abundant stage of society will be unattainable for most of the Third World, even if it becomes socialist before the second half of the twenty-second century. If in the socialist world as a whole—what our Soviet colleagues call the socialist camp—the first phase of socialism should prevail, each socialist country, according to current Marxist theory, should export according to its capacities to a kind of socialist world market and receive from it according to its contribution in that market, plus such economic aid as the public opinion and leadership of the socialist countries will be prepared to give.

The experience of western Europe and of the democratic socialists shows that 1% of GNP is the maximum that the Swedish working classes, including public opinion and intellectuals, are willing to let their government distribute as economic aid. The figures for Germany are lower, four-tenths of 1%. On the whole, it does not appear realistic that public and working class opinion, in the present period of scarcity, will give much more than 1%, either in industrial countries ruled by democratic socialists or in Communist-ruled ones.

To be sure, when wealth increases in the industrial countries the marginal utility of economic aid will decline and generosity may increase. One could imagine a future in which Christianity in the West and socialist solidarity in the East would increase to contribute a nickel on the dollar and five kopeks on the ruble. But that is hardly in the near future.

The world will therefore continue to need coercive state machineries for national defense, and for immigration control. Also within near-rich socialist countries and the poor countries, such machineries will

be needed to defend the unequal distribution of income that is still needed to create material incentives for more work.

HOW TO SHORTEN THIS PERIOD

We will therefore have states with some enforcement characteristics, so far as we can now foresee, until about 2200 A.D., for international and global allegiance. How can this process be shortened? Social changes alone will not suffice to shorten it. It can be shortened through scientific and technological breakthroughs that lead to major changes in production functions. Such major changes, however, do not grow on trees. Breakthroughs occur sooner or later in rough proportion to the material means put into search operations that we call science. Even then they are not certain, but under favorable conditions they become more probable. Nuclear energy was discovered within less than a decade, and was made practical through preceding advances in scientific theory and the allocation of vast amounts of resources, first in the United States and then later in other countries.

Breakthroughs could become more attainable through adaptive and initiative learning. At this stage of the initiative learning state, the public sector share which amounts now to an average of 52% of the gross national product in the member states of the European Community, may recede to 30% and even to 10% by the time the initiative learning state is fully developed (people may not think it urgent to go to another planet, but 10% may do so, particularly if the social problems are smaller than they are today).

If successful, these technical breakthroughs would advance the substantial reduction of the coercive state. They may help to reduce the coercive side of the state machinery up to about the year 2100 or 2150, essentially leaving only the provision of services and the production of goods under the administration of the state. In regard to all these questions, it is vital for social scientists both in the West and in the East to try to put, at long last, some explicit time variables into the visions of scholars and thinkers of past generations.

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