



MODULE 1

DEFINITION, MEANING AND NATURE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

DEFINITION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The terms 'politics' and 'political ' have been derived from the Greek word 'polis' which means 'City -State'. Polis itself is hard to translate- perhaps 'polity' comes nearest, but the word is archaic and pompous sounding. For the Greeks 'politics' meant the science of the City-State which was the highest organization of the community through which men strove for moral perfection. 'Polis' also implies community, and not merely an independent community.

For Aristotle, politics or the government of the polis must always involve interaction between citizens; it was because of the small size of the population in the city-state. The Sparta, the city-state had only 5000 population. In states of this size it is obvious that there is intimacy and closeness between citizens, even between rulers and ruled when aristocracies predominated. Rulers could not pose as gods. Even tyrants had to be somewhat political, had to exhibit the common touch rather than imperiousness. It is same with the Panchayat Raj system even today in India.

Therefore, Politics today means 'applied' or 'practical' politics dealing with day-to-day public affairs and the actual problems of government. Those who take part in the actual conduct and management of the State, government, political parties etc. are known as politicians. On the other hand political science refers to the theoretical aspects of the study of politics.

Using the term politics in the broadest sense, Sir Frederick Pollock divides it into:

1. Theoretical politics and
2. Practical or applied politics.

In theoretical Politics he includes:

- (a) The theory of the State,
- (b) The theory of government,
- (c) The theory of legislation, and
- (d) The theory of State as an artificial person.

Under the practical or applied Politics he includes:

- (a) The State (actual forms of government),
- (b) The government (the working of government, administration etc), laws and legislation, and
- (c) The State personified (diplomacy, peace, war, and international relations).

Thus everything that relates to the basic problems of the State including the principles of political organization and administration falls within the domain of 'theoretical' politics, while that which is concerned with actual working of the government and other political institutions comes under 'practical' or 'applied'

politics. The majority of writers, however, prefer the term 'political science' to 'theoretical politics' and the simple term 'politics' to 'applied' or 'practical' politics.

The term political science in its current usage is, however, more comprehensive than the term politics. It includes both theoretical and applied politics. It includes both the theory or State and the actual conduct of affairs of State.

TWO POINTS OF CLASSIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science may be classified into two point of view of definition:

1. Traditional point of view (Legal and Institutional) definition
2. Modern Point of view (Behavioral) definition

From the traditional point of view we may define political science as "the study of the state and government in all their manifestations, aspects and relationships". In this sense, politics can be domestic, national, federal, municipal or international.

These early definitions of political science dealt generally with state and government.

1. J.W. Garner: "Political Science begins and ends with the state"; "Politics is the study of State & Government".
2. R.G. Gettel: "Political Science is the historical investigation of what the state has been, an analytical study of what the state is and a political, ethical discussion of what the state ought to be".
3. Leacock: "Political science deals with government only".
4. Paul Janet: "Political science is that part of the social science which treats the foundations of the state and the principles of government".
5. Gilchrist: defined it as "a study of State and Government"

In the beginning of the 20th century there developed a new way of looking at political science. This new focus looking at political science was on behaviour. The main thrust of the new view is the treatment of politics as an activity and a process.

In this context, new definitions emerged.

1. Harold Laswell: "Politics is the study of influence and the influential" or "the study of the shaping and sharing of power"
2. David Easton: "Politics is the authoritative allocation of values."
3. Catlin: "Political Science is the study of the act of human and social control".
4. Andrew Heywood: "Politics can be defined as an activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live."

THE VIEW OF POLITICAL SCIENCE FROM MODERN POLITICAL SCIENTIST

Modern political scientists consider politics as a process centering around power and influence. They are concerned with not just the state and the government, but also the study and evaluation of political activities, political power, processes and non-governmental institutions.

MEANING OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Politics is not only a mere institution of governance but also a mechanism for achieving societal goals. Political science is a social science concerned with the theory and practice of politics and the description and analysis of political systems and political behaviour. It includes matters concerning the allocation and transfer of power in decision making, the roles and systems of governance including governments and international organizations, political behaviour and public policies.

Political science is thus a study of the state in the past, present and future; of political organization, political processes and political functions; of political institutions and political theories.

Political science has several subfields, including: political theory, public policy, national politics, international relations, human rights, environment politics and comparative politics.

FATHER OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Aristotle is known as the Father of Political Science. He is famous for his statement “Man is a political animal”. Man is a social animal. He cannot live in isolation, because he is not self-sufficient and the natural instinct to survive compels him to live a collective life. According to Aristotle, this collective life necessitates a political mechanism of rules, regulations and leadership. An organized society needs some system to make and enforce rules for orderly behavior in society. This led to the evolution of a political system with elaborate governmental institutions & procedures in each society. Therefore, man is also a political animal. Political science is one of the oldest subjects of study of this political life of man.

STAGES OF EVOLUTION

- (1) Philosophical: concerned with ends and purposes
- (2) Institutional: concerned with political organization
- (3) Behavioural: concerned with motivations and mechanism of human behavior
- (4) Pluralistic: concerned with the interaction among groups and organizations
- (5) Structural: concerned with the connection between the individual and the community
- (6) Developmental: concerned with the process of growth, industrialization and change and the impact on government forms and policies.

SCOPE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The scope of Political Science implies its jurisdiction or subject matter. Political Science is a very wide and comprehensive subject. There is no agreement among the Political Scientists as regard to the scope of Political Science. Despite this disagreement, we may make an attempt to define the scope of Political Science which includes the followings:

A study of the State and Government:

Political Science primarily studies the problems of the State and government. The state is defined as a group of people organised for law within definite territory. The State possesses four characteristics, viz. Population, territory, government and sovereignty. Government is an agent of the State. Political Science studies the activities of the State and explains the aims and objectives of the State and government.

A Study of Political Theory:

Political theory is a major branch of Political Science. On the basis of the political ideas or thoughts of political thinkers, political theory formulates definitions or concepts like democracy, liberty, equality, grounds of political obligation, etc. A student of Political Science must start his lessons with political theory. Political theory explains the rudimentary concepts of Political Science. It also includes the study of political philosophy.

A Study of Political Institutions

The field of Political Science is rather vast. It includes the study of political institutions. This covers a study of constitutions and comparative government, explains their merits and demerits, their structure and working and arrives at different conclusions on comparative basis. Besides, the study of public administration and local government may be included in this area. These institutions are useful to the nation and hence they are studied along with the State.

A study of Political Dynamics:

The study of political dynamics has become significant in the 20th century. It means the current forces at work in government and politics. It covers a wide range and includes the study of political parties, public opinion, pressure groups, lobbies, etc. A scientific study of the working of these political dynamics helps to explain the political behaviour of individuals and different groups. The study in this field is often done in collaboration with other social sciences like sociology, anthropology and psychology.

A Study of Adjustment of the Individual with the State:

The scope of political science also includes a study of the nature of relationship between the individual and the State. It examines how man should adjust himself with the society. Man is the root of politics. The process of adjustment of men with the society is an important aspect of Political Science.

A study of International Relations and international law

Lastly, the scope of Political Science includes a study of international relations which has become significant since the first quarter of the 20th century. It covers a wide range and includes diplomacy, international politics, international law, international organisations like the United Nations, etc. The States are the subjects of international law. International law has assumed greater importance in recent times.

The above contents show the wide range of subjects that come under the fold of Political Science. Broadly speaking, political science contains the topics dealing with both empirical facts and philosophical values. Questions of facts are concerned with “what is” and those dealing with values are concerned with “what should be”. The contents of political science fall in either of these two broad categories.

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LESSON 2

THE STATE

DEFINITION AND MEANING OF STATE

The word state and its cognates in some other European languages (state in Italian, estado in Spanish and Portuguese, état in French, Staat in German) ultimately derive from the Latin word status, meaning "condition, circumstances".

The English noun state in the generic sense "condition, circumstances" predates the political sense. It is introduced to Middle English in the 13th century both from Old French and directly from Latin.

The term came to refer to the legal standing of persons (such as the various "estates of the realm" – noble, common, and clerical), and in particular the special status of the king with the revival of the Roman Law in the 14th-century Europe. The highest estates, generally those with the most wealth and social rank, were those that held power. The word also had associations with Roman ideas (dating back to Cicero) about the "status rei publicae", the "condition of public matters". In time, the word lost its reference to particular social groups and became associated with the legal order of the entire society and the apparatus of its enforcement.

The early 16th-century works of Machiavelli (especially The Prince) played a central role in popularizing the use of the word "state" in something similar to its modern sense. The contrasting of church and state still dates to the 16th century. The North American colonies were called "states" as early as the 1630s. The expression L'Etat, c'est moi ("I am the State") attributed to Louis XIV of France is probably apocryphal, recorded in the late 18th century. In common parlance, State is a country considered as an organized Political community by one government.

THE DEFINITION OF STATE

A form of political organization in which a group of people who share the same history, traditions, or language live in a particular area under one government.

According to one definition, a state is a community formed by people and exercising permanent power within a specified territory.

The term 'State' is central to the study of Political Science. But it is wrongly used as synonym for nation, society, government etc. The term 'state' is also used as State management, State aid and so on. Also as the States of Indian union or the fifty States that make the United States of America. But in Political Science, we use this term differently; it has a more specific meaning.

Some of the definitions of the concept of State are as follows:

"The State is the politically organized people of a definite territory"

Bluntschli

State is "a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent, or nearly so, of external control, and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience."

Garner

State is "a territorial society divided into governments and subjects, whether individuals or associations of individuals, whose relationships are determined by the exercise of this supreme coercive power."

Laski

State "is a people organized for law within a definite territory".

–Woodrow Wilson

"The State is a concept of political science, and a moral reality which exists where a number of people, living on a definite territory, are unified under a government which in internal matters is the organ of expressing their sovereignty, and in external matters is independent of other governments." –Gilchrist

Human beings are social animals and cannot live alone. When people live together, they fulfill their social needs. But everybody is not good and kind. There are all sorts of men and women, who exhibit various emotions such as pride, jealousy, greed, selfishness and so on.

According to Burke, "Society requires not only the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body as in the individuals the inclination of men should be thwarted, their will controlled and their passions brought into subjection." The best is to control human perversity through means of political authority. Therefore people are bound by rules of common behaviour. If these are broken then they can be punished. Society fulfills people's need for companionship; the state solves the problem created by this companionship.

The state exists for the sake of good life. It is an essential and natural institution and as Aristotle said, “The State comes into existence originating in the bare needs of life and continues its existence for the sake of good life.”

It is only within a state that an individual can rise to his or her ability. If there is no authority, no organisation and no rules, then society cannot be held together. The state has existed where human beings have lived in an organized society. The structure of the state has evolved gradually over a long period of time, from a simple to a complex organization that we have today.

The essence of state is in its monopoly of coercive power. It has a right to demand obedience from the people.

However, the Marxists believe that state is a class organisation, which has been created by the propertied class to oppress and exploit the poor. They refuse to believe that the state is a natural institution. To them the propertied class created the state and it has always belonged to them only. Thus, the state is just a means of exploitation. Therefore, they visualize a situation of classless society or communism in which there will not be any need of the state. State will, thus, wither away. Attaining the status of a state



MONTEVIDEO CONVENTION 1933

According to international law, a state is typically defined as being based on the 1933 Montevideo Convention. According to Article 1 of the Convention, the state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications:

1. Permanent population
2. Defined territory
3. Government

In practice, it is difficult to determine when a people exercising power within a certain territory forms not only a country and a nation but also a sovereign state. Many disputed and developing statehoods only partially fulfill the criteria laid down in the Montevideo Convention.

Currently, there are several territories that have declared themselves to be sovereign states, but whose status has not been recognised by any other state. For example, Somaliland declared independence in 1991 but it has never been recognised. In addition, there are several states that have been recognised by only a small section of the international community. The Republic of China (Taiwan) declared its independence in 1912, but due to the “One-China policy” of the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan) is currently only recognised by about 20 countries. The interests of unrecognised states are advocated by an international organisation called Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation.

Attaining the status of a state requires recognition by other states. The recognition of a state depends on legal and political factors. Particularly during the Cold War, states refused to recognise new states within the enemy bloc on political grounds, although from the perspective of international law, their recognition would have been justifiable.

In practice, the recognition of a state means that an official decision is made by a government to recognise a state, that a diplomatic mission is established or an international treaty is drawn up. The recognition of a state may also take place unofficially. If a state has voted in favour of a membership application submitted to the UN by a newly independent state, this has been deemed as de facto recognition, even if the two states do not have diplomatic relations.

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LESSON 3

ELEMENTS OF THE STATE

THE INTERNATIONAL LAW ON STATE

The essential features of a state are best summarized by Oppenheim's International Law: "There are [...] four conditions which must be obtained for the existence of a state.

There must, first, be a people...

There must, second, be a territory in which the people is settled...

There must, third, be a government...

There must, fourth and last, be a sovereign government."

Without people, there can be no state. This means a population is the first thing a state needs. States require fixed boundaries relative to other states. That means you need to be able to draw the state on a map, which also involves the recognition or lack of recognition from neighboring states.

Furthermore, the state needs to be able to exercise sovereignty over their own territories. When a state lacks that authority, it's prone to becoming a colony, which is typically developed to be exploited the colonizer.

Like the body needs a brain, the state needs a government to maintain order, enforce laws, and provide services. Governments exercise what political theorists like Thomas Hobbes have called a monopoly on legitimate violence. The state's use of violence is legitimized based on the consent of its people, which allows the state to collect taxes, punish wrongdoers, and so on.

From the above lines we understand that the state possesses four essential elements. These are:

ELEMENTS OF THE STATE

Population

The State is a human institution. It is the people who make a State. Antarctica is not a State as it is without any human population. The population must be able to sustain a state. But the question is; how much should be the population?

Plato's and Aristotle's ideals were the Greek City – States of Athens and Sparta. Plato fixed the number of people in an ideal state at 5040. Aristotle laid down a general principle that the state should neither be large nor small; it should be large enough to be self-sufficing and small enough to be well-governed. Rousseau put the number at 10,000. But it is difficult to fix the size of the people of a state. In modern times we have India and China which have huge population and countries like San Marino with a very small population.

Countries like former Soviet Union gave incentives to mother of large families. In India, over-population is a big problem while China has enforced a one-child norm. Dictators like Mussolini had openly encouraged large population of the state.

So no limit-either theoretical or practical-can be put on population. But it must be enough to constitute governing and governed classes, sufficient to support a political organization.

The population should be in proportion to the available land and resources. It should be remembered that the differences in the size of population, other things remaining the same, does not make any difference in the nature of State.

The quality of the population is also important. A state requires healthy, intelligent and disciplined citizens. They should be possessed with qualities of vitality. The composition of population is also very important. A state with a homogenous people can be governed easily.

Territory

Just as every person belongs to a state, so does every square yard of earth. There is no state without a fixed territory. Living together on a common land binds people together. Love for the territory inculcates the spirit of patriotism. Some call their countries as fatherland and some call it motherland. But there is a definite attachment with one's territory.

The territory has to be definite because it ensures exercise of political authority. Mobile tribal's had some sort of political authority but they did not constitute a State because they lacked a fixed land. The Jews were living in different countries and they became State only with the creation of Israel, which had a definite territory. Without a fixed territory it would be difficult to conduct external relations. It is essential for the identification if one state attempts to conquer the territory of another.

The territory may be small or large. But the state has to have a definite land. It may be as small as an Marino, which has an area of 62 Square kilometers, or it may be as large as India, USA, Russia or China. The size of a state influences the form of government. For example, smaller states can have a unitary form of government but for the large states like India and the USA, the federal system is relatively suitable.

The quality of land is also very important. If the land is rich in minerals and natural resources, it will make the state economically powerful. It should be able to provide enough food for its people. The States of West Asia were insignificant but they acquired prominence after the discovery of oil. Large territory of a State gives it strategic and military advantage during the times of war. Mostly the territory of a state is contiguous and compact though there are exceptions also. Before the creation of Bangladesh, the two wings of Pakistan were miles apart. Hawaii and Alaska are far away from the main territory of USA.

Land, water and airspace comprise the territory of the state. The sovereignty of a state is exercised over its land, its rivers, mountains and plains and airspace above the land. The sea up to a certain limit from the land border is also a part of the territory of a State.

Government

Government is the working agency of the State. It is the political organization of the State. Indian political scientist Prof. A. Appadurai defined government as the agency through which, the will of the State is formulated, expressed and realized. According to C.F. Strong, in order to make and enforce laws, the State must have a supreme authority. Government is a fixed structure. Political executives who get elected to offices may change but Government as a system is a permanent body of State. The State existed before the people come to power and it will exist after these men and women in power leaves the control of the State.

The purpose for which people live together cannot be realized unless they are properly organized and accept certain rules of conduct. The agency created to enforce rules of conduct and ensure obedience is called government. Government is also the focus of the common purpose of the people occupying the definite territory. It is through this medium that common policies are determined, common affairs regulated and common interests promoted. Without a government the people will lack cohesion and means of collective action. There would be groups, parties and warring associations and conditions of wars and chaos. So there is a need for common authority and order where people live. This is the pre-requisite of human life. The state cannot and does not exist without a government, no matter what form a government may assume. The government is a must, though it may take any form. It may have a monarchy like Bhutan or republic as in India. It may have a parliamentary form of government like India and Great Britain or a presidential form of government as in the United States of America.

Sovereignty

A people inhabiting a definite portion of territory and having a government do not constitute a state so long as they do not possess sovereignty. India before 15 August 1947 had all the other elements of the state but it lacked sovereignty and therefore it was not a State. Sovereignty is the supreme power by which the state commands and exerts political obedience from its people. A state must be internally supreme and free from external control. Thus sovereignty has two aspects, internal and external. Internal sovereignty is the state's monopoly of authority inside its boundaries. This authority cannot be shared with any other state. The state is independent and its will is unaffected by the will of any other external authority.

Therefore every state must have a population, a definite territory, a duly established government and sovereignty. The absence of any of these elements deprives it the status of statehood.

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LESSON 4

STATE AND SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY

A study of any aspect of the state must begin with a definition of society, since a state is a society politically organized. A society may be defined as any association of human beings. Among such peoples as the British or the French, for example, there is a vast system of relationships among men and women dividing them socially into groups which by no means coincide with their political grouping. Sometimes, and more frequently, the group is very much smaller than the state, but often it passes right across the political frontier, and this is especially the case in commercial relationships. The fundamental units of the association of the members of a community, considered socially and not politically, may be said to be three. The first is the family, the association into which men are born. The second is the type of association to which men are compelled to belong through some strong incentive as such as economic interest or social advantage, as for example, a trade union or professional society. The third is what may be called the voluntary association, such as club or a church. Now, while it is true that the state does not use its force, as a rule, actively to interfere with such associations as these, the fact remains that it could and is sometimes obliged to do so for reason either of social health or of political expediency. While, on the one hand, such associations as we have mentioned play an important part in influencing and determining state action, on the other, many of them could not continue to exist without the conditions which the agency of the state alone can enforce, such as marriage laws, rights of property, laws of contract, and so on.

THE STATE

The state is something more than a mere collection of families, or an agglomeration of occupational organizations, or referee holding the ring between the conflicting interests of the voluntary associations which it permits to exist. In a properly organized political community the state exists for society and not society for the state.

All associations make rules and regulations for their conduct, and when men are associated politically these rules and regulations are called laws, the power to make these being the prerogative of the state and of no other association. Thus in the words of R.M.Maclver, a “state is the fundamental association for the maintenance and development of social order, and to this end its central institution is endowed with the united power of the community. But this definition might conceivably cover a pastoral or nomadic family who in some sort discharged the powers of government.

Such a society however lacks territoriality an indispensable condition of true political organization. According to J.W. Hetherington , “The state is the institution or set of institutions which, in order to secure certain elementary common purposes and conditions of life, unites under a single authority the inhabitants of a clearly marked territorial area. But what is this ‘United power of the community’ (society) and this ‘single authority’ (state). It is the power or authority to make laws. So we come to the definition given by Woodrow Wilson: “A state is a people organised for law within a definite territory”.

The essence of a state, then, as distinct from all other forms of association, is the obedience of its members to the law. If they don't obey, a penalty to be inflicted on any persons those who disobey the command of the state.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN STATE AND SOCIETY

Society is wider in scope than State:

Society is a very broad and comprehensive organisation of human beings. It is formed by all types of relations (social, economic, cultural, political, moral, religious, and others) that emerge and develop among the people who are members of the society.. As against this, State is only a political institution or organisation. It is concerned primarily with the exercise of power in society. State constitutes the sovereign power-system of the Society.

Society is prior to State:

Society is rooted in human nature. As social animals people naturally enter into social relationships and form society. The birth of society took place in the earliest period of history. State also has a very long history behind it and yet, everyone agrees, it came after the birth of society. The need for protecting the social relationships is the need for law and order led to the birth of the State. State had its birth after the evolution of society into a territorially settled society of people.

State is a politically organised unity of the people, Society is a natural unity of people bound together in social relationships:

Society includes both organised and un-organised groups of people, their activities and relationships. It consists of the vast network of all human relationships in society. . State is a politically organised community of people living on a definite portion of territory and characterised by the exercise of sovereignty over the people. State is the organised political community of the people of a society.

Government is the agency of the State; Society has no formal organised agent:

State acts through its government. Government is the agent of the State. It exercises the sovereignty of the State. . Society has no agent or agency. It is a self-regulating system of relationships. It functions naturally on the basis of its customs, traditions, usages and naturally evolved moral codes of conduct. Society lacks a formal organisation.

Sovereignty belongs to State and not to Society:

Sovereignty is the most essential property and the hallmark of the State. State alone exercises supreme power over all its citizens and their institutions. It is the law and order-maintaining institution of Society. Its laws bind all the members of the Society. Society is a system of social relations.

Territory belongs to State and not to the Society:

State is a territorial entity. Definite territory is an essential element of the State. Society has no territory. Even vagabonds bound by social ties constitute a society, non-residents Indian who have got the citizenships of other States continue to members of Indian society.

Society is concerned with both internal and external human behaviour, State is concerned with external aspects of human behaviour:

State is concerned with external human behaviour. Its laws lay down rules which regulate the external behaviour of the people and their groups, institutions, and organisations. State uses its coercive power on each such person/group/institution which commits any breach of law.

In contrast, the society is concerned with all aspects of human behaviour and relations in society. Social customs and traditions, and rules of morality cover all types of social relations at all levels – individual, family, community, neighborhood, regional and national.

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LESSON 5

STATE AND NATION

MEANING OF NATION

By nation, as you know, we mean a historically constituted stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and physiological make up manifested in a common culture. Nation, Bluntschilli says, is “a union of masses of men bound together specially by language and customs into common civilization which gives them a sense of unity”. A nation is a culturally homogeneous social group.

The state, as we know, is a people organized for law within a definite territory; it is always sovereign-supreme internally and independent externally. The nation is a group of people psychologically bound together while sharing common joys and sorrows.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN STATE AND NATION CAN BE EXPLAINED AS UNDER:

- Nation and state are distinct entities. A nation may not be always a state; India was not a state before August, 1947. A state may not always be a nation. Austria - Hungary was a state but not a nation before World War I because the heterogeneous people did not form a culturally homogeneous people.
- The state is a state because it is sovereign. The nation is not a state if it is not sovereign. Sovereignty is the chief characteristic of a state; it is not a feature of the nation. A nation becomes a nation-state when the nation attains statehood.
- The state is a political concept while the nation is a cultural, and a psychological body. Hayes says, “Nation is primarily cultural, and only incidentally political”. What it means is that nation is not a political concept, it is only spiritual.
- Laws bind the people together in a state; sentiments and emotions bind the people in a nation. The unity of the state is always external; the unity of the nation is eternal. In the case of the state, unity is imposed; it comes from above through laws. In the case of nation, unity comes from within, through emotions.
- There is an element of force connected with the state. The state's laws are binding. There is a coercion exercised by the state if its authority is defied. In the case of the nation, there is the element of persuasion.

- The elements of the state are definite: population, fixed territory, government and sovereignty. The elements of a nation are not definite. Somewhere common language helps constitute a nation, somewhere else, common race makes a nation. Common religion, for example, was a factor in making Pakistan as a nation; it was common language in the case of the United States as a nation whereas it was common heritage that made India a nation.
- A state may be larger than a nation. The former USSR had, within it, more than a hundred nationalities. Conversely, a nation may be larger than a state; a nationality may spread over two states. The Korean nationality is spread over two states: North Korea and South Korea.

In common usage, the terms State and Nation are often used as synonyms. For example, when we say 'Western nations' or 'Asian nations' or 'African nations', we do not mean nations but States. Similarly, the 'United Nations' is in reality an organisation of nation-states. Each modern state is a Nation State; nevertheless there exist some important distinctions between the State and the Nation.

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LESSON 6

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

INTRODUCTION

Some see a "state" as an ancient institution, going back to Rome, Greece and before, and theorized by Plato, Aristotle and other classical philosophers. Others insist on the unique features of the modern state, with its extensive rule of law, citizenship rights, and broad economic and social responsibilities.

A state is more than a government; that is clear. Governments change, but states endure. A state is the means of rule over a defined or "sovereign" territory. It is comprised of an executive, a bureaucracy, courts and other institutions. But, above all, a state levies taxes and operates a military and police force. States distribute and re-distribute resources and wealth, so lobbyists, politicians and revolutionaries seek in their own way to influence or even to get hold of the levers of state power.

States exist in a variety of sizes, ranging from enormous China to tiny Andorra. Some claim a long lineage, while others are of modern construction. In all but the short term, states are in flux. They expand and contract as military and political fortunes change. Some, like Poland, even disappear and re-appear later. Or they may be divided up (sometimes peacefully) by communities that prefer to go their separate ways (Czechoslovakia). Others, such as Iraq, may be occupied or run as a colony or protectorate. States can also "fail" - their governing institutions collapse due to civil war and internal strife (as in Somalia) or because the state has little authority outside the capital city (Afghanistan). While globalization and regional integration (like the European Union) challenge the state's powers, the state is still the dominant arena of domestic politics as well as the primary actor in international relations.

Some states occupy a unique status in the international community of states, due to a very small population or very small land area, but usually both. Microstates or small states and territories (SSTs) are sovereign state and enjoy a disproportionately large influence in the United Nations General Assembly thanks to the one state, one vote rule. Experimental States such as Sealand, Freedom Ship, Cyber Yugoslavia are among the hundreds of experimental states that people have founded in order to avoid taxation, feel independent, or to create a tourist attraction.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE STATE

In addition to the essential elements,- population, territory, government and sovereignty, - states possess certain distinguishing characteristics. Burgess gives

- **All –Comprehensive:**

- First, I would say that the state is all-comprehensive. Its organization embraces all persons, natural or legal, and all associations of persons. Political science and public law do not recognize in principle the existence of any stateless persons within the territory of the state.

- **Exclusive:**

- Second, the state is exclusive. Political science and public law do not recognize the existence of an imperium in imperio. The state may constitute two or more governments ; it may assign to each a distinct sphere of action ; it may then require of its citizens or subjects obedience to each government thus constituted ; but there cannot be two organizations of the state for the same population and within the same territory.

- **Permanent:**

- Third, the state is permanent. It does not lie within the power of men to create it to-day and destroy it to-morrow, as caprice may move them. Human nature has two sides to it, — the one universal, the other particular ; the one the state, the other the individual. Men can no more divest themselves of the one side than of the other ; i.e. they cannot di- vest themselves of either. No great publicist since the days of Aristotle has dissented from this principle. Anarchy is a permanent impossibility.

- **Sovereign:**

- Fourth and last, the state is sovereign. This is its most essential principle. An organization may be conceived which would include every member of a given population, or every inhabitant of a given territory, and which might continue with great permanence, and yet it might not be the state. If, however, it possesses the sovereignty over the population, then it is the state.

STATE AND ITS FUNCTIONS

A good deal of controversy exists as to the functions of the state or what is called the sphere of state action. The theories that have prevailed regarding the necessity and functions of the state range all the way from those which deny the necessity or utility of the state altogether (anarchism) and which limit the state's functions to the bare minimum (laissez faire individualism) to those which invest it with enormous range of functions and laud it as the indispensable agency by which all social, economic, artistic, literary and scientific progress has been achieved (socialism and welfare state).

Some of the important functions of a state are as follows:

There is incessant controversy about what the state shall do. Political thinkers have from time to time advanced many theories to define the sphere of state activity. On the one hand, there are thinkers like anarchists, communists, syndicalists who question the very existence of the state and advocate a stateless society.

On the other hand, there are the absolute thinkers like idealists who regard the state omnipotent and entrust to it every action pertaining to human life. In between these two extreme types of thinking there are the individualists who hold that Government is the best which governs the least.

Thus, there is no unanimity among the political thinkers as to what the state should do.

The state is a limited agency:

The very nature of the state sets a limitation on the functions of the state. The state has limits to what it can do. The state, as stated above, though universal yet it is a limited agency. It is limited by the means at its disposal. It is limited by the customs of the community.

It is limited by the fear of resistance. And it is limited by the existence of other associations in society whose function it cannot perform or undertake. MacIver says, "It is needless and futile to concentrate in one agency all the activities of life. Certain tasks the instrument can perform, but badly and clumsily — we do not sharpen our pencils with an axe. Other tasks it cannot perform at all and when it is directed upon them it only ruins the material."

From what MacIver says the conclusion may be drawn that there are certain functions which only the state can perform; others, which it is wholly incapable of performing and those which it can with advantage perform and for which it is well adapted.

FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE ACCORDING TO MACIVER

MacIver sums up the functions of a modern state into two major functions, one is compulsory functions which include- order, protection, conservation and development; and the other is Optional functions (non-compulsory)

COMPULSORY FUNCTIONS

1. Maintaining Order:

Taking the first type of functions, i.e., which the state alone can perform, the primary function is the maintenance of order in society. The state is possessed of peculiar attributes which enable it to perform this function. For this purpose each state maintains a police force and keeps a watch on the disruptive elements. It protects the life and property of the citizens.

2. Formulations of Laws

Formulation of laws and maintenance of law courts to settle disputes amongst individuals as well as individual and the state. Those who are guilty of violating the law must be brought to book.

3. Protection of the country from outside aggression

For this purpose, each state maintains an army. It also tries to maintain friendly relations with other countries through exchange of diplomatic envoys.

THE OPTIONAL FUNCTIONS

The Optional functions or the ministrant functions of the state include those functions which a state may or may not perform depending on its capacity and resources. The non-performance of these functions by the state does not in any way jeopardize its existence. However, in recent years due to emergence of the concept of welfare state, there is growing tendency among the modern states to undertake more and more optional functions. The list of optional functions performed by the modern states is so exhaustive that it is not possible to enumerate all of these functions here. However, some of the important functions which are performed by majority of the states are described below:

- **Public Works:** Under this head are included all those industries and institutions which the State not merely regulates, but owns and manages. The control of coinage and currency are undoubtedly among the necessary functions of government. Almost equally necessary is the government postal service. Telegraphs, telephones, railways, water supply and lighting may in a sense be called optional functions, since the general welfare does not always require them to be operated by the State. When public operation is clearly superior to private operation, all things considered, the State undoubtedly neglects its duty of promoting the common welfare if it fails to manage these utilities. It is a necessary part of the State's functions to provide such public safeguards as fire departments, lighthouses, buoys, and beacons; to maintain such instrumentalities of communication as roads, canals, bridges, and wharves; and to conserve such natural resources as forests, water powers, and watersheds. None of these activities can be satisfactorily performed by private enterprise.
- **Public Education.** As the child belongs primarily to the parents, so the function of education is primarily theirs. Both these propositions are demonstrated by the facts and requirements of human welfare. In very exceptional cases only can the education and upbringing of the child be controlled and carried on as well by the State as by the parents. Nevertheless, the common welfare does require the State to take a rather important part in the work of education. It is summarized in the following excerpts from the Pastoral Letter of the American Hierarchy, issued in 1920.

- As the public welfare is largely dependent upon the intelligence of the citizen, the State has a vital concern in education. This is implied in the original purpose of our government which, as set forth in the preamble to the Constitution, is "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." In accordance with these purposes, the State has a right to insist that its citizens shall be educated. It should encourage among the people such a love of learning that they will take the initiative and, without constraint, provide for the education of their children. Should they, through negligence or lack of means fail to do so, the State has the right to establish schools and take every other legitimate means to safeguard its vital interests against the dangers that result from ignorance. In particular, it has both the right and the duty to exclude the teaching of doctrines which aim at the subversion of law and order and therefore at the destruction of the State itself.
- The State is competent to do these things because its essential function is to promote the general welfare. But on the same principle it is bound to respect and protect the rights of the citizen, and especially of the parent. So long as these rights are properly exercised, to encroach upon them is not to further the general welfare, but to put it in peril. If the function of government is to protect the liberty of the citizen, and if the aim of education is to prepare the individual for the rational use of his liberty, the State cannot rightfully or consistently make education a pretext for interfering with rights and liberties which the Creator, not the State, has conferred. Any advantage that might accrue even from a perfect system of State education would be more than offset by the wrong which the violation of parental rights would involve. In our country, government thus far has wisely refrained from placing any other than absolutely necessary restrictions upon private initiative. The result is seen in the development of our resources, the products of inventive genius and the magnitude of our enterprises. But our most valuable resources are the minds of our children, and for their development at least the same scope should be allowed to individual effort as is secured to our undertakings in the material order.
- **Public Charity.** The principle that the State should do only those things which cannot be done as well by private action, applies with especial force to the field of charity. In general, this principle rests upon the fundamental truth that the individual reaches a higher degree of self-development when he does things for himself than when the State does things for him. In the province of charity this fact is illustrated with regard both to the receiver and the giver. The former is more likely to seek unnecessary assistance from the State than from an individual; the latter is more likely to infuse his charity with human sympathy than is the State; and his incentives to charitable action are diminished if the State does too much. In both cases harm is done to individual development.
- Nevertheless, the charitable functions of the State are numerous and important, In the field of prevention, it can and should use all proper and possible methods to provide that kind of social environment which renders charitable relief unnecessary.

Under this head comes a large list of industrial, educational, sanitary and moral provisions, to assure people a reasonable minimum of the material conditions of living. Some of these are stated in detail in later paragraphs of this chapter. In the field of relief, the State is frequently required to maintain hospitals, asylums, almshouses and corrective institutions; to grant subsidies to private institutions and agencies engaged in these works, and even to provide for needy persons outside of institutions. Whether and to what extent the State should undertake any of these tasks, is always to be determined by the answer which the actual situation gives to the question: can the State do the work better, all things considered, than private agencies? "All things considered," refers to remote as well as immediate results. For example, it is conceivable that the State might take care of all dependent children more cheaply than could private associations, but this action ought not to be taken if it would lead to a notable decline in charitable feeling, responsibility, and initiative among individuals.

- **Public Health, Safety, Morals.** The State should protect its citizens against disease, by sanitary regulations, such as those relating to quarantine (corona virus in 2020), inoculation, medical inspection of school children, impure drugs, adulterated food, and the disposal of garbage. It should safeguard their physical integrity, by such measures as traffic rules, safety requirements for public conveyances, and building regulations. It should, as far as possible, provide them with a good moral environment through the regulation or repression of the liquor traffic, through the suppression of divorce, prostitution, public gambling, and indecent pictures, printed matter, theatrical productions, and places of amusement.
- **Industrial Regulation,** Owing to the complexity of modern industrial conditions, this function of the State is more important than in any preceding age. Owing to its effect upon the pecuniary interests of individuals, it has been more strongly criticised than any other activity of the State. Not much opposition has been offered to State regulation of banks. All reasonable men recognize that the public must be protected through requirements concerning incorporation, minimum of capital and surplus, liability of stockholders, nature of investments, amount and kind of reserves, the issuing of notes, and public inspection and supervision.
- **The regulation of commerce,** public utilities and manufactures, has a varied scope and may be exercised in various ways. Foreign commerce may be regulated through taxes and embargoes on imports and exports, and by other methods of restriction. The regulation of domestic commerce takes many forms: intoxicating liquors, tobacco, explosives, drugs and other commodities are subjected to a system of licensing, or special taxation, or other kinds of legal supervision; railroads are forbidden to exact more than certain maximum charges for carrying goods and passengers, and are compelled to maintain certain standards of service; and such municipal utilities as street railways and lighting concerns must submit to similar requirements. Commercial contracts which are clearly extortionate, such as loans of money at usurious rates, are generally prohibited by law. In this matter the policy of governments is not in accord with the individualistic theory that all technically "free" contracts ought to be legally enforced. As a matter of fact, such contracts are not free in any fair sense. All the foregoing regulations promote the public welfare and are evidently among the proper functions of the State.

- The most important public regulation of manufactures is that which strives to prevent unfair dealing and extortion by monopolistic corporations. In some form this is a very ancient practice of the State. Many centuries ago, legislators became aware that human beings cannot be trusted to exercise monopoly power with fairness to either competitors or consumers. Today the most enlightened governments have numerous and complex statutes to prevent and punish both these forms of injustice. Such measures are clearly justified, not only to promote the public good, but also as an exercise of the primary function of the State, namely, the protection of natural rights. They are intended to prevent and punish unjust dealing and extortion. Nevertheless, they have not adequately attained that end. Additional measures are required, to limit still further the "individual freedom" of the monopolist to treat his fellows unjustly. Legal determination of maximum prices, government regulation of supply and distribution, and State competition in the manufacturing or other business carried on by a monopolistic concern, -- are the principal new methods that have been suggested. In so far as they are necessary and would prove adequate to protect the general welfare, they can undoubtedly be classed among the proper functions of the State. Since the main object is to prevent the imposition of extortionate prices upon the consumer and the receipt of excessive profits and interest by the monopoly.
- Probably the most necessary and beneficent group of industrial regulations are those which apply to the labor contract and the conditions of labor. The principal subjects covered are wages, hours of labor, child labor, woman labor, safety and sanitation in work places, accidents, sickness, old age and unemployment. As regards wages, legislation has been enacted regulating the manner and frequency of payment, and fixing minimum rates of remuneration. Underlying most of the latter measures is the theory that no wage earner should be required to accept less than the equivalent of a decent livelihood. So long as millions of workers are unable to obtain this decent minimum through their own efforts or through the benevolence of the employer, they have clearly the right to call upon the intervention of the State. In other words, the enactment of minimum wage legislation is among the State's primary as well as secondary functions. Laws prohibiting an excessively long working day, the employment of young children, the employment of women in occupations unsuited to their sex, the existence of unsafe and unsanitary work places, -- are all likewise included among both the primary and the secondary functions of government. Legal provisions for the prevention and adjustment of industrial disputes, and to insure the workers against accidents, sickness, unemployment, invalidity and old age, have been made by various countries. They evidently represent a normal exercise of, at least, the secondary functions of the State.
- Conservation and development: MacIver includes in this category "the conservation and development of human capacities as well as of economic resources." The state is well adapted to regulate the exploitation of natural resources in the interest of present and of future generations of the entire community. If the exploitation of natural resources is left in the hands of private individuals, then they will seek their own gain at the cost of communal gain. The state can better uphold the interest of the whole and the interest of the future as

against the competitive interests. So conservation of forests, fisheries, and exploitation of mineral resources are functions which the state should undertake. The conservation and development of human capacities are no less important than that of the natural resources. The state should provide for education, public parks, museums, playgrounds, and contribute to the development of science, and to the encouragement of art. Though other agencies can perform these tasks but none so efficiently and on so great a scale and with such authority as can the state.

It is thus clear that the modern state has expanded its activities in various directions. The ratio of the number of Government employees to the total population has steadily continued to increase. Whether the recent expansion of governmental activities is advantageous or not depends upon how one feels about the value of the increased functions and services and the cost of these functions and services.

On this question there may be strong difference of opinion. While the critics on the one hand point out to the evils of the growth of bureaucracy, the inevitable outcome of the expanding governmental activities; on the other hand it is pointed out that the recent social and technological changes have made it necessary for the state to take over the functions formerly carried by other institutions.

We are living in an era characterized by the establishment of large centralized Governments which perform innumerable functions and exercise enormous powers. Perhaps it is not now possible to go back to the society of the small community. Accordingly, our problem is not to reduce the functions of the state or abolish it but to develop more adequate scientific knowledge and techniques for the efficient exercise of these powers in the public interest.

The functions the State should not Undertake according to MacIver:

- **Should not control public opinion:**

- Taking up the functions which the State should not undertake, MacIver says, "The State should not seek to control public opinion, no matter what the opinion may be," provided there is "no incitement to break its laws or defy its authority." "To urge law breaking is to attack the fundamental order, the establishment of which is the first business of the state, and for the preservation of which it is endowed with coercive power."

- **Should not enforce morality:**

- Secondly, the state should not enforce morality. 'The sphere of morality is distinct from the sphere of political law. "Morality is always individual and always in relation to the whole presented situation, of which the political fact is never more than an aspect." There is no such thing as 'state morality'. There is no morality save individual morality. Law cannot prescribe morality it can prescribe only external conditions. It cannot cover all the grounds of morality. "To turn all moral into legal obligations would be to destroy morality."

- **Should not interfere with custom and fashion:**

- *Thirdly, the state should not interfere with custom and fashion directly. "The state has little power to make custom, and perhaps less to destroy it, although indirectly it influences customs by changing the conditions out of which they spring." MacIver states in forceful words: "Custom, when attacked, attacks law in turn, attacks not only the particular law which opposes it, but, what is more vital, the spirit of law abidingness, the unity of the general will."*
- *The state has even much less control over that minor and changeful form of custom called fashion. MacIver states, "A people will follow eagerly the dictates of fashion proclaimed by some unknown coterie in Paris or London or New York, But were the state to decree changes in themselves so insignificant, it would be regarded as monstrous tyranny; it might even lead to revolution."*

- **Should not create culture:**

- *Lastly, the state cannot create culture because culture is the expression of the spirit of a people or of an age. "It is the work of community, sustained by inner forces far more potent than political law." Art, literature and music do not come directly within the purview of the state. "In all these activities a people or a civilization goes its own way, responsive to the influences and conditions for the most part un-comprehended and uncontrolled by the state."*
- *It may be emphasized here that in recent times there has been a tendency towards the growth of state functions. Today there is no citizen and almost no organization which operates outside its orbit of power. The barriers between the field of economics and government are rapidly being lowered. The welfare state is now a popular ideal. There is now hardly a phase of life in which the state does not participate either as a Renderer of services, as an arbiter, or as a controller.*
- *The two world wars have further broadened the functions of the state. The trend towards expansion of governmental functions is likely to continue. This trend is the result of the growth and diffusion of the idea that the state is responsible for the economic and psychological, as well as the physical security of its citizens.*
- *The conclusion to which MacIver is driven on the whole question of state action is that, in general terms the state should control those external conditions of social living which are of universal concern in view of the acknowledged objects of human desire. It should not meddle with concerns which are not its own. "If it attempts those things which it ought not to attempt it will fail in the things which properly fall within its charge."*
- *The end of the State, we have seen, is to promote the welfare of its citizens as a whole, as members of families, and as members social classes. Anyone who is inclined to doubt the propriety of including the second and third of these clauses, will dismiss the inclination as soon as he looks beneath formulas and; fixes his attention upon realities.*

Theories concerning the Functions of the State

Classification of the different political theories concerning the function of the state in Society are:

- Liberal and conservative theories of the state tend to believe the state is a neutral entity, separated from society and the economy. These theories assume a capitalist economic system exists.
- Marxist theorists believe the state is a partisan instrument that primarily serves the interests of the upper class. Marxists see a close relationship between political and economic power.
- Anarchists would like to completely dismantle the state apparatus and replace it with an alternative set of social relations that are not based on state power.
-
- Pluralists view the state as a neutral body that simply enacts the will of the groups who dominate the electoral process.
- A polyarchy, a concept Robert Dahl developed, refers to the idea that the modern democratic state acts in response to the pressures a variety of organized interests apply.

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