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VARIATIONS ON A FAMILIAR THEME*

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As I set out to prepare for this combined inaugural and valedictory, I sought a theme worthy of the occasion and within the span of my own limited vision. Notwithstanding the lush crop of "problems" confronting our world and our profession, no suitable theme came readily to mind. I experimented with many, including "Variations on a Theme by Joe McCarthy," or "Acheson at Armageddon," or "General MacArthur Fades Again." But in all such cases the theme was obscured by the variations. And so I've called these remarks "Variations on a Familiar Theme."

Since 1903 when Frank Goodnow spoke on "The Work of the American Political Science Association," no less than forty-five presidents have prepared annual speeches on as many different themes. It is interesting to note that of thirteen such speeches up to 1917, only one gave any major attention to international relations. Then, between 1917 and 1924, four of the seven were devoted to an international theme. But during the twenty-six years from 1924 through 1950, only two dealt primarily with international relations.

Thus, it would seem that the presidential addresses of the American Political Science Association have reflected the prevailing mood of the American people—a mood dominated by domestic rather than world affairs. It is, of course, possible to see in this history the evidence of intellectual myopia. How, one might ask, could these men (there were no women among them), all careful students of government, be so blind to the promethean forces that have changed the face of our world during the lifetime of the Association over which they have presided?

It would be as presumptuous as it is unnecessary for me to answer for my predecessors. Their preoccupation with domestic affairs was in

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any case more apparent than real. For they knew (at least some of them did) what many have yet to learn—that the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is, and always has been, an artificial one. Hence “Social Planning Under the Constitution,” which was the theme of President Corwin’s address in 1931, had a bearing on international relations as direct as Quincy Wright’s “Political Science and World Stabilization” in 1949.

So-called domestic policies relating to tariffs, immigration, race relations, national defense, taxation, education and even social welfare have been as much a part of our foreign policy as the Monroe Doctrine or the Open Door, for they help to determine our “stance,” as it were, in the world community. And however obscure the integral relation between domestic and foreign policy in the past, it has become crystal clear today. “The foreign affairs of the United States,” says Jim McCamy, “consumed more than three-fourths of the money spent by the Federal government in four years following World War II and more than half the Federal expenditures in all but nine of thirty years following World War I.”

The contribution of ECA to the economic and political stability of Western Europe is now generally admitted. But the impact of this same program upon the economic and political life of the United States is less generally appreciated. When it was still in the discussion stage, Senator Taft referred to the “so-called Marshall Plan” as a “complicated mixture of foreign and domestic policy. . . .” We need ask, he said, whether “the advantages to be gained in foreign policy outweigh the disadvantages at home. . . . How far shall we make a present to other people of the fruits of our labors?” Not all the effects of ECA, at home and abroad, have been beneficent. But surely even the senior Senator from Ohio must now admit that the advantages, both foreign and domestic, far outweigh the disadvantages.

As a final illustration of the interrelations of foreign and domestic politics, consider what is happening to our “free” economy and our “open” society under a global cold war and a limited hot war in Korea. Consider the effects upon such “domestic” problems as inflation, manpower supply and utilization, taxation, public works, education and social welfare, and civilian defense, to mention but a few.

Even more serious has been the effect of the cold war upon the basic democratic institutions which our policies are presumably designed to protect. Consider the so-called loyalty program of the federal government, the outcry from committees on un-American activities for even more stringent controls over subversive activities, and their effects upon our traditional civil liberties. Under the new regulations of the

Loyalty Review Board, we not only have continued a policy of establishing guilt by association but have gone one step beyond this to assume guilt by accusation. As Alan Barth has recently observed: "The presumption of innocence supposed to surround an accused person has been abolished. The doctrine that guilt is personal and cannot be imputed on the basis of mere association does not apply. The right of the accused to confront and cross-examine his accusers is forfeited. The immunity from rearraignment on a charge that has been disproved is abandoned."¹

Step by step the cold war against Communism has been accompanied by a transformation of our democratic state into a garrison state, in which, as a report of the Committee for Economic Development says, "the soldier and political policeman rise to power while the institutions of civilian society and of freedom shrink."

How far along this road we have traveled since 1946 and how the trend can be checked or its direction changed, should be a problem of major concern to members of this Association. It is a problem, however, that cannot be attacked piecemeal by narrow specialists working under a self-imposed compartmentalization. It is no more a problem for those who profess international relations than for those who profess constitutional law, public administration or political parties. Unless we realize this, we shall be like the men in a French fable who sought to understand the elephant by looking separately and intensively—one at his tail, another at his trunk, another at his legs, and a fourth at his torso. What each one saw was real enough, and his description was accurate within his frame of reference. But none of them ever saw or described the elephant.

We have learned the meaning of total war; we are learning the meaning of total diplomacy, which utilizes not only political but economic, ideological, and even military weapons. As political scientists we must now learn the meaning of total politics. For total politics implies that the problem of political power in our world—its nature, basis, structure and scope—is in fact a seamless web not to be fully understood by viewing it in segments. Just as foreign and domestic policy are integrally related, so students of American government, political parties and public opinion, international relations, public administration, political theory, public law, and comparative government are not rivals in a race for academic preferment, but partners in a common quest for understanding and control of what Hobbes so accurately named *The Leviathan*.

¹ *The Reporter*, Vol. 5, p. 15 (July 24, 1951).

I am not now talking about integration but about understanding. What I am pleading for is a return to political science as Aristotle and the other founders of our profession conceived of it—as a Master Science in terms of which the other social sciences find their meaning and significance.

I need not remind this audience that Aristotle wrote not only about *Politics* but also about *Ethics* and *Economics*; that Hobbes' *Leviathan* is made up of books not only on the Commonwealth, but also on Man, the Christian Commonwealth, and the Kingdom of Darknesse; that John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* is a necessary part of his political science; that Rousseau had written a *Discourse on the Origin and Foundation of Inequality* and a *Discourse on Political Economy* before he wrote *The Social Contract*; that Immanuel Kant's *Essay on Eternal Peace* was preceded by his *Critique of Pure Reason*; that Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was but a part of his total political theory, of which his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* was the foundation; that Montesquieu and De Tocqueville were happily blind to the barriers which lesser men have erected between special compartments of political science and between us and the other social sciences. To them jurisprudence, administration, international relations, public finance, political parties and public opinion, comparative government, as well as much of anthropology, sociology, economics, history and psychology, were but special aspects of the total science of man as a political animal.

I am not arguing that political scientists return to the orientation and methods of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At times these earlier writings appear "hazy," as, for example, in the case of John Daniel Gros, professor at Columbia from 1784 to 1795 and author of the first American textbook on political science. Among other things, this textbook dealt with the *Natural Principles of Rectitude, for the Conduct of Man in All States and Situations of Life, Demonstrated and Explained in a Systematic Treatise on Moral Philosophy: Comprehending the Law of Nature—Ethics—Natural Jurisprudence—General Economy—Politics—and the Law of Nations*.

We rightly smile at the presumption and naïveté of anyone who would undertake to explore an area so vast and so complex—and to do so without benefit of a special Institute or Bureau, staffed with research assistants, secretaries, technical assistants, and IBM machines. Yet there is a lesson for us in the cosmic cogitations of Daniel Gros. He had as his central purpose the instruction of his students in those principles of morality and rectitude by which they could "become good men and good citizens." Obviously we could use more of this type of instruction

today. Gros knew that ethics, jurisprudence, economics, politics and international relations were not independent and unrelated disciplines but simply convenient frames of reference for inquiring into the "natural principles of rectitude for the conduct of man."

If one is to argue that such training is a poor preparation for practical politics, at least he must admit that it did not seriously handicap Jefferson and Madison, Hamilton and other practical politicians, who became the architects of democratic government in the modern world. Indeed, one may well ask whether the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, or the Federalist Papers could have been written except by men trained in this way. We might well ask ourselves also where in America we are today preparing the Jeffersons, the James Wilsons, the James Madisons or Alexander Hamiltons that our world so sorely needs?

The kind of education we offer today, as in Jefferson's day, reflects the demand which society makes upon the schools and colleges. And this demand is for experts and specialists in every field. The demonstrable advantages of a division of labor in increasing the rate and volume of industrial production, the manifest superiority of the trained specialist in medicine, law and engineering, and the spectacular achievements of specialized scientific research, have all conspired to accelerate the trend toward specialization. Moreover, the sheer volume of scientific information accessible to modern scholars has made the man of universal knowledge a singularly rare bird.

Added to these influences in the United States were our individualistic and pragmatic traditions, which have emphasized "practical" education at the expense of theoretical and cultural studies. This is, no doubt, one reason why the United States has proved such a laggard in the field of basic science and so preëminent in applied science and technology. For a century or more we drew upon the European storehouse of basic science and contributed precious little to it. Now, as we are being called upon to replenish this storehouse, we may find our emphasis on "practical" education and training not so "practical" after all.

De Tocqueville, in a chapter that deserves careful and prayerful rereading today, commented on *Why the Americans Are More Addicted to Practical Than to Theoretical Science*. "Those who cultivate the sciences amongst a democratic people," he said, "are always afraid of losing their way in visionary speculation. They mistrust systems; they adhere closely to facts and the study of facts with their own senses." Can it be that this distrust of systems, and of the theoretical implications of what we do, helps to explain why we on the one hand succeed

so well with the "practical" aspects of a program like ECA and on the other hand fail so signally in explaining its ideological significance either to ourselves or to the rest of the world?

At any rate, this distrust of theory and of knowledge for its own sake, this preoccupation with so-called practical training adapted to each student's needs and interests, has had far-reaching effects upon American education. In our passion for the "practical" and in our system of free election of courses by students, we have a prescription for educational anarchy—without system, without theory, without plan and without purpose.

"Practical" courses of dubious, or at best transitory, value have been added to the curriculum at the expense of time-honored disciplines. New schools have developed to grant degrees in a mounting variety of specialties, with little or no theoretical foundation and often with no significant body of knowledge, skills or principles. In the structure of the university, the college of arts and sciences, where the old lights still burn even if dimly, has been overshadowed by the new arrivals. In the competition for students, physical facilities, faculty and funds, it usually comes off badly. Administrators continue to speak of it as the "heart and soul" of the university, but rarely understand it well enough to fight for it against the barbarian invasion. The result is that graduates emerge from our colleges who are moderately well "trained" in this skill or that, but lack even the rudiments of an education. This progressive impoverishment and fragmentation of human knowledge has not only made a mockery of anything worthy to be called a liberal education but has also undermined the common core of knowledge and training in science, history, literature and philosophy that had been a bond of union among educated men and women for a thousand years.

Thus it is that technical specialization, which has made possible a united world, has at the same time undermined the cultural unity without which a united world is impossible. Indeed it is doubtful whether even a regional grouping like N.A.T.O. can be more than a temporary alliance unless we achieve a greater measure of cultural understanding than now exists.

All of these developments are of particular importance to political scientists. For we have seen the Master Science itself progressively whittled away. In a kind of intellectual chain reaction, political economy, jurisprudence, and history broke away from moral philosophy; economics broke away from political economy; and political science became a foundling of history and jurisprudence. Nor did the process of segmentation stop here. Public finance broke away, public administration is restive. Other areas of study which scarcely justify a single full-year

course in any reputable university are coming to be regarded as separate and independent disciplines. And because academic empire-building is as common as that of its bureaucratic brother, the barriers between studies became higher and more impermeable. The founding fathers of our profession would not have thought of public administration, international relations, public opinion or public finance as disciplines apart from or independent of political science. They realized that if these studies are cut away from the parent stock, they wither into sterile, empty husks. Or they reach out, vampire-like, to absorb other disciplines, either to fill in or to conceal their own emptiness. I have recently been told, for example, that "public administration is broad enough for all of us to get under that tent." There are, I believe, species of animals in which parents often devour their offspring—but this is my first encounter with a species in which the offspring seek to devour the parent.

It was not always so. Even as recently as my own undergraduate days, the study of political science embraced areas and "disciplines" which today are regarded either as alien or at best as peripheral to it. No one, for example, regarded it as strange that political science majors should be required to include in their courses of study statistics, public finance, general, abnormal and social psychology, history, philosophy, formal logic and literature, as well as political theory, comparative government, public law, political parties and public administration. It never occurred to me that Vernon Parrington's course, which he called "Main Tendencies in American Thought," was not as much a course in political theory as in literature. Nor were those of us reared in this tradition surprised when Parrington's monumental study of *Main Currents in American Thought* was dedicated to a political scientist, the late J. Allen Smith.

The trend toward specialization and concentration changed this. A distinguished political scientist, a former President of this Association, once told me that no student of political science should "waste his time" on psychology. He was particularly opposed to Freud and J. B. Watson—none of whose works he had ever read but whom he knew to be charlatans, and immoral ones at that. Yet political scientists can scarcely hope to understand political behavior or public opinion without at least a passing acquaintance with recent research in such fields as group dynamics, industrial relations, social psychology and the technical methods used in social surveys. The barriers of ignorance and misunderstanding between the psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists have seriously impeded significant research on political behavior and public opinion.

Innumerable experts write about public opinion with a political naïveté that would astound any undergraduate major in political science. In no other field is the triumph of technique over purpose so obvious. At the risk of laboring the point, may I again suggest that our preoccupation with technique at the expense of purpose has materially reduced our effectiveness in the current ideological war with Communism. With our faith in the technician, we have turned to radio, press and motion picture executives, public relations and advertising experts, not only to advise us concerning techniques of transmission but to forge our ideological weapons as well. The result has been a campaign to "sell" America to the world in much the same terms in which we "sell" Coca-Cola or Ivory Soap to Americans.

Tom Paine could mobilize a nation with a pamphlet written on a drumhead and distributed hand to hand because what he had to say struck fire in the hearts of those to whom his words were addressed. So far, unfortunately, no Tom Paines have appeared on the staff of the Voice of America. Nor are they likely to appear until we realize, as Professor Padover says, that "we are dealing with a world revolutionary situation involving races and cultures and aspirations totally alien to the experience of [the average] advertising executives." The anthropologist, historian, political scientist and philosopher are more likely to develop a meaningful framework for ideological warfare—but only if they are able to emerge from the narrow cubicles in which specialists are too often confined.

Much of the impetus toward specialization arises from a commendable desire to be scientific. It is obviously easier to apply rigorous standards of observation, classification, and analysis to a limited than to a more extended universe. By limiting the field we also limit the variables, and thus make it easier to formulate generalizations, forecasts, and predictions. But when variables *outside* a field of inquiry are related to others included within the field, we do not increase either the reliability or the validity of generalizations by excluding them—however much we may seem to simplify our problem by doing so. In the long run, of course, science contributes to understanding not through restriction of the universe to which any given generalization applies but through its progressive extension.

The inadequacies of the brass-instrument psychologists in explaining human behavior led inevitably to Behaviorism, as Behaviorism led to *Gestalt*. It is now, I believe, generally accepted doctrine among psychologists that human behavior, whether in courtship or in Congress, is molar and not molecular. Hence it is that the greater the specialization and the narrower the field of inquiry, the greater becomes the need for

coordination and integration at higher levels and over broader areas. It is this capacity for scientific integration and coordination at progressively higher levels that marks the great from the mediocre scientist, whether in physics or in politics.

Not all that goes under the name of science can be said to add to our knowledge and understanding of man as a political animal. Much current literature seems to be based on the theory that politics becomes scientific by becoming polysyllabic and obscure. New and strange vocabularies have emerged. It is as though some scholars—usually strangers to the city hall, county court house, state or national capitol—find sublimation in a kind of Semantic Nirvana. One of them, for example, writes about the importance of diversity of “interaction patterns” “to a working conceptual scheme, including . . . the segmental chain reaction patterns of greatly varying extent of political distance, and the segmental interlapping patterns where there is in effect the paradox of a discontinuous continuum.” Another, quoted by Stuart Chase in his excellent book on *The Proper Study of Mankind*,² says: “In conformity with the preceding point, if all the interacting parties (in marriage, in minority-majority groups, in different occupational, religious, political, economic, racial, ethnic and other interacting groups and persons) view the given overtly similar (or dissimilar) traits: A, B, C, D, N (physical, biological, mental, socio-cultural) as negligible values or as no values at all, as comprising even no similarity (or dissimilarity), such overt similarities-dissimilarities are innocuous in the generation of either solidarity or antagonism.”

I forbear to cite other examples, of which unhappily there are many. “Some professors,” says Chase, “seem to feel that if they can only get a terminology which is dense enough, they have somehow achieved the scientific method. All they have done is to shatter the communication line.” Perhaps there is method in this madness, if we are to believe with T. S. Schiller that “nothing has a greater hold on the human mind than nonsense fortified with technicalities.”

I shall not pretend that these are fair samples of the language of contemporary political science. If they were, this Association would long since have dwindled to a fraction of its present membership. Those who remained would have been properly exiled to some semantic sanctuary accessible only, as they would say, to the neologistic *cognoscenti*. Nevertheless, the all-too-common passion for pseudoscientific gobbledegook—one of the ill-begotten offspring of excessive specialization—constitutes another barrier to the internal unity of political science and to effective communication with the other social sciences.

² (New York, 1948).

Never before has the need for understanding and cooperation among the social sciences been so great. Ask any hundred men and women to name the most pressing problems confronting mankind! Although the order of priority might differ, the following would inevitably be included: war and peace, security and freedom, economic stability, population and food supply, medical care and public health, racial and other intergroup relations, equal justice under just laws, labor-management relations and industrial peace. The list could be extended to include a host of other headaches that plague our civilization. Almost without exception, they are problems arising not in the fields of natural science and technology but in the field of human relations, and more particularly in what Aristotle called "Politics."

Yet in the face of these problems, social scientists are divided and confused. As one student put it, "We are like soldiers lying in isolated foxholes without means of communication . . . yet (we) are concerned with different aspects of the same critter—man—and the notion that we can abstract the economic or the psychological (or the political) aspect of his behavior without regard to the rest, is nonsense."³

Does this mean that every social scientist must be an expert in every field? I think not. But it does require that he be aware of the essential unity of knowledge concerning man and his universe. It requires also a searching inquiry into the subject matter, methods, skills, principles and problems of all the social sciences to discover what they have in common and how each may best contribute to the mitigation or solution of the major problems of our civilization. It means also a return to a truly liberal education as the basis for any and all scientific training.

If a liberal education means anything, it means more than a smattering of information about this and that, and also more than technical competence in a single highly specialized subject. Both the dilettantes and the narrow specialists are intellectual cripples easily victimized by the first plausible pied piper who comes along. Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin have counted thousands of them among their most ardent collaborators and supporters. They can be found in the entourage of Senator McCarthy, Gerald K. Smith and William Z. Foster, among the hooded hoodlums of the Ku Klux Klan, and within the ranks of those pseudo-intellectuals who become Stalin's stooges and shock troops. Because they bear the trademark of a college degree, they give a sort of academic absolutism to these campaigns of subversion, hatred and reaction.

To reconcile the legitimate demand for specialized training with the

³ Quoted by Chase, p. 45.

equally urgent need for a liberal education is a central problem of higher education in the United States. As political scientists, we cannot hope to discharge the great responsibilities which have come to us if we continue to educate *our* students on the catch-as-catch-can basis that now prevails. We need to face frankly the problem of professional standards and qualifications for those who seek to be political scientists.

What should be the minimum educational requirements for an A.B., an M.A., and a Ph.D. in political science? Isn't it time for the American Political Science Association to establish such standards? As an aid to such an inquiry, I venture to propose the following as a *minimum* for all political science majors during their undergraduate years:

(1) Two full-year courses taken successively in mathematics and natural sciences. Under no circumstances should these courses be merely *about* natural science but full-bodied laboratory courses *in* mathematics and the natural sciences.

(2) Two full-year courses—taken successively if possible, although not necessarily so—in the humanities, fine arts and music.

(3) Two full-year courses in history and social sciences outside the field of the student's major.

(4) One full-year course dealing with selected problems in American civilization. The course now being given at Amherst College might serve as a model.

(5) Two full-year courses in a modern foreign language or languages—unless the student can pass a proficiency test in at least one foreign language.

Such a minimum program would absorb approximately half of the student's time during his undergraduate years, leaving ample opportunity for concentration in more strictly professional courses as he goes along. These latter should certainly include at least one full-year course in each of the major fields of political science. The development of a similar minimum program on the graduate level should be undertaken by the American Political Science Association.

I present these suggestions not as a panacea nor as something novel and revolutionary, but as a small step toward restoring to political science the scientific, cultural and humane foundation that it had in the beginning. Only along some such road can we hope to recover a sense of the unity of knowledge without which our highly specialized sciences become sterile and dangerous. Only along some such road can political science again become the Master Science.

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of political science in our world. The liberty and security of the individual, interpersonal

and social relations, economic and social welfare, world peace and security—yes—even survival itself, depend in large measure upon the character and quality of our political institutions and the wisdom of public policies. Compared to the problems we confront, those of the nuclear physicist are child's play.

We do well to honor, and in some respects to imitate, our friends in the natural sciences. Their achievements have transformed the world. They have increased the span of human life and at the same time devised new and more effective means for its destruction. The Four Horsemen—War, Famine, Disease and Death—are today armed with more lethal weapons for mass destruction than ever before in history.

Humility befits the political scientist in the face of these miracles. But in eating our humble bread, we ought not to forget the contributions of politics to civilization. How shall we compare the invention of the steam engine with the framing of the Constitution, or with the development of the federal system of government? Without the commerce clause and its interpretation under Marshall, could we have had our spectacular industrial growth? Who is to say that the invention of the telegraph or the electric dynamo, or of radio and television, is more important to American civilization than a uniform currency, or the Sixteenth Amendment? Politics has been a more or less silent partner of physics from the beginning of our history. Over 2,500,000 patents have been issued since the framers gave Congress power "to promote the progress of science and the useful arts" by granting patent and copyright to authors and inventors.

The spectacular progress we have witnessed in the natural sciences and technology has been made possible only by progress in the science and art of government. I mention all this only so that as political scientists we may raise our heads a bit in the company of our glamorous and affluent colleagues in the natural sciences.

Every year hundreds of millions of dollars—over eighty percent of which is supplied by the federal government—flows into research and development of the natural sciences and technology. By comparison the social scientists are very poor relations indeed.

Nevertheless, when measured against the slender support they have had, their record of achievement is impressive. They have helped to enrich and to buttress our civilization by bringing reason to bear in the development of domestic law, both private and public, constitutional government, economic and social planning, and international law and organization. They have helped to substitute reason for sentiment and self-interest in dealing with the conservation and management of both natural and human resources, in administrative manage-

ment at all levels, in municipal government and urban planning, national defense, and a host of other equally important and complex problems affecting the public welfare. Some day we may learn that scientific training, research and development in human relations, and more particularly in the field of government and law, is at least as important as in physics and chemistry, medicine and engineering.

It is a commonplace to say that our generation stands simultaneously on the brink of disaster and on the threshold of a new civilization. Others have said that we are witnessing once again the decay of one civilization as another is striving to be born. We are both spectators and participants in this process as citizens and as scientists.

For science alone is not enough if we are to master the problems that confront our civilization. Medieval civilization, it is said, was an age of faith—and modern civilization is the age of science. But, like most neat phrases, this harbors a half-truth. For ours, too, is an age of faith—of faith in science and reason as the best means for discovering the laws of God and nature. But our faith goes beyond this and embraces those human values which give meaning and direction to our lives:

(1) Respect for the dignity of all men regardless of racial, religious or economic origin and status.

(2) Recognition of individual and cultural differences and of the different needs and aspirations to which these differences give rise.

(3) Recognition of, and respect for, the role of reason in the conduct of human affairs and awareness of the desirability of extending its scope to embrace ever-widening areas of individual and social behavior.

(4) Recognition of the principles of free inquiry, expression and association as logical corollaries of the rule of reason.

(5) Recognition that social responsibility is a logical corollary of power and that to find ways and means for the enforcement of this responsibility is an inescapable and continuing obligation of all members of society.

These values have their roots in the basic aspirations of the human heart. But they are also values that are compatible with science and without which science cannot flourish or endure.

Political science, if it is to be worthy of its claim to be the Master Science, must take account of these values. It must also recognize the essential unity of human knowledge. Only by doing so can it contribute to our salvation and to the bright future that lies ahead.