

## Day 1

### Principles of Government

#### “The State”

Assignment Pg 8 1-3, 5 (old book)

-When the United States declared their independence in 1776 each state thought of itself as a country. Even though the states later joined together as one nation under the Constitution, the term State continued to be used to describe the main political units within the United States.

-The term nation is often used to describe an independent state or country. However, a nation is any sizable group of people who are united by common bonds of race, language, custom, tradition, and, sometimes, religion.

-There are 4 essential features of a state

1. Population-States where the population shares a general political and social consensus or agreement about basic beliefs, have the most stable governments.
2. Territory
3. Sovereignty- Political Sovereignty means that the state has supreme and absolute authority within its territorial boundaries. It has complete independence, and complete power to make laws, shape foreign policy, and determine its own course of action. Because every state is considered sovereign, every state is equal with respect to legal rights and duties at least in theory. In practice, of course, states with great economic strength and military capabilities have more power than other states.
4. Government- is the institution through which the state maintains social order, provides public services, and enforces decisions that are binding on all people living within the state.

-The Purposes of Government

1. To maintain social order- According to the social contract theory, people need government to maintain social order because they have not yet discovered a way to live in groups without conflict. Governments have the power to make and enforce laws. Governments can require people to do things they might not do voluntarily, such as pay taxes or serve in the army. Without government, civilized life would not be possible. Government controls and contains conflict between people by placing limits on what individuals are permitted to do.
2. To Provide public services
3. To Provide for national security and a common defense
4. To Provide for and control the economic system

Governments derive their authority from two sources-their legitimacy and their ability to use coercive force. Legitimacy means the willingness of citizens to obey the government. Americans understand that if their elected officials fail to respond to the interests of the people, they can be voted out of office. Coercive force, the second source of government authority, derives from the police, judicial, and military institutions of government. Government can force people to pay taxes and can punish offenders by fines or imprisonment.

## Day 2

### The Formation of Government

#### “Government Systems”

-Unitary System- A unitary system of government gives all key powers to the national or central government. This does not mean that only one level of government exists. Rather, it means that the central government has the power to create state, provincial, or other local governments and may give them limited sovereignty.

-Federal System- A federal system of government divides the powers of government between the national government and state or provincial governments. Each level of government has sovereignty in some areas.

#### “Constitutions and Government”

-Constitution- A constitution is a plan that provides the rules for government. A constitution serves several major purposes.

1. It sets out ideals that the people bound by the constitution believe in and share.
2. It establishes the basic structure of government and defines the government's powers and duties.
3. It provides the supreme law for the country. Constitutions provide rules that shape the actions of government and politics.

-Constitutional government- It refers to a government in which a constitution has authority to place clearly recognized limits on the powers of those who govern. Thus, constitutional government is limited government.

-Preamble- Most constitutions contain a statement that sets forth the goals and purposes to be served by the government. This statement is called the preamble. The preamble to the United States Constitution states the major goals of American government.

-Framework for Government- The main body of a constitution sets out the plan for government. It also describes the relationship between the national government and state governments. Most written constitutions also describe the procedure for amending, or changing, the constitution.

-The Highest Law- Constitutions provide the supreme law for states. A constitution is usually accepted as a superior, morally binding force. **Constitutional law** involves the interpretation and application of the constitution. Constitutional law primarily concerns defining the extent and limits of government power and rights of citizens

## Day 3

### Politics and Government

-Politics- The effort to control or influence the conduct and policies of government is called politics. The Constitution did not prevent the development of politics because politics and government are closely related. In fact, a major political struggle developed over the ratification of the Constitution itself. People are taking part in politics when they

join a citizens' group protesting higher taxes or when they meet with the mayor to ask the city to repave the streets in their neighborhood.

-Seeking Government Benefits- Participation in politics arises because people realize that government has the potential to influence their lives in many ways. In large, diverse nation like the United States, there is a continual struggle over what benefits and services government should provide, how much they should cost, and who should pay for them. Through politics, individual and groups seek to maximize the benefits they get from government while they try to reduce the costs of these benefits.

-Importance of Politics- Through politics, conflicts in society are managed. As people seek rewards and benefits, politics provides a peaceful way for them to compete with one another. The outcomes of politics affect such key matters as the quality of air and water, economic conditions, peace and war, and the extent of citizens' rights and freedoms.

-Governing in the Twentieth Century-Because of great inequalities among countries, the world today is full of contrasts. The United States and about 20 other states, such as Japan, Canada, Australia, and France, are industrialized nations. Industrialized nations have generally large industries and advanced technology that provide a more comfortable way of life than developing nations do. Developing nations are only beginning to develop industrially. More than 100 developing nations have average per capita, or per person, incomes that are a fraction of those of industrialized nations. In the poorest countries, starvation, disease, and political turmoil are a way of life. Many states of Africa south of the Sahara and of Southeast Asia are developing nations.

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-Growing Interdependence- Interdependence means that nations must interact with or depend on one another, especially economically and politically. The larger countries of North America-Canada, Mexico, and the United States-are developing greater economic, social, and political ties. In 1993 the United States signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which linked North America in a far-reaching trade partnership that affected goods produced and sold between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Many of the developing states have become very dependent on the industrialized ones for economic aid, medical supplies and services, financial investment, assistance to cope with natural disasters and military aid. For example, because of its friendly relationship with Kuwait and its dependence on Middle Eastern oil, the United States led a defense of Kuwait, defeating Iraq in the Persian Gulf War of 1991. In 1970 United States exports of goods and services were more than \$62 billion, while imports were nearly \$60 billion. By 2000 United States yearly exports climbed to more than \$950 billion, and imports passed the one trillion mark.

-Nonstate International Groups-These nonstate groups fall into three categories: 1. Political movements such as national liberation organizations; 2. multinational corporations; and 3. international organizations. Nonstate groups play major roles in international affairs because they impact policies and decisions of the diverse states of the world.

-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)- maintain diplomatic relations with many states.

-Multinational corporations are huge companies with offices and factories in many countries. They do carry out their activities on a global scale, selling their products worldwide and entering into agreements with foreign governments. Thus, multinational

corporations influence international politics and the internal decisions of their host countries.

-The modern world includes many international organizations. These groups range from the United Nations (UN) to more specialized organizations such as the International Sugar Council and the Universal Postal Union.

Day 5

“Types of Government”

-The US has established a representative democracy that serves as a model for government and inspires people around the world. Students in China in 1989 marched for “government of the people, by the people, and for the people” yet other forms of government outnumber true democracies. Over the centuries, people have organized their governments in many different ways. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the ruling royal family controls the government and its resources. Family members choose the king from among themselves. In Burkina Faso in Africa, a small group of wealthy landowners and military officers governs that country. In Sweden the people elect the Riksdag, the national legislature, which in turn selects the prime minister to carry out the laws.

-Major Types of Government- 1. Autocracy- rule by one person; 2. oligarchy- rule by a few persons, or 3. Democracy-rule by many persons

-Autocracy- Historically, most autocrats have maintained their positions of authority by inheritance or the ruthless use of military or police power. Several forms of autocracy exist. One is an absolute or totalitarian dictatorship. In a totalitarian dictatorship, the ideas of a single leader or group of leaders are glorified. Monarchy is another form of autocratic government. Absolute monarchs have complete and unlimited power to rule their people. The king of Saudi Arabia, for example, is such an absolute monarch. Today some countries, such as Great Britain, Sweden, Japan, and the Netherlands, have constitutional monarchs. These monarchs share governmental powers with elected legislatures or serve mainly as the ceremonial leaders of their governments.

-Oligarchy- Communist nations have this. Leaders in the Communist Party and the armed forces control the government. Such governments may try to give the appearance of control by the people. For example, they might hold elections, but offer only one candidate, or control the election results in other ways. Such governments may also have some type of legislature or national assembly elected by or representing the people. As in a dictatorship, oligarchies usually suppress all political opposition sometimes ruthlessly.

-Democracy- A democracy is any system of government in which rule is by the people. The key idea of democracy is that the people hold sovereign power. Abraham Lincoln captured this spirit best when he described democracy as “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” A democracy requires that all people be as free as possible to develop their own capacities. Government in a democracy works to promote the kind of equality in which all people have an equal opportunity to develop their talents to the fullest extent possible.

-Republic- voters hold sovereign power. Elected representatives who are responsible to the people exercise that power.

Day 6

## “Economic Theories”

-Economics-the study of human efforts to satisfy seemingly unlimited wants through the use of limited resources

-Role of Economic Systems-All economic systems must make three major economic decisions: 1. what and how much should be produced 2. how goods and services should be produced 3. who gets the goods and services that are produced.

-There are 3 types of economic systems in the world Capitalism, Socialisms, and communism

-Capitalism- At one end of the spectrum is an economic system in which freedom of choice and individual incentive for workers, investors, consumers, and business enterprises is emphasized. This system is usually referred to as free enterprise, or capitalism. Pure capitalism has five main characteristics 1. private ownership and control of property and economic resources; 2. free enterprise; 3. competition among businesses 4. freedom of choice 5. the possibility of profits.

-Ideas of Capitalism- 1. the idea that people could work for economic gain. Second is the idea that wealth should be used aggressively.

-Free Market- means that buyers and sellers are free to make unlimited economic decisions in the marketplace.

-In 1776 Adam Smith a Scottish philosopher and economist, provided a philosophy for this new system. Smith described capitalism in his book “The Wealth of Nations” From the writings of Smith and others came the basic idea of laissez-faire economics. Laissez-faire, a French term, means “to let alone.” According to this philosophy, government should keep its hands off the economy. The government’s role is strictly limited to those few actions needed to ensure free competition in the marketplace. In a free-enterprise or pure market economy, economic decisions are made by buyers (consumers) and sellers (producers). Sellers own businesses that produce goods or services. The answer to the question of what to produce is determined in the marketplace by the actions of buyers and sellers, rather than by the government. Consumers compete one another to buy what they want and need.

-Governments Influence- In the US the nation’s government has grown, it has become the single largest buyer of goods and services in the country. Since the early 1900’s the US government has increasingly regulated the economy for various purposes. The Meat Inspection Act and Pure Food and Drug Act were early attempts by government to protect the consumer. The Great Depression of the 1930’s left millions of Americans without jobs. The national government set up the Social Security system, programs to aid the unemployed, and a variety of social programs.

-Mixed Market Economy- is an economy in which free enterprise is combined with and supported by government decisions in the marketplace. Even though it is a mixed market economy the American economic system is rooted deeply in the idea of individual initiative that each person knows what is best for himself or herself. It also respects the right of all persons to own private property and it recognizes that freedom to make economic choices is a part of the freedom of political choice.

-Socialism

- distribution of wealth

- public ownership of most land, factories, and production

- government controls major decisions about production
- democratic Socialism- the people control the government, which controls the means of production
- Communism
  - economic decisions made by govt.
  - govt. control of production, transportation, and distribution