CHAPTER ONE

RADICALISM AND THE RATIONAL SOCIETY: THE PLURALIST VIEW

The Social Roots

Modern pluralism emerged as American intellectuals, mainly ex-radical, responded to the events of their youth and the pressures of the 1950's. The rise of communism and fascism in Europe had forcefully suggested the similarities between the extreme Right and the extreme Left and the dangers of mass movements. The moderate New Deal, on the other hand, succeeded in giving American capitalism a reasonable and stable basis. Thus drastic social change seemed not only terribly dangerous but also unnecessary.

But many of the thinkers with whom we are concerned remained critical of American society as a whole through World War II, perhaps sustained by the hopes for a new world pervasive during that war as during the previous one. These hopes soon exhausted themselves as the cold war and the rise of McCarthyism finally deadened the radical impulses of the pluralists:[1] the country now had to be defended against attack from without and within. McCarthy threatened the stability of the society to which the pluralists were becoming reconciled; in his attack on intellectuals he threatened the rapprochement itself. The pluralists now sought values in traditions of mainstream America with which they could

identify. They attributed to peripheral, radical movements the diseases they had previously located at the heart of the American ethos.[2]

The Intellectual Heritage

Writing at the height of the McCarthy hysteria, Edward Shils located the danger of McCarthyism in the "populist" tradition; American pluralism, he felt, saved us from the Senator and his following. A few years later, in *The Politics of Mass Society,* William Kornhauser echoed this counterposition between the Populist-McCarthy heritage and the pluralist tradition.[3] Many others who have connected McCarthyism to agrarian radicalism have also defended pluralism.[4]

An elaborate pluralist theory would inevitably include doctrines that individual pluralists would reject. Nevertheless, those placing McCarthy in an agrarian radical tradition seem to share certain common assumptions and underlying preoccupations. The effort here is not so much to be faithful to the ideas of each individual pluralist as it is to analyze an "ideal-typical" pluralism.[5]

Modern pluralism, I will argue, is not simply a defense of shared power or a sympathy for diverse values but also a theory of history in which industrialization is the major actor. Industrialization destroys traditional stability, but the success of industrialization enables group politics to dominate a society. Mass politics is defined by its orientation to the institutions and norms of industrial society. Group politics does not eliminate political moralism but rather directs it to its proper concern — social cohesion in a constitutional, industrial society. Group politics is the conflict not among groups but among group leaders, socialized into the dominant values and associations of industrial society. Pluralism does not extend its tolerance for diversity to mass movements and anti-industrial attitudes felt to threaten the conditions of diversity.

The pluralist defense of modern industrial society brings

together three strands of political thought. From traditional liberalism — through Weber — it borrows the concern for rationality. Liberalism united an impersonal society with self-interested individuals, and pluralism values this combination. From traditional conservatism — through Durkheim and mass theory — it borrows the need for an ordered society. Like conservatism, pluralism fears the unattached individual. From traditional pluralism — Figgis, Laski, Cole — it borrows the reliance on groups. It combines these elements to arrive at a normative and descriptive social theory aimed at the stability of the social system.

But each of these traditions was double-edged and pointed in the direction of liberty as well as order. The liberals, in atomizing society, aimed to liberate the individual from a multiplicity of group coercions. The conservatives feared that the rationalization of society destroyed the freedom that was preserved in the interstices of a hierarchical and traditional order. The traditional pluralists favored groups not to discipline their members and provide cohesion but to defend the liberty of their members against a powerful state. Modern pluralism accepts the liberal rationalization of traditional freedom, the conservative ordering of liberal freedom, and the group discipline of individual freedom.[6]

Consider first the pluralist transformation of mass theory. Finding roots in the conservative reaction to the French Revolution, writers such as Ortega y Gasset feared the rise of a state of the masses. In Ortega's view, nonprivileged groups in traditional society knew their place. Enmeshed in specific primary group loyalties, they recognized the special competence of elites in cultural and political affairs. The revolt of the masses threatened to destroy the privileged elites and the civilized values they preserved.[7]

Ortega had moral and aristocratic trepidations that modern pluralism has left behind. The revolt of the masses, he argued, would destroy culture and trivialize the quality of life for everyone. Modern pluralists like Bell and Shils specifically

reject this version of mass theory.[8] Moreover, in government as in the arts Ortega feared the exertion of the "material pressure" of the masses.[9] Governing required the special skills of a political elite; there was no room for the pressure group politics of pluralism.

These differences between mass theory and pluralism have a common root. For Ortega, modern industrial society ushered in the revolt of the masses; he looked to America with horror. Tearing individuals from their traditional moorings, industrial society would produce mass extremist revolts. For the modern pluralists, industrial society destroys old loyalties and groups; but it also creates new ones. The new groups are more associations than communities, the new loyalties more utilitarian than traditional. But the functions they perform are similar. Thus, although the secondary associations of industrial society operate directly in politics, the pressure they exert is not equivalent to the mass pressure Ortega feared but rather a substitute for it. By putting new facts into the old analysis, the pluralists have arrived at a defense of industrial society instead of an attack on it. They stand the traditional theory of mass society on its head. Developed industrial countries like America are thus pluralist; they are not mass societies.[10]

How can theorists like Ortega who feared industrial society be used to promote its acceptance? The pluralist treatment of industrialization and bureaucratization is rooted in Max Weber's concern with the demystification of the world. By demystification, Weber meant the replacement of magical, emotional, evaluative, and traditional components of life by systematic, rational, practical modes of thought and activity.

Bureaucracies stressed norms of efficiency and impersonality. They dealt with individuals only in specific, job-oriented terms; the customer's total personality and his social position were equally irrelevant. Here is the meaning of formal equality, and it suggests that Weber's demystification of the world was in a peculiar sense also its depersonalization. Similarly,

the Protestant ethic directed individuals to systematic subordination of means to ends in the accumulation of worldly goods. Capitalism depended structurally on a bureaucratic organization of the work force and psychologically on an instrumental orientation to worldly activity. A bureaucratic and capitalist society limited the permeation of everyday activity by ultimate moral standards. Those with an instrumental orientation judged everything by its use as a means. Moreover, means themselves became more rational. An instrumental society not only avoided questions of ultimate ends; it also minimized commitment to irrational means. Individuals became more concerned with discovering rational ways to achieve their ends. This concern permeated politics as well as personal affairs. Political groups became less likely to make self-contradictory demands, irrational in the specific and dangerous sense that the means would not achieve the ends. In Weber's instrumental society, political opponents could be "reasoned" with because their efforts to seek their ends were rational. Bargaining and compromise became possible.[11] As long as the society worked in a practical sense, those who had accepted an instrumental (*zweck-rationalität*) orientation would not threaten its stability. The political implication of this is that there is no basis within such a society for revolutionary values. The ultimate questions of justice were no longer to be the business of politics.

For Weber, the instrumental character of industrial society was unrelieved. Here he followed in the footsteps of the Enlightenment conception of a liberal society.

The Enlightenment thinkers favored a society of individuals uncoerced by group or traditional ties. According to the old theorists of mass society, such a conception atomized society, resulting in social disorganization, mass movements, and totalitarianism.[12] This paralleled the view of Emile Durkheim.

Durkheim thought that while traditional societies had a "mechanical solidarity" (common beliefs, and traditions) modern societies joined individuals together only on the basis

of diverse functions in a common division of labor. This organic solidarity atomized the individual from his group ties and destroyed his commitment to ultimate and stabilizing values. Durkheim saw Weber's rational society but found the individuals in it isolated and lost. The society produced not instrumental activity but social disorganization and anomie.

Durkheim's cure for anomie was not a return to mechanical solidarity but the perfection of organic solidarity. When each individual knew his place in the new rational society, personal and social disorders would cease.[13] A society rational in Weber's sense would also acquire organic solidarity in Durkheim's sense. Attacks on that society would not only be irrational, they would also tear at a social fabric of great value.

Empirical research has suggested how Durkheim's theoretical supplement to Weber works in practice. Modern industrial sociologists have transformed Weber's formal and spare bureaucracy into a network of group affiliations. Modern political scientists and sociologists have discovered the importance of formal and informal groups in a bureaucratized society. In sum, industrial society produces both capitalist and bureaucratic structures and an instrumental orientation; these make rational politics possible. It creates as well the groups that integrate individuals into the rational order. Weber's society solves Durkheim's problem; modern pluralism grows out of this synthesis.

For the modern pluralists, a constitutional regime requires "traditions of civility" that tolerate a variety of interests, traditions, life-styles, religions, political beliefs, and economic activities. This diversity is safeguarded when power is shared among numerous groups and institutions. Groups provide individuals with specific channels for realizing their demands, focusing their members on the practical desires that can be realized in ordinary democratic politics. At the same time, even nonpolitical groups provide isolated individuals with a home, integrating them into the constitutional order. More-

over, when an individual belongs to many groups he cannot act in an extreme fashion in support of one group without threatening his commitment to another. He thus becomes committed in general to the society and is unable to threaten that commitment through the support of a particular extremism.

Without groups, disorder and totalitarianism are real threats according to the pluralists. Lacking a sense of community and alienated from the total society, individuals are vulnerable to mobilization by mass movements. These movements rather than focusing on concrete group demands to improve the individual's position in the society play upon generalized resentments stemming from the deeper layers of the personality. Mass movements arise from the desperation, rootlessness, and irrational longings of isolated individuals. Their targets are scapegoats, and the solutions they propose are either harmless but pointless panaceas or else threaten to destroy the constitutional regime. Mass politics involve irrationality and chaos; group politics produce sensible and orderly conflict.*

The intellectual heritage of pluralism suggests that the theory is not simply a defense of diverse groups sharing power but also an analysis and defense of tendencies within modern industrial society. Pluralism requires more than diversity; it requires as well the consensus and orientations of modern industrial society to protect and limit that diversity. Herein

* Politics in industrial society is rational for the pluralists in four interrelated senses. First, political demands are not rationalizations for underlying frustrations. Since their manifest content is what counts, they can be handled rationally. Second, people are rational about means. They seek those that will achieve their ends; they think instrumentally. Third, individuals concern themselves with short-run, self-interested goals; rationality and self-interest become synonymous here. Finally, political ends are not utopian; they can be achieved within the framework of the existing social order. The politics of those who long for the return of the traditional, preindustrial way of life are irrational on all four counts; and this desire is at the root of much political irrationality.

lies the key to certain difficulties apparent in a more detailed examination of pluralism itself. Three problems are of particular concern — the relations between groups and the public interest, between groups and mass movements, and between multiple group affiliations and political moderation. In each case, the explicit analysis focuses on groups, but industrialization is the often inarticulate major premise. In each case, explicit reliance on groups produces apparent contradictions resolved only when industrial society as a whole enters the picture.

Group Politics and the Public Interest

For a wing of liberalism that extends from Adam Smith to David Truman, politics is rational when no one worries about social goals.[14] Individuals and groups pursuing their own interests preserve social cohesion in the good society.

In Smith's world, there is no politics because there is no power; the laws of the market are supreme. Truman's world seems eminently political for is not the essence of politics bargaining, compromise, and the reconciliation of group differences? But in a larger sense, Truman's group equilibrium corresponds to the invisible hand. Since power is shared among many groups, the outcome of group conflict corresponds to the desires of the organized citizenry. There is no need for a specific political attention to the public interest because politics regulates itself.

Truman defines out of existence any conflict between groups and the public interest. Since groups are "shared attitudes," all political actors can be called groups. Since versions of the public interest can only be rationalizations for group goals, the public interest cannot exist apart from group interests. The pluralists I am concerned with reaffirm the common identity of group politics and the public interest not by definition but because they are terribly afraid of the catastrophic conesquences of nongroup politics. Kornhauser, for

example, distinguishes between mass politics, concerned with general, remote, and moral objects, and pluralist politics, concerned with immediate and particular objects. The alternative to group determination of public policy is the influence of the irrational mass.[15] Similarly, Bell has contrasted "market" and "ideological" decisions. The former are based on the rational self-interest of the individual or group, the latter on a purpose clothed in moral terms and deemed important enough to override individual self-interest. The danger "is that political debate moves from specific interest clashes, in which issues can be identified and possibly compromised, to ideological tinged conflicts that polarize the groups and divide the society."[16]

Finally, Lipset and Hofstadter have distinguished between class and status politics. Class politics is any kind of economic group politics, whether of broad, economic classes or narrow, economic interest groups. In either form, it is group-based and economically self-interested, lacking the ideological, revolutionary connotations provided by Marx. By contrast, status politics is not the politics of organized groups but of status groups — the young, the downwardly mobile, the third-generation Americans, the ancient New England families. Status politics is, in Hofstadter's words, "the clash of various projective rationalizations arising from status aspirations and other personal motives." To the pluralists, vague feelings of status insecurity explain the support for such movements as the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's and McCarthyism in the 1950's. Specific political programs to meet status resentments are generally difficult to envision; it is not a simple economic matter of wanting higher minimum wages or subsidies to the ship industry. Status concerns therefore tend to result in irrational political programs, whose manifest content has little relation to the fears that produced them.[17]

Status politics are seen as ideological mass politics; class politics are the politics of the market world and the group process. Politics divorced from group self-interest endangers

constitutional stability. The defense of self-interested politics seems at the heart of pluralism and is reinforced, paradoxically enough, by pluralist psychology.

Pluralist psychology is rooted in the studies of the authoritarian personality first prominent in the book of that name.[18] The psychology of *The Authoritarian Personality* has specific psychoanalytic roots which need not concern us here. In general, the pluralists are indebted to Freud for uncovering the hidden, nonrational layers of the human personality. For the pluralists, the unconscious explains the great human capacity for extreme and antirational behavior — from fascist sadism and mass murder to episodes of mob violence to milder forms of hero worship and political emotion. Nothing seems further from the behaviorist utilitarian psychology of the Smith, Bentham, Bentley tradition. In two ways, however, pluralist psychology goes back to that tradition.

In the first place, the concern for psychology has meant a shift away from more strictly political and structural concerns. Psychological attitudes become a main basis for predicting social behavior. Political programs, even positions in the political arena, become less important. Thus Lipset relies on psychological evidence of authoritarianism to demonstrate working-class political authoritarianism. That there should be a vital connection between the psychological makeup of individual workers and the political demands of workers and their organizations is not immediately obvious; yet Lipset virtually assumes the relevance of the psychological material.[19]

The psychology is different, but the method of analysis goes back to the utilitarians. The utilitarians also paid little attention to tradition, history, or position in the social structure in explaining political behavior. A knowledge of human psychology was sufficient to understand and arrange political institutions; the pleasure-pain calculus was at the root of politics. But if both the pluralists and the utilitarians have a psychological model of political behavior, then the resulting

political analyses, based as they are on such contrasting psychologies, must be very different.

Here the pluralists discard utilitarian individualism in order to reaffirm its rationalistic premises. They argue that political behavior in certain situations cannot be predicted directly from psychological attitudes. Where individuals are members of groups, group involvement and multiple group loyalties take over from depth psychology. In a structured situation, individuals are supplied with relatively well-defined roles; their psychological traits become less relevant. Moreover, groups direct the attention of their members away from the political satisfaction of deep-seated psychological grievances and toward bread-and-butter goals. In a meaningful psychological sense, groups control their members and make them rational.[20] By controlling individuals, groups permit the natural harmony of Adam Smith to be re-established on the group level. A society of competing groups not only solves the problem of isolation caused by the Smithian society; it also takes into account depth psychology without sacrificing the invisible hand. The invisible hand worked for Smith because men behaved rationally. For the pluralists men may be irrational, but groups impose rationality. The state therefore need not step in, and no politics of the public interest are necessary.

The psychology and sociology of the pluralists tell them that certain moral concerns are authoritarian and threaten existing institutions. But their psychology and sociology, used in the main to attack moralistic politics and defend groups, are also used crucially to defend a particular kind of moral politics. The moral politics defended are those resulting in the social cohesion of modern industrial society; the root pluralist fear is of mass passion over public policy, not of concern for the public interest per se.

For example, the pluralists praise the educated, eastern opponents of McCarthy for their commitment to law, established procedures, and social cohesion, devoid of any par-

ticular interests it serves for them. Similarly, the pluralists make the point that political conflicts have shifted from economic issues to matters of foreign policy, civil liberties, and so on. But this means that all politics concerned with these issues, not only McCarthyism, is status politics. If McCarthy is damned for concern with noneconomic questions, what can one say of his educated, eastern opponents? Indeed, Hofstadter's interpretation of the progressive movement in status political terms rests on the assertion that the progressives were afraid that new wealth was destroying old social institutions. Yet Hofstadter, and more clearly Riesman and Glazer, fear McCarthyism as a movement of new wealth against established institutions.[21] Their fear of McCarthyism parallels progressive anxieties. In thus reflecting progressive concerns, Riesman, Glazer, and Hofstadter not only exhibit status politics but the particular status politics of the progressives.

Because of their fear of the damage that an extremist movement can do, many of the pluralists seem to long for an autonomous political elite that stands above the group struggle and keeps that struggle from getting out of hand.[22] They desire a class for which the self-interested and nonmoral strictures do not apply. Questions which are remote to most people would be proximate to them. Thus Kornhauser quotes Schumpeter's description of a man's proximate objects as "the things under his personal observation . . . for which he develops the kind of responsibility that is induced by a direct relation to the favorable or unfavorable effects of a course of action.[23] For most people, this criterion excludes the broad questions of national and international politics. For the sophisticated political elite it would not. Are these broad questions with moral implications the legitimate group province of the pluralist elite? This elite is to be immune from "populistic" mass pressure. Is it not therefore insulated from the immediate pressures of group politics as well?*

* It could be argued that the pluralists favor intervention to safeguard the public interest only when the rules of the game of group

Group Politics and Mass Movements

In pluralist eyes, mass movements pose a major threat to social cohesion. But how are mass movements to be distinguished from groups when both end the anomie of isolated individuals? The distinction may seem obvious enough, but it is far from easy to categorize. Pluralist efforts to present such a distinction rely on contrasts in political demands, political styles, political methods, and in who is organized. The simplest contrast between mass movements and pressure groups focuses on their demands. Mass movements are said to make moralistic rather than economic demands, and to have broad programs rather than narrow, specific ones. They concentrate on matters remote from the daily experience of their members rather than on issues of "proximate" concern.[24] But such relatively straightforward distinctions are hardly satisfactory. The Townsendites and the Poujadists both exhibited "mass" characteristics in spite of their narrow, economic demands. On the other hand, groups organized on a narrow constituency — the AMA, for example — are often moralistic. The Anti-Saloon League, classic case of a single-issue pressure group, was both moralistic and extreme. And what could be of more "proximate" interest to the Luddites than the machines they smashed?

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politics are threatened. But their own writing does not suggest so restrictive an interpretation. Moreover, the line between substantive and procedural intervention is far from easy to draw in practice, particularly when procedure is defined not in clear formal terms (secret ballot, majority election, and so forth) but in the less operational senses of tolerating opposition, following precedent, and respecting elite autonomy.

Consider foreign affairs, for example. In foreign policy, the nation as a whole and its interests are at stake; hence foreign policy may be included in the "nongroup" sphere of politics. Note that the school of political realism, which derides the concept of national interest at home, derides the possibility of anything else in foreign policy. "National interest" switches from a fuzzy rationalization to a hard political concept. This can be understood in terms of the two types of pluralist rational politics just sketched.

To distinguish mass movements from pressure groups by whom they organize also runs into difficulties. Mass movements are said to recruit the previously unorganized, those least integrated into the organizations and institutions of society.[25] On the other hand, they are said to make appeals that cut across existing political and economic cleavages, uprooting people from *existing* allegiances.[26] It may be that those who are uprooted were less involved in the first place, but this suggests the relevance, not simply of group involvement but of a general involvement in and allegiance to the norms of the wider society. Those more committed to the constitutional, industrial society are less mobilizable by mass movements.

Ultimately, pluralists distinguish groups from mass movements by their degree of commitment to constitutional values. Group politics is the politics of trial and error, compromise and restraint. It looks upon the political arena as a contrivance of human ingenuity, with many spheres outside of and irrelevant to politics. Mass movements are said to see a sole and exclusive truth in politics. Political ideals are part of a preordained system of philosophy, which it is the job of the movement to enforce. Mass movements are therefore intolerant of opposition, denying legitimacy to points of view other than their own. Emotional and supremely confident, mass movements love violence. They seek influence through direct action — riots, strikes, marches; suspicious of parliaments, mass movements prefer the streets. Their members participate directly in politics rather than relying upon organizational leaders. Masses of men ordinarily divided by their interests are united by hysteria and emotion.

Such efforts to distinguish mass movements from groups suggest that a pluralist society depends not only upon the existence of groups but upon their orientation as well. Ultimately, the difference between mass movements and pressure groups in the pluralist analysis is that the former reject the society, desire totally to transform it, and are, in a word,

radical. However narrow in focus or economic in approach, groups that attempt to retard the development of a sophisticated, industrial order have a "mass" character.

Group Politics and Political Moderation

There is still another important method of distinguishing mass movements from pressure groups. It might be argued that mass movements are not isolated from constitutional norms per se but first and foremost from other groups in society. An isolated group is one whose members are members of no other group. Isolated groups can thus exist even if there are numbers of groups in a society. Individuals must in addition be members of more than one group and free to move from one group to another.

Why would multiple group affiliations produce moderation? The argument is that those with several group memberships are pressured in different directions by the different groups and are therefore more moderate. Since group members lack total loyalty to a single group, they restrain leaders in the exercise of group pressure. This argument is superficially plausible; the evidence usually cited comes from the voting studies, which developed the notion of "cross-pressures." A cross-pressured person is one who is pressed in conflicting directions by competing loyalties. Multiple group affiliations are said to produce cross-pressures. These pressures from conflicting groups are said to moderate extremism.

But the actual evidence points in a narrower and very different direction. In the voting studies a cross-pressured person is one whose political views or social characteristics predispose him in conflicting directions with respect to his voting decision. He may be a rich Catholic or favor the Republican candidate and the Democratic issues; a woman may have a Democratic father and a Republican husband. In all cases, the cross-pressured person tends to be less likely to vote, less stable in his vote intention, less involved in political discus-

sion, and less knowledgeable about political issues. Far from being an independent moderating force, the cross-pressured person is very easily influenced. Moreover, he tends to misperceive the stands of candidates on issues. In general, cross-pressured people are not moderate through involvement but rather withdraw from politics because of conflict. Their multiple pressures lead not to rational moderation but rather to political withdrawal and confusion.[27]

The final irony is that cross-pressured people are not very likely to have multiple organizational affiliations. For example, those Democrats in Elmira in 1948 cross-pressured between Democratic party affiliation and candidate preference for Dewey were less likely to belong to organizations than the sample as a whole. And if cross-pressured people tend to misperceive the candidates' issue positions, those with organizational memberships tend to have a highly accurate picture of the candidates' positions.[28] If the cross-pressures hypothesis applied to those with multiple group affiliations, it would suggest the political apathy and irrationality of these people rather than their moderation; but it simply is not relevant to the organizationally involved.

Traditionally, the moderating influence of multiple group affiliations has been presented in terms of cross-pressured members limiting organizational leaders. However, as Stanley Rothman points out, relatively few Americans are in fact members of more than one or two groups. There is little evidence either that groups influence the attitudes of their members or that group members influence the conduct of their leaders. Members tend to be apathetic, attending few meetings and rarely participating in group deliberations. Decisions in fact are taken by self-perpetuating oligarchies.[29]

How, then, do multiple group affiliations promote constitutional stability? Apparently cross-pressured members do not moderate determined leaders. But the pluralists in fact rely not on the multiple affiliations of group members but on the characteristics of group leaders. The relatively small

number of people highly involved in group life and belonging to many organizations tend to be the very leaders and activists themselves, not the public at large or the organizational rank-and-file. Leaders of organizations and voluntary associations are more likely to have multiple group affiliations than are the members. If overlapping group memberships check the leaders of organizations, this is not a check of members on leaders but a check of leaders on themselves and each other.

Indeed, it is more than that; it is a check of leaders on members. The pluralists here stand Robert Michels on his head. Michels argued that organizations produce leaders divorced from rank-and-file control and *embourgeoised* (socialized) into the values and associations of the wider society.[30] A revolutionary writing about socialist parties, Michels viewed this development with horror. But pluralists defend the independence of leaders from rank-and-file control. Leaders have better attitudes and are better informed than ordinary citizens.[31] Leaders tend to belong to more organizations. Because of their position, leaders are thought more likely than members to be willing to compromise; they are more exposed to the demands of other groups and to the obstacles in the way of achieving their own group goals. This is not so much because they are members of the other groups; rather the existence of these groups is in the forefront of their consciousness. Leaders have to deal with other groups; members do not. Leaders develop informal contacts with various political elites. In sum, for the pluralists leaders are more likely to be socialized into the dominant values and established institutions of their society.[32]

Ultimately, pluralism is not the politics of group conflict but the politics of leadership conflict. Are these simply the leaders of pressure groups such as the Farm Bureau and the Steel Workers? Or are they in addition those educated, informed, socially involved people (primarily in the urban middle and upper classes) whose specific organizational affiliations are less important than their knowledge and values

in general? The problem of group politics and a pluralist elite has been referred to earlier; more than one road seems to suggest the elitist underpinnings of pluralist doctrine. Certainly pluralists rely less on the existence of groups than is apparent at first sight and more on the orientation of groups, on the presence of civilized values in society, and on the defense of those values by leaders equipped to protect them.

These more general considerations are also relevant in understanding why people join groups in the first place and which groups they join. Individuals may join groups which reinforce their attitudes rather than groups that overlap the relevant arena of conflict. Why does a right-wing Republican join only reinforcing groups; why does a French worker join a left-wing veterans group rather than the French equivalent of the American Legion? Indeed, how did Britain develop constitutional stability without, until recent years, the presence of cross-class organizations?[33] Overlapping group memberships seem a usual consequence rather than a cause of political stability. Is this not, in fact, what the pluralists believe — that the process of industrialization tends eventually to create values leading to overlapping group affiliation (at least among a small but vital segment of the population)?

Industrialization and Agrarian Radicalism

The relevance of pluralist theory to American history emerges most forcefully in Richard Hofstadter's *The Age of Reform*. Hofstadter's thesis is that reform movements before the New Deal were preoccupied with moral rather than "practical" questions. Populism and progressivism attempted "to save personal entrepreneurship and individual opportunity and the character type they engendered, and to maintain a homogeneous Yankee civilization." Trafficking in moral absolutes, they maintained an "exalted moral tone." Rural either in actual social composition or in roots, reformers were opposed to urbanization, industrialization, and

the growth of an instrumental society. The opponents of Populism and progressivism, those who were industrializing the society, were practically rather than ideologically inclined.

With the New Deal, this relationship was reversed. According to Hofstadter, the New Deal scorned moral formulations, did not equate good politics with personal integrity, and "showed a strong and candid awareness that what was happening was not so much moral reformation as economic experimentation." It utilized organizations, the enemies of the individualistic rural reformers, to solve pragmatic problems. The opponents of the New Deal defended personal virtue and responsibility against practical actions. If once the progressives worried about the effect of money on moral character, now the conservatives opposed unemployment relief out of the same fear. In the past, conservatives had built factories and railroads and industrialized the society while the reformers raised moral objections. Now the New Deal fed the hungry, saved the banks, and rescued the industrial society from desolation, while the conservatives greeted these practical acts with moral indignation. Pre-New Deal reform shared with post-New Deal reaction a suspicious attitude toward industrial society.[34]

Pluralist history thus cements the connection between McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism. For the pluralists, McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism directed moralistic and "mass" appeals[35] against the development of an instrumental, bureaucratized industrial order. Many of the specific similarities identified by the pluralists grow out of the alleged anti-industrial character of the movements. Shils, for example, argues that both Populism and McCarthyism opposed established elites. Yet in the Middle West and particularly in the South, Populism challenged a rising elite.[36] This apparent contradiction can be reconciled by understanding that for Shils the new elite was an industrial elite, destined to become established. Similarly, Bell has written that both Populism and the radical Right appeal to "dispossessed" groups.[37] If this

word is to mean anything different from "discontented," it would seem to refer to once-secure groups that have lost status or power. Yet Bell goes on to identify *rising* elites as sources of support for the radical Right. But Bell's rising elites, unlike Shils', are alienated from status and power in a sophisticated, industrial order.

Without more ado, one may list other similarities between McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism alleged to flow from their mass, anti-industrial character. The movements made demands for a radical reorganization of society. They enlisted a mass following that split apart existing coalitions. They had an explosive character; that is, they came to prominence in a burst and disappeared as quickly. They believed that all opposition to them was illegitimate, had a low tolerance of ambiguity, and in general exhibited characteristics associated with the authoritarian personality. More particularly, the pluralists find the movements were for the people as a mass — for nationalism and Americanism. They were against both the traditional aristocratic elites and the newer industrial elites. They were against bureaucratization; intellectuals; science; cosmopolitanism; alien influences; privacy and civil liberties; the vested interests; instrumental activity in general; compromise; the disinterested performance of duties; established institutions and procedures. Suspicious of "overeducation," they believed that knowledge should be a means to Americanism rather than an end in itself. They were jingoist and nativist. They had a conspiracy theory of history and blamed political evil on individual morality rather than on the structure of society. They lacked faith in institutions of political representation.[38]

Thus far the pluralist argument is that McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism had similar preoccupations and were analogous political movements. Their appeal was not necessarily to the same groups of people but to people similarly discontented with industrialization and with an industrial society.[39] The movements might be similar in political char-

acter but different in specific social support. Thus Lipset points out that there is no authoritarian appeal per se; left- and right-wing authoritarian movements make similar appeals but not to the same types of people.[40]

This might suggest that Populist left-wing extremism and McCarthyite right-wing extremism had different bases of social support. Nevertheless, the pluralists argue that the same social strata supported McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism. These were movements not of the Right and Left but of the Center — that is, McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism had a middle-class base in common. Moreover, within the middle class, argues Lipset, isolated and poorly educated groups are particularly prone to support extremist movements.[41] The pluralists see agrarian radical roots in McCarthyism because the movements were *petit-bourgeois.* They received the support of the small, independent, old middle class.

Martin Trow discovered disproportionate support for McCarthy in Bennington, Vermont, among those opposed to big business and big labor. He called this view nineteenth century liberalism, relating it, in good pluralist fashion, to Populist fears of concentrated industrial wealth and power. Moreover, the social stratum in Bennington most sympathetic to McCarthyism was the small business class. In nineteenth century America, the vast majority of small businessmen were farmers. The small businessmen in Bennington, particularly those with a "nineteenth century liberal" ideology, seemed to prefer an older, rural America in which individual self-help had a more direct meaning than it does in a bureaucratized society.[42] Trow's findings suggest that those supporting agrarian radical movements moved with their ideology from Populism to McCarthyism.

In the pluralist view, certain specific similarities between McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism are due to the rural, small middle-class basis they shared in common. The movements were anti-British, anti-Wall Street, anti-international

bankers, anti-eastern aristocracy. They were pro-German. They stood for the moral absolutes associated with agrarian virtue, such as personal integrity and religion. They were against bigness, favoring equal opportunity and the small producer. Calling upon the traditions of a rural, individualistic America, McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism threatened in the name of the popular will to destroy the pluralist society in which they lived.[43]

According to the pluralists, agrarian radicalism sought to reverse the processes of industrialization that would make America safe for democracy. McCarthyism challenged industrial society in the name of simpler, "purer" rural values. The specific concerns — economic hardship in the Populist case, communism for McCarthy — simply shielded the underlying hatreds and fears unleashed by McCarthyite and Populist appeals. The pluralists hardly favor outlawing such movements as McCarthyism and Populism, but they do locate these movements substantially outside the bounds of legitimate political controversy. These are movements radically challenging the rational, pluralist society.

In the abstract, the pluralist approach may seem compelling. But the conclusions of the present study fail to support it. Thus:

1. McCarthyism received the significant support of no social groups peculiarly inclined to support agrarian radicalism.

2. Populism was a mass movement but (*a*) its program and rhetoric were not anti-industrial and (*b*) its character was democratic, particularly in comparison with the industrializing "groups" that confronted it.

3. Moral indignation is not a peculiar feature of pre-New Deal reform movements but rather an essential element both of American politics in general and traditional conservatism in particular.

4. Reform moralism depended on and was related to practical proposals for social reform.

5. McCarthyism contained elements opposed to an industrial, cosmopolitan society, but these "mass" elements (*a*) composed the Senator's elite and not his mass following and (*b*) point toward McCarthyite roots not in agrarian radicalism but in traditional conservatism.

6. Unlike agrarian radicalism McCarthyism made little impact on the mass level; it influenced few voters and had its greatest success among (pluralist?) elites.

7. McCarthy's support at the popular level was the result of the cold and Korean wars in particular far more than anti-industrial sentiments and authoritarian preoccupations in general.

The present study finds little support for a simple "anti-industrial" interpretation of McCarthyism and agrarian radicalism. It fails to uncover significant agrarian radical roots in McCarthyism. These conclusions in themselves hardly invalidate pluralism as a whole. The theory is both too general and too diffuse for that. But the conclusions do suggest that pluralism, without significant refinements, distorts rather than illuminates our understanding of American politics. It is particularly ironic that pluralism, partially stimulated and rendered plausible by McCarthyism, fails to comprehend the Senator and his following.