THE POLITICAL IDEAS OF DANIEL DEFOE

by

Irving Harold Smith

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Department of History,
McGill University,
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INTRODUCTION

After more than two hundred years the reputation of Daniel Defoe has become solidly entrenched in the history of English literature. No respectable anthology of eighteenth century writing would omit mention of this considerable name, and at least a fragment of either Robinson Crusoe or A Journal of the Plague Year. Discussion of the development of the English novel generally begins with the name of Defoe: He is seen as being either the father, or as being the vital link connecting the earlier moral fable and the modern complex novel. In either case, his name and his work assume the significance of a central pivot in the history of the narrative.[1] Similarly, in the study of modern journalism, every effort is made to show the lasting imprint which he has left on the mass medium as author of the Review.[2]

And, as if to prove the growing awareness and appreciation of the literary importance of Defoe, reviews, critical articles, theses and biographies, have begun to appear in ever-growing volume, until at present, the study of Defoe, the writer, presents a formidable literature in its own right.

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[1]For Defoe and the novel see: A. Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel, (London, 1951), Vol. I, 55-63; I. Watt, The Rise of the Novel, (London, 1957).

[2]For Defoe and journalism see: W. Payne, Mr. Review, (New York, 1947).

Indeed, there are few literary areas of Defoe's works which have not been, or which are not under, close investigation. Abreast of literary research, biographical activity has uncovered much detail of a personal nature which has enabled us to frame a picture of Defoe as a man, rather than as the semi-legendary figure, who with Protean talent, played the poet, created the novel, and introduced journalism.

But, what originally began as a literary investigation has stimulated other writers to investigate Defoe's religious,[1] ethical,[2] economic[3] and social[4] ideas as well. However, the picture remains incomplete. Even among the painstaking biographical works by Wilson, Lee, Dottin and Sutherland in which, admittedly, the attempt is made to view all the facets of Defoe's complex personality, there still remains an aspect --an important aspect--which is largely unexplained; though paradoxically often referred to and commented upon.

What were the politics of Daniel Defoe--politics, that is, interpreted in its largest sense--abstract political theory and its direct effect upon practical political activity? It is odd that this important question has received such scant

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[1]Hewitt, F., Daniel Defoe: Dissenter, (Unpublished thesis Cornell, 1947).

[2]Andersen, H.H., Daniel Defoe: A Study in the Conflict Between Commercialism and Morality in the Early 18th Century, (Unpublished thesis, Chicago, 1930).

[3]Moore, J.R., Daniel Defoe and Modern Economic Theory, Indianna University Studies, (June, 1934), Vol. XXI, 3-28.

[4]Girdler, L., Daniel Defoe's Theories of Gentility, (unpublished thesis, California, Los Angeles, 1951).

attention, particularly, if we bear in mind that Defoe as a novelist made his appearance in his very late fifties. Until that moment, he was completely engaged in the implacable strife of English politics. To his contemporaries, he was pre-eminently a political pamphleteer, and only later, much later, did he gain a reputation as a diverting novelist.

The length of this active and exuberant life (Defoe was born c.1660 and died in 1731) only serves to show how one-sided the various studies of Defoe have been; how rigorously the literary mine of Defoe's writings has been worked, while the political quarry of his ideas has scarcely been scratched. At present, there are only two studies of Defoe's political views. One, by M.E. Campbell, Political Propaganda in the Early Verse of Defoe, (Published thesis, Yale 1938), is a meticulous examination of Defoe's obscure poem, A New Discovery of an Old Intreague (1691). As an example of literary detection, it is a remarkable piece of work; but it deals almost exclusively with the identification of persons and events in the poem. The second work is Miss A.E. Levett's Daniel Defoe which appeared as an essay in Social and Political Ideas of Some English Thinkers of the Augustan Age, (1650-1750), edited by F.J.C. Hearnshaw (1927-28). This essay was to give, at most, a general account of Defoe's political ideas. Of the article's thirty pages, nine pages are devoted to poli-

tical concepts and the remaining twenty-one to biographical details, and to remarks on Defoe's economic and social views. To criticize the essay for not attempting a more exhaustive treatment of Defoe's political ideas would be to misunderstand the nature of the book; but, nevertheless, the absence of any detailed examination of his political views, has caused at least two of Defoe's biographers to lean on Miss Levett's essay.[1]

The purpose of this thesis is to bring the political portrait of Defoe into sharper focus. The task is threefold: to reconstruct the political theory of Defoe; to examine his relationship to the concept of party politics; and lastly, to outline his views on foreign policy (with the exclusion of Anglo-Scottish relations).[2] No attempt will be made to trace his daily political activity unless it throws additional light on his political ideas.

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[1]James Sutherland, Defoe, (New York, 1938), 145; Brian FitzGerald, Daniel Defoe: A Study in Conflict, (London, 1954), 115.

[2]Defoe's activity in Anglo-Scottish foreign relations has been well treated in H.F. Grave's Daniel Defoe, Director of Propaganda: A Study of Defoe's Methods for Promoting the Union of Scotland and England, (Unpublished thesis, Pennsylvania, 1935). Consequently, mention is only made of Anglo-Scottish relations where some comment is necessary to round out the general view of Defoe's foreign policy.

CHAPTER I

A WHIG THEORY OF GOVERNMENT

Some Conventional Characteristics In Defoe's Writings

Defoe began his career as a pamphleteer in a rather sporadic manner; but the small, unsteady stream of tracts which he wrote at the close of the seventeenth century, soon turned into a torrential river, amounting, at the end of his career, to roughly 350 pamphlets and poems.[1] It was also during his most active pamphleteering days, that he wrote and edited the important newsheet of the early eighteenth century, the Review (February 19, 1704 - June 11, 1713), totalling approximately 5610 pages.[2] Throughout his political career Defoe carried on a prolific correspondence, ranging

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[1]The sources of Defoe's writings, in this thesis, are based on the bibliography by Professor Henry C. Hutchins, printed in The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, (Cambridge, 1940), II, 495-514. A more recent article has appeared by Professor J.R. Moore, "The Canon of Defoe's Writings", The Library, Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, 5th ser., XI (1956), 155-169. It contains additional bibliographical advice of great value.

[2]Defoe's Review was published for the Facsimile Text Society by Columbia University Press, (New York, 1938), in nine volumes containing twenty-two books.

from his own intimate circle of friends to high government personages. Recently collected, the correspondence fills a large volume of almost five hundred pages.[1] How one man could have turned out so large a quantity of written material, (leaving out entirely his contribution to the field of the novel) while struggling with the daily necessities of providing for a large family, still remains an unsolved mystery. Professor H.C. Hutchins, in a more jocular vein has suggested that Defoe must have had his own man Friday to assist him.

However, a simple numerical count of Defoe's writings can be misleading. It is true that almost all of his collected works contain some political reference. Still, the author of an article on Defoe's political thought could write: "It is by no means clear that Defoe is a political thinker in any strict sense."[2] What motivated this statement is perhaps the fact that, from all of Defoe's writings, the bulk of his theorizing is to be found in two political tracts and one lengthy poem. The first tract, Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution. Written by a Lay-Hand in the Country, For the Satisfaction of Some Neighbours, was printed early in 1689; the second tract, The Original Power of the Collective Body of

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[1] G.H. Healey, The Letters of Daniel Defoe, (Oxford, 1955).

[2] A.E. Levett, "Daniel Defoe", Social and Political Ideas of Some English Thinkers of the Augustan Age, 160.

the Peoples of England Examined and Asserted, appeared in 1701; while the poem Jure Divino, in twelve books, containing the most elaborate statement of Defoe's political theory, was published in 1706. In all, the pamphlets devoted entirely to political theory are in a disproportionate ratio when compared to the entire production achieved by Defoe at the end of his career in 1731. If Defoe is to be considered for the distinction of being called a political thinker on the basis of two pamphlets and one poem, there may be some justification for the doubt expressed in the above statement; but if his entire writings are assembled, he deserves more attention and credit. However, it should also be stated that Defoe was never entirely preoccupied with abstract political theory; on the contrary, his writings are of a specifically practical nature. There are few examples in which Defoe wrote in a purely speculative sense.

The political cauldron of party strife had reached the boiling point under Charles II, and continued to bubble until it spilled over into the reigns of William and Anne, even though the real significance of Whig and Tory had become quite meaningless after their joint victory in 1688.[1] Defoe always felt it his duty to overcome and cure the self-lacer-

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[1] H.N. Fieldhouse, "Bolingbroke and the Idea of Non-Party Government," History, XXIII (1939), 47.

ations inflicted on society by this constant political recrimination. He applied himself vigorously to explain away what he considered the dangerous confusion existing in the minds of his contemporaries. Even when he did attempt an excursion into the realm of abstract theory, it was always with an eye on some current and pressing problem affecting the society in which he lived. There is little political speculation pursued for the intellectual excitement that might titillate the withdrawn scholar. Defoe was far too involved in the daily perplexities of life, for such activity. His writings and speculations therefore, contain a purpose--an eminently practical purpose.

The skeleton of his theorizing bears close resemblance to the framework of a host of political tracts, comprising the corpus of Whig literature. He quoted freely from Bracton, Coke, Harrington, Grotius, Milton, Locke, Sidney, and gave indication of familiarity with the Leveller writing of the seventeenth century.[1] Several characteristics reappear in his writing that help to classify him as a Whig. Like all

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[1]Defoe's academic education may largely account for this. As the son of a Dissenter it was impossible for him to secure a regular university education. But it would not seem that he suffered unduly for this privation. His father was sufficiently well off to send him to a private Dissenting academy in Newington Green which was under the direction of the Reverend Charles Morton.

Unlike the average seventeenth century grammar school, with its narrow concentration on Latin and Greek, the private

good Whigs, Defoe searched for the "original contract" between king and subject; this contract was to serve as the blade with which to pare the bitter fruit of royal absolutism. Like all

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Dissenting academies showed a flexibility in traditional methods of teaching and certainly a much wider curriculum. Apart from his theological studies and classical languages, Defoe was introduced to modern languages--French, Spanish, Italian--and also history, natural science, geography, astronomy, physics, and even a type of shorthand.

More important, was the person he studied under. The Reverend Charles Morton was a graduate of Oxford, who had established some reputation for himself as a mathematician and antiquarian. He was later appointed Rector of Bilsan, in 1655. But like so many other Dissenting preachers, he was ejected from his living by the implacable Clarendon Code. He then opened his own private academy for the instruction of Dissenters children. His enemies labeled him "a rank independent." It is interesting to note that when the Reverend Morton decided to emigrate to America, he was offered the presidency of Harvard College; but apparently the authorities reconcidered and gave the position to another man. Was it because of his somewhat exaggerated political views which he had published in one of his books entitled Eutaxia? At any rate, he was made vice-president, and he taught for several years until he died in 1698.

In his own school, Reverend Morton seems to have encouraged his pupils to form "a sort of democratical government" of their own. Professor Sutherland refers to Defoe's alma mater as the "small soviet of Newington Green", while Dottin states that for the students, "Cromwell était leur Dieu et Milton leur messie".

It is also indicative of the nature of the school, that after Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685, three former fellow-students of Defoe's at Newington Green--Battersby, Hewling, and Jenkyns, were apprehended and executed. See: J. Sutherland, Defoe, 20-24; W. Freemen, The Incredible Defoe, 68-70; P. Dottin, Daniel Defoe et Ses Romans, 26; F.S. Hewitt, Daniel Defoe: Dissenter, (unpublished thesis, Cornell University) 1947.

good Whigs, Defoe insisted on the supremacy of English common law; regardless of the nature of the problem, he felt that the law would ultimately decide in the interests of the citizens of England. In a way, these two points are connected with a third. Defoe shared an important eighteenth century quality with his Whig colleagues, in believing that reason, rightly applied, would solve all problems[1]--and were not the laws the very embodiment of reason?

But Defoe was also very much a child of his age, and one outstanding characteristic in his work transcends either Whig or Tory classification. In disputing the concepts of government and obedience he relied heavily for evidence and support upon the Old and New Testaments. In a public debate he readily stated, "I agree.....the Scripture is to be regarded in this dispute above all other testimonies".[2] On the surface this may appear as a straightforward contradiction to his staunch belief in reason. But the problem is more deeply rooted than in mere mental sloppiness.

Defoe lived at that critical moment when the seventeenth century mode of thought was dissolving under the acidulous influence of the eighteenth century Enlightenment. The seventeenth century was preoccupied with the architectural

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[1]For a very good summary of 'reason' in eighteenth century society, see James Sutherland, Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry. (Oxford: 1948.)

[2] Review, Sept. 10, 1706, Vol. III, Book VII, 429.

edifice of a philosophical system based upon truths which were unalterable and axiomatic. Investigation into further regions of thought and knowledge was only possible through reason by the rigorous process of deduction. The eighteenth century Enlightenment, with its weapons of empiricism was diametrically opposed to this.[1] But it would be incorrect to assume that the men of this period joined either school with complete confidence. Quite the contrary, the philosophical makeup of the men who lived at the crossroads of the seventeenth and eighteenth century was peculiarly hybrid. Kepler, who was capable of formulations erected on the strictest empirical observations, still remained an authority on astrology. The intellectual gap between the seventeenth century philosophical system and the eighteenth century Enlightenment was difficult to bridge, and the men who attempted the ordeal found it necessary to anchor their support on two contradictory shores.[2] Defoe was no less riddled with intellectual inconsistencies than Kepler. A second reason helps to explain Defoe's dual approach to speculation. His childhood and upbringing certainly contributed to his acceptance of the sacred writings as repositories of eternal truths. As a child of intensely religious puritan parents his religious instruction

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[1] E. Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, (Beacon, 1951), 6-7.

[2] E. Cassirer, The Myth of the State, (Anchor, 1955), 369.

began at an early age and occupied, what would be considered today, a disproportionate part of his waking hours.[1] He has left us a brief glimpse of his childhood by relating an incident which happened during the early years of the reign of Charles II. The rumour that Catholicism was preparing to reconquer the nation caused many Dissenters to anticipate the danger by copying out the Bible in shorthand, in order to prevent a popish government from confiscating them:

> . . . I myself, then but a boy, worked like a horse, till I wrote out the whole Pentateuch, and then was so tired I was willing to run the risk of the rest.[2]

It is not surprising therefore, to find his writing so richly interwoven with Biblical references.

Motives produced by his historical background and his childhood environment may help to explain his insistence upon reason and his reliance on scripture. But a suspicion also arises that, as an unorthodox political thinker challenging the accepted views of monarchy and government, Defoe purposefully chose to assemble his facts from the holy writings, in order at least to parry the accusation of being either a republican anarchist or an atheist and thus to defend his reputation by the very nature of the sources used in his arguments. Insofar as these characteristics are concerned, his

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[1] James Sutherland, Defoe, 14.

[2] Review, Dec. 22, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 498.

approach is thoroughly whiggish and conventional.

The Raison D'etre of Political Theory

The raison d'etre of political theory for Defoe as stated, was not abstract investigation, but rather the necessary task of destroying two pernicious ideas: (a) Jure Divino, the absolutist creed of government; (b) Non-Resistance, the ideology of the Established Church and the Tory squire. The preoccupation with these two principles in his work (and one may add, of all other Whig theoreticians, including Locke and Sidney) is dependent on the fact that the political ghost of Sir Robert Filmer was neither laid to rest with the end of the Cromwellian experiment, nor did it confine itself to haunt the shadows of the reigns of the restoration Stuarts. On the contrary, it ostentatiously paraded itself in the bright sunlight for all to see.

In brief, Filmer had attempted to prove that the power of kings was "natural" as well as divine. It was natural in the sense that "The father governs by his own will, not by the laws and wills of his sons and servants". The first king therefore was Adam. His children in turn became hereditary kings in their own households. But it was impossible for even Filmer to suggest that the Stuart kings were the direct heirs of Adam for kingship; consequently he modified the assertion to "present kings are, or are reputed to

be, next heir to him." The phrase "are to be reputed" almost destroyed the sanctity of the monarchy. However, the paternal aroma which permeated Filmer's theory was sufficiently pleasing to the conservative elements in society who were interested in the support of an absolutist government.

The irony of Filmer's literary career is that when he died in 1653, his pamphlets and particularly Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings remained unpublished. It was not until 1679 that a volume of these was reprinted. As the exclusionist campaign intensified, the single volume was followed by the publication, in 1680, of his most famous tract Patriarcha, and it was again reprinted in a second edition, in 1685. These pamphlets were the great defences of the Stuart armoury of absolutism.

Irrespective of whether the arguments of Patriarcha are sound or unsound, realistic or unrealistic, during the 'eighties their mere existence were of the utmost importance.[1] It is distressing to read the disparaging remarks made on the Whig-Filmer controversey, for example: "The tiresome persistence with which Sidney and Locke follow this obvious argument merely shows that an absurd conclusion is a godsend which no controversialist has the heart to overlook."[2] Laski

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[1] P. Laslett, The English Revolution and Locke's Two Treatises of Government, (Cambridge Historical Journal), XII, (1956), 45-46.

[2] G.H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory, (New York, 1951), 513.

could question "Why Locke should have wasted the resourses of his intelligence upon so feeble an opponent."[1] This surely minimizes the importance of Filmer. Filmer represented the outer defence of the bastion of absolutism, and if the bastion was to be destroyed the outer defence would have to be overcome. The seriousness which Defoe attached to the Whig-Filmer controversy is clear:

> Divine Right of Government, must imply the Divine Debt of entire Submission, and a Jure Divino King, and a Passively Obedient People are Synonimous in Nature, tend to the same thing, and are constant attendants one of the other.
>
> From hence I draw this Conclusion, and I think 'tis very just--That to start the Doctrine of Divine Right in England, is a design, if possible, to restore Tyranny to this nation, and to distil such notions into the heads of the people, as may suppress the desire and love of liberty and make absolute arbitrary Government familiar, and eligible to them...[2]

Throughout his career, Defoe struck at the two pillars of absolute government, explaining to his readers and opponents alike, the dangers that lay hid in these dogmas:

> Why pray Gentlemen of the High Church, what do you Talk of Jure Divino? Do you know what you are doing? The Jure Divino of Kings will undoe the Church of England, as now Established; it will bring you all back where you were; it will return the High Commission Court; it will Disenfranchise Magdalen College, and send your

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[1] H. Laski, Political Thought in England from Locke to Bentham, (Oxford, 1955), 29.

[2] Review, Sept. 11, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 327.

> Bishops all to the Tower; if your Kings are Jure Divino, so are all their Commands, to resist them is death, Treason against Heaven; if they command you to Renounce God, sell your religion, go to Mass, turn Turk, Papist, or any thing, you must obey even for Conscience sake--What is it you are doing, Gentlemen, when you talk of Jure Divino?[1]

Against passive-obedience he was equally adamant:

> Passive-Obedience, Non-Resistance, and the Divine Right of Hereditary Succession are inconsistent with the Rights of the British Nation. . . inconsistent with the Constitution of the British Government, inconsistent with the Being and Authority of the British Parlaiment, and inconsistent with the declar'd essential Foundation, the British Monarchy--These abhorr'd Notions would destroy the inestimable Privileges of Britain, of which the House of Commons are the Glorious Conservators; they would subject all our Liberties to the Arbitrary Lust of a single Person, they would expose us to all Kinds of Tyranny, and subvert the very Foundation on which we stand--they would destroy the unquestioned Sovereignty of our Laws, which for so many Ages have triumphed over the Invasions and Usurpations of ambitious Princes; they would denude us of the beautiful Garments of Liberty, and prostitute the Honour of the Nation to the Mechanicism of Slavery--They would divest God almighty of his Praise, in giving his Humble Creatures a Right of Governing themselves, and charge Heaven with having meanly subjected Mankind to the Curse of Tyranny which he himself abhors.[2]

He expressly dedicated himself thus:

> My, brief Resolution is this; While I

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[1] *Review*, Sept. 13, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 330.

[2] *Review*, Jan. 10, 1710, Vol. VI, Book XV, 473.

> live, they may be assured, I shall never desist doing my Duty, in exposing the Doctrines that oppose God and the Revolution; such as Passive-Submission to Tyrants, and Non-Resistance in Cases of Oppression.[1]

On Patriarchal Government

In order to disprove the validity of Jure Divino and Non-Resistance, Defoe proposed to investigate the history of early government, and the institution of kingship. But he was very brief in his comments on ancient government, the bulk of which are to be found in his major political poem Jure Divino. He began his discussion with the question:

> But how did Families and Nations rise,
> Join for Defence and form Societies?[2]

As for the family, it was the original social unit of government, with the father acting as governor:

> In the paternal right no man could reign,
> Farther than his own Household did contain;
> . . . . . .
> Wise Providence, that all events foreknew,
> Directs the world their safety to pursue:
> While in the infant--ages of the kind,
> Nature to first Paternal Rules confin'd;
> The men untainted, and their number few,
> The Patriarchal government might do.[3]

For Defoe, this society where men were "untainted" was quite ideal. It was a world untrammeled by monarchs, complex government or suffocating laws:

> First Government was Natral and Free,

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[1] Review, Preface, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XIV.

[2] Jure Divino, Book II.

[3] Ibid, Book II.

And fixt in Patriarchal Majesty.[1]

But eventually this "untainted" society failed to function properly. The pastoral scene of a peace-loving people changed to:

> Eternal feuds the petty lords invade,
> To lust and crime, by lust and crime betray'd.

A note appended to these lines explains: "This plain . . . that Patriarchal power was not adapted to rule great nations, but that infinite Feuds and Petty wars would succeed, which must end in conquest and monarchy".[2] Even in the light of this brief statement, however, the causes for the failure of early society to function properly remain uncertain. And clearly, Defoe himself was unsatisfied with his casual explanation, that a growing population produced entangling complexities which a simple patriarchal form of government failed to cope with. But he did not leave the problem hanging in mid-air. Instead he fell back upon the resources of Christian theology, strongly tinctured with eighteenth century concepts.

Loss Of Reason - The Original Sin

In this ancient ideal society, according to Defoe, God had given man laws to guide his spiritual life:

> Th' immortal Laws of Moral Right were giv'n,
> As guides of Conduct by indulgent Heaven.[3]

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[1] Jure Divino, Book II.

[2] Ibid, Book II.

[3] Ibid, Book II.

These laws were revealed in the sacred books and answered all the questions that the spiritual nature of man could ask. But for the daily exigent problems of life he had given man reason. And man had only to exercise his faculty of reason in order to solve the problems that arise in the secular world:

> But, as to Government, he left him Free,
> Nature directed: Rules of Politie;
> Needless to Dictate, to his Reason known,
> 'Twas in himself, the Hint was all his own.[1]

It would be incorrect to attribute this view to Defoe's originality. These sentiments of boundless confidence in reason are typical eighteenth century characteristics. Nevertheless, this idea provided Defoe with a foundation upon which he could proceed to erect his political theory. Now he could explain the origin of tyranny and its trappings of Jure Divino.

As a sincere Protestant Dissenter, but also as a child of the Enlightenment Defoe interpreted the story of the fall of man:

> Without doubt, the capacious understanding, with which man was at first indu'd, sunk into darkness of mind at his fall, the powers, or faculties of his soul, were contracted, in their operations, and clouded in their prospects, and Man became an enquiring creature that wanted instruction, and stood in need of experience, and all common Helps to improve him, and to recover the illumination.[2]

In a sense , Defoe conceived of the fall of man and his loss

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[1] Jure Divino, Book II.

[2] Ibid, Book VII.

of reason as the original sin. Incapable of correct reasoning the ideal society of man gave way to "eternal feuds" and to "lust and crime". Out of this degradation came all men's woe:

> Tis not at all improper to observe that
> the fall of Man having made him a Slave to the
> Devil, Man grew something Diabolical him-
> self, and strove to practice a synonimous
> power over his fellow Creatures, etc., to
> imitate the Devil in Tyrannizing o'er one
> another.[1]

And so the final result of this fall through the loss of reason had been that:

> Nature has left this Tincture in the Blood,
> That all men would be Tyrants if they cou'd:
> If they forbear their neighbours to devour,
> Tis not for want of Will, but want of power;
> . . . . . .
> The only safety of society,
> Is, that my Neighbours just as proud as I;
> Has the same will and wish, the same design,
> And his Abortive Envy ruines mine;
> . . . . . .
> We're all alike, we'd all ascend the Skies,
> All wou'd be Kings, all Kings would Tyrannize.[2]

After demonstrating the idyllic existence of society before the fall, Defoe was anxious to illuminate the political path back to the good society. It would appear that Defoe was sincere in the belief that:

> Had he in State of innocence remain'd,
> His happiness had all that's Good contain'd;
> No property, no Right or Wrong had known;
> Each man had all the world and all his own.[3]

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[1] Jure Divino, Book VII.

[2] Ibid, Introduction.

[3] Ibid, Book V.

Any further discussion would have been totally irrelevant. After having presented his view of patriarchal society and its eventual failings, he proceeded to the next stage of man's political history--an analysis of kingship.

On Kingship

Defoe expected the most stubborn resistance to his theory of kingship. The sacredness of monarchy in the mind of High Church men and High Flyers alike was well known. Perhaps this accounts for his particularly biting remarks on the subject. Defoe pointed out that the advocates of absolute government, relied heavily on two arguments: Firstly, that Divine Right was an ancient institution with a great historical tradition; and secondly, that English men had always obeyed their kings without resistance. He scarcely had to exert himself to show how unhistorical the second argument actually was. Defoe saw English history as a continual battle against growing monarchy. He would never allow his opponents to forget, that we "have depos'd two Sacred Kings, whose Right was unquestion'd, (Viz. Edward II and Richard II);" and the constant "Baronial wars against encroaching Sovereigns;" and that more recently, we "have invited the Prince of Orange with an Army at his heels, to call our Monarch to Account for Male-Administration".[1] Surely this was not the soil in which non-resistance

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[1] *Review*, Jan. 14, 1710, Vol. VI, Book XVI, 481-482.

could take root!

But in regard to the first argument, that tradition was a sufficient reason for preserving absolute monarchy, Defoe had nothing but contempt. He refused to be bound by:

> Custom the bastard of antiquity,
> The Light that Error cozens Coxcombs by;

and he refused to imitate those who would:

> . . . make us like some Modern Rakes appear,
> Who will be damn'd because their Fathers were.[1]

His greatest scorn he reserved for the view that religion itself supported divine right. This he considered sacriligious. Deceitful persons had always tried to cover their ungodly actions by appealing to religious sentiments:

> As to the pretence of Religion, tis confess'd all sides make use of it, Kings to oppress their subjects, people to rebell against their sovereigns; kings to obtain new crowns, subjects to transpose their allegiances; . . . Thus God almighty is jested with, and banter'd of all sides, and Religions made the Foot-ball of Princes, to be kicked about the world as it suits their occasions, to gloss over the worst of Treason, Sanctify the horridest Villanies, and be a Cloack to all the Tyrannies in the world.[2]

Throughout his career Defoe continued to marvel that:

> Religion is certainly the usefullest thing in the world, whether honestly or politically considered; no engine, no artifice comes up to the turns and tricks of those that make use of it to carry on their arguments. These spiritual engineers make

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[1] Jure Divino, Book IV.

[2] Review, July 29, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 182.

> religion serve to so many uses, and answer so many ends, more than it was appointed for, that it gives a wonderful, testimony of its Divine Original, in that it is not quite lost, stigmatiz'd and exploded, as the Ignis fatuus of mankind, and the vilest Legerdemain in the world.[1]

But these critical assertions did not prevent Defoe from using the holy writings for his own purposes. When he came to investigate the nature of kingship, he relied almost exclusively on the Bible.

His first observation was that for almost sixteen

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[1] Review, Oct. 10, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 266. The contempt he felt for what he termed "Royal Religion" can be seen in the statement: "Royal Religion! a demonstration of a vacum in nature, a salamander in the fire, Lawyers honestly, Jews charity, Turkish humanity, a brutes abstinence, a priests continence, or a Whore's maiden-head." Royal Religion. Being Some Enquiry After the Piety of Princes, (1704), 3.

It would appear that Defoe was willing to eliminate religion entirely as a factor to be considered in contemporary politics. Whereas the attitude of Louis XIV to the Huguenot was generally seen from a religious angle, Defoe wrote as though the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was a political move in the game of statecraft: ". . . banishing his Protestant subjects was the highest piece of Politicks and the best step as to him, that ever was taken in that kingdom. . ." Review, July 29, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 181. The only sanctity that surrounded Divine Right was power--if it had it:

> Title and Rights an empty formal word;
> And all the Jus Divinum's in the Sword;
> The Crowns a Hieroglyphick to the Steel,
> Subjects may think of this, but that they feel;
> 'Tis force supports the High Tyrannick Test
> And Men obey, because they can't resist.
>
> Jure Divino, Book II.

hundred years, from the Creation to the Deluge, kings did not rule God's people; but they did rule amongst the surrounding populations:[1]

> . . . Nimrod (who we account the first Monarch) being a prudent and ambitious Man, laying hold of the Stupidity and Perverseness of the people, projected to him self this scheme of Sovereignty; telling them, That if they would put themselves under his obedience, he would protect them against the power of God . . . they, willing rather to trust one they could converse with, than that God who had so lately destroyed the world, submit to his proposal.[2]

The antiquity of the kingship is thus challenged, or at any rate weakened, and it is shown that society could function for long periods without the surveillance of kings.

The discovery that monarchy was not the original form of government, presented the second problem. From whence came kings? And, of course, a great deal depended upon this question. Searching the Old Testament, Defoe reached the conclusion that the request for a king came originally from the people. The appropriate verse, ". . . we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king,"[3] seemed to prove that the initiative was taken by the entire people.[4] However, Defoe was not certain whether God was even then willing to sanction

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[1] Reflections upon the Late Great Revolution, 10.

[2] The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, (1704), 11.

[3] I Samuel 12:19.

[4] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 11.

monarchy, but rather complied as with the case of divorce -- permitting it but not approving of it.[1] Step by step, Defoe attempted to transform kingship, which in the contemporary mind was hedged with divinity, into a mortal institution of purely practical significance.[2]

In order to carry out this transformation, he seized upon all the available evidence in the Bible showing the people as the prime movers in the political drama--initiating the request for kings, and actually setting up kings by their own action. This second factor lent to the people a certain superiority. Quoting from both cases of Saul and David, he pointed out that the choice of a king was a form of elective process. Even if, in these cases, God ordained the king, it was nevertheless the people who legitimatized the ceremony.[3] "God himself appointed, the prophet proclaimed, but the people's assent was the finishing the royal authority of the first king of Israel."[4] Instead of the people meekly accepting a humble position under the paternal watch of an absolute king, Defoe was able to write ". . . when God almighty does the most directly and immediately raise a single person or family, the

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[1]Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 10, See also The Protestant Jesuit Unmasked, 20.

[2]Ibid, 12.

[3]Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 13.

[4]The Original Power of the Collective Body, 133.

people are his instruments to do it, and bring it about . . ."[1] Scriptural evidence also tended to support the view that, after the coronation ceremonies, the king was hardly entrenched so as to be able to command perpetual obedience from successor to successor. ". . . God does not tye himself to a family or line."[2] The Divinity's reluctance to perpetuate a royal family contains the clue to the social contract. Where Locke admitted the impossibility of finding the original contract of men and government lost in antiquity,[3] Defoe gained sight of it in the Old Testament:

> . . . God is no respector of persons, and that his kings have no surer tenor in God's favour than other people; for his promises are as conditional to them, as to the meanest man; and if they fail of their duty, God may and oftentimes does take the forfeiture as we see here both in the case of David and Jeroboam.[4]

The phrase "if they fail of their duty", would explain the repeated abdications and forfeitures, forced and voluntary. It was not due to the fickleness or the mysteries of God. Kings had a definite position and duty in the scheme of things. Should they fail to perform, or violate, those duties (which constituted the contract) all evidence showed how readily God would allow their expulsion. The contract, in Defoe's view,

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[1] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 14.

[2] Ibid, 15.

[3] Locke, Second Treatise of Government, ed. J.W. Gough, (Oxford, 1948), 50.

[4] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 15.

was the joint responsibility of king and people, and "such a compact and agreement between prince and people, is the very corner-stone of monarchy itself".[1] Of course, this same compact was the hinge in Whig theory upon shich all succeeding arguments turned. It was similarly indispensable for Defoe:

> For here tis said the King made a Covenant with the people before the Lord and there the people made Saul king before the Lord; from whence I think we may collect, that being mutual, the promise was as obliging, as it was solemn of both sides, for both are exprest in the same words."[2]

But, if Defoe sought to diminish the antiquity of kingship by bringing to light 1600 years of man's existence without this institution; if he had attempted to curtail the power of kings by illuminatiing their duties and responsibilities to the people, he was now to deliver the fatal stroke to the royal prerogative; but first, it is necessary to examine what Defoe considered the role of law in English society.

The Nature Of Law

It has been observed, that Defoe considered the fall of man and the loss of reason as inextricably interwoven. Man's loss of reason was the taint in his psychological make-

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[1] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 28.

[2] Ibid, 31.

up that resulted in lust, crime and the desire to subjugate his fellow man. The irrationality of man separated him from the ideal patriarchal society where reason was supreme.

But the good in man, and the faculty of reason were not entirely dormant. The desire of man to reenter the good society manifested itself by the creation of laws. For Defoe, law was the reflection of reason that man in his fallen state had need of, in order to save himself from the anarchy and tyranny of his irrational existence.

> Degenerate Nature soon seduc'd by Crime,
> Quickly incroach'd upon the power sublime;
> And reason found it needful to explain,
> Laws to prescribe, and Limits to restrain;
> For man's a lawless wretch by Inclination.[1]

Perhaps the ideal society would prove impossible to recreate, but through the agency of law, at least, some semblance of the ideal society could be achieved:

> Reasons the Sovereign Guide of Humane Things,
> Which Leads the Subject, and commands their Kings;
> The Pole-Star and the Pilot of Mankind,
> The Soul of Sense, and optick of the Mind;
> The Arbitrator of the Grand Dispute,
> Betwixt the Humane Nature and the Brute;
> The Dignity and Honour of the World,
> Without it alls' a chaos.[2]

Professor Sutherland has pointed out that the men of the eighteenth century strongly believed that "truth--the one

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[1] Jure Divino, Book V.

[2] Ibid, Book III.

inevitable and unchanging truth--was waiting to be apprehended by those who used their reason."[1] Consequently, "In literature and in art, no less than in politics and religion, it was felt that agreement should and could be reached, and by the middle of the century it was generally thought that it had been reached."[2] Defoe, very much a child of his time, lived by these beliefs. And he held it highly improbable that the great majority of men who made laws through the power of their reason should make unjust or unworkable laws. He could state, therefore, without hesitation that:

> Reason is the Test of law; for laws which are contradictory to reason, are void in their own nature, and ought not either to be made or regarded.[3]

He was confident in explaining the nature of law in this manner because most men desired to live in a regulated society that could provide them with the necessary order to preserve their property and lives.

> Laws are always to be squar'd by the Publick good; if laws should be made by whatsoever Authority, repugnant to the public good, they cease to be laws, and are no more binding; as in another case, if laws are made repugnant to the laws of God, the subject ought not to obey or regard them: Now let either King or people make the laws according to the customs of the several countries, if they are blest with these

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[1] J. Sutherland, Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry, 14.

[2] Ibid, 36.

[3] Jure Divino, Book III.

> sanctions, that they are agreeable to the laws of God, and squar'd by Reason and the Puclick Good, they become sacred, and must be obey'd.[1]

But, if law was to hold so important a position in the scheme of things, Defoe made sure to indicate where the repository of law was to be. "The safety of the people is the supremest law; and those the best judges of that safety, who are by the people entrusted with it."[2] It would appear therefore, that the people of England had given the power of making laws to representatives in Parliament. But Defoe was reluctant to allow Parliament an exclusive monopoly in manipulating the laws:

> We know the very Parliament themselves cannot dispence with the Law, but in a Parliamentary way: No Law can cease to be a Law, 'till repeal'd by the same Power that made it; and nothing can have the Force of Law in England, but what has the Peoples Consent in Parliament.[3]

In this manner, the law of England could never become the instrument of a particular group or class, and even the bureaucracy was reminded:

> Law is the mighty substance, Magistrate
> Is but the Upper Servant of a State.[4]

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[1] Jure Divino, Book III.

[2] The Protestant Jesuit Unmasked, 8.

[3] Advice to All Parties, (1705), 9.

[4] Jure Divino, Book III.

The Function Of Law

The idea of the contract between king and subject was axiomatic in Defoe's thinking; however, he still had to determine what power and authority were held by the king. This problem was curtly answered by defenders of absolutism with the biblical verse, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."[1] There was enough nebulous matter here to satisfy the most subservient royalist writer. Instead of offering a laboured rebuttal, Defoe seized upon this statement and turned it to his own use. He recognized the utter vagueness of the statement and prepared to insert a brace to give it greater legal accuracy, and thus render it harmless in the hands of royalists. Defoe was convinced he had proved that monarchy was limited and conditional among the Jews. Christ had added nothing to the original scheme, consequently the people owed no new obligation. Because man had spread all over the face of the earth, and great diversity had grown up between nations in their customs and habits, it was impossible to apply one rule to all men in regard to government and obedience. Still, Christ's injunction was a generalization. The man of God knows well enough his obligations to his Maker, but to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's is extremely uncertain. And here, Defoe in-

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[1] Sabine, A History of Political Theory, 393., G.P. Gooch, Political Thought in England: From Bacon to Halifax, (Oxford, 1955), 4-13., O. Gierke, Political Theories of the Middle Ages, (Cambridge, 1927), 30-37.

sisted, Christ had spoken in purposeful generalization, so that each nation could determine according to its own tradition what was Caesar's portion. In other words ". . . 'tis from the Statute Book not the Bible, that we must judge of the power our kings are invested withal, and also of our own obligations and the measure of our own subjection."[1]

Thus in one stroke Defoe converted a precept fraught with danger for constitutional development, into a buttress for parliamentarian and legal progress. English law emerges above kingship, to serve as the guide post for both king and people. The prerogative as the expression of the capricious and personal will of an individual is transformed into a department of government, modified and directed by a rational law, in the interest of all citizens. As has been seen, however, Defoe was most emphatic in explaining with whom rested the right to formulate law.

He had little patience for the argument that, from the sovereign prince, all laws emanated and therefore could be considered above and beyond law. This went against the grain of all his reasoning. If one could accept his original conclusions that kings were the elective creatures of society, then:

> Tis evident, that the power of the people

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[1]Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 35.

> is not only antecedent to that of kings, but also, that kings did receive and derive their authority at first from the people. So that 'tis no incongrous, much less impossible supposition, that kings do derive their authority from the laws; for certainly they must owe their power to that which gave it a being; and that is that original contract which is made between the people and the person or family they shall think fit to advance to the kingship; which ought to be the boundary of the Prince's authority, as also of the subjects submission.[1]

The ideas that the "king can do no harm" had revived during the reign of Charles II, as a royalist slogan. Like so many mediaeval maxims, this one was subjected to contradictory interpretations. The Common's opposition attempted to convert this royalist concept into a doctrine of ministerial responsibility, accompanied by the right to impeach. The king could do no wrong because his actions were advised by his ministers; consequently, his ministers could be held responsible and impeached. Indirectly, the king as well was open for attack.[2] Defoe chose a more direct path. As long as the king ruled within the body of English law, he could not possibly do wrong. The rationality of the law prevented this. Should the king attempt to rule outside the framework

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[1] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 40.

[2] D. Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II, (Oxford, 1955), Vol. II, 453.

of law and commit injury, he did no harm as king, for he had "unkinged" himself the moment he crossed the critical line dividing legal action from personal and wanton will.[1] Thus Defoe added another seemingly royalist maxim to the arsenal of Whig theory. Regardless of the quality of Defoe's poetry, the matter is well illustrated in the following verses:

> And punishing of Kings, is no such crime,
> But Englishmen ha' done it many a time.
> When kings the sword of justice first lay down
> They are no Kings, though they possess the crown.
> Titles are shadow, crowns are empty things,
> The good of subjects is the end of Kings
> To guide in war and protect in peace;
> Where tyrants one commence, the kings do cease:
> For arbitrary powers so strange a thing,
> It makes the tyrant, and unmakes the king.
>
> That Kings, when they descend to tyranny
> Dissolve the bond, and leave the subject free,
> The Governments ungirt when justice dies,
> And constitutions are non-entities
> The nations all a mob, theres no such thing
> As Lords or Commons, Parliament or King.
> A great promiscuous crowd the Hydra lies,
> Till laws revive, and mutual contract ties:
> A chaos free to chuse for their own share,
> What case of Government they please to wear:
> If to a king they do the reigns commit,
> All men are bound in conscience to submit:
> But then that king must by his oath assent
> To postulates of the Government.
> Which if he breaks, he cuts off the entail,
> And power retreats to its original.
>
> This doctrine has the sanction of assent,
> From natures universal parliament.
> The voice of nations, and the course of things
> Allow that laws superior are to kings.[2]

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[1] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 42. Even if the king felt that certain legislation was harmful to the nation, Defoe would only allow him to express his opinion but, not withhold the Royal assent:--"He ought not to deny it to any Bills for the publick good: Neither can he assume any prerogative to himself by such absolute or Negative voice." The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, 18.

[2] The True Born Englishman, (1701.)

Again, it is the law of England that stands above all, shedding light on all aspects of government, giving direction to both king and people.

Another concept staunchly defended by the Cavalier Parliament, was the wide extent of the King's prerogative which included the vital areas of peace and war. Danby openly defended this view.[1] If Defoe could not penetrate the idea directly, he could argue:

> The power of making peace or war is vested in the king: Tis part of his prerogative, but tis implicitly in the people, because their negative as to payment does really influence all those actions.[2]

Defoe's argument to this point presents a formidable attack on the Jure Divino concepts of Filmer and his High-Church successors. It also explains the position given to the king in Defoe's political scheme of things. But it is still only an argument, and because Defoe was pre-eminently practical, he could not leave the discussion floating in the regions of abstract thought. He accompanied his arguments with practical advice for action.

The Right Of Rebellion

Assuming that the citizens of England were opposed to any form of tyranny he summed up the question:

Shall Tyrants plead their mission from on high,

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[1] Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II, Vol. II, 450-1.

[2] An Argument Showing That a Standing Army with Consent of Parliament is Not Inconsistent with a Free Government, (1698), 222.

> And guard their Mischiefs by their Majesty;
> Entitle Heaven to all they can commit,
> And ruine Nations by the sacred cheat:
> With rapes and murthers first debauch the Throne,
> And make the Text those rapes and murthers own;
> Preach the Religion of Obedience due,
> To such as no Religion ever knew;
> Princes that give their Will its eager just:
> And sacrifice the Nation to their Lust,
> Are these the persons sanctify'd by Line,
> Then Lucifer himself may be Divine?[1]

Defoe could not comprehend how any people, and particularly the English, tolerate tyranny. "No nation under Heaven, that had two grains of reason in its exercise, could ever bear a tyrant, much more this enlightened People of England; the Name of tyrant is rooted so deep, the aversion to it so strong, and the reason against it so great, that they might justly, any one, Despair in the attempt."[2] It is clear that Defoe's political theory is essentially dynamic. He was impatient with the rigid views of divine right, and demanded a flexibility of thought which would give his fellow citizens an opportunity to mould their own lives with the assistance of their free will and reason.[3] That man would have to decide

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[1] Jure Divino, Book

[2] Review, Sept. 11, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 327.

[3] According to Dottin, Defoe was in the vicinity of Wimborne or at Martook, when he received word that Monmouth, his hero had arrived at Lyme, "et, sourd a la voix de la froide raison, enfourcha son grand cheval de bataille et vint se ranger sous l'étendard bleu de l'insurrection." P. Dottin, Defoe Et Ses Romans, (Paris, 1924), 54. Unfortunately, no

his future independently is clear: "God almighty precribed no rules of government to man, only told him the Duties to his Maker; but as to the articles of Powers, he made him Lord of himself. . .".[1]

Yet tyranny did exist and was clothed in the robes of pious defence; and this Defoe consiered the rankest blasphemy. If such great importance was attached to the law forbidding suicide, why should it be correct to allow a tyrant to jeopardize life indirectly?

> . . . if he must the gift of life maintain;
> With equal care he's bound to the defence,
> From foreign or Domestic Violence:
> It can't be just that Heaven shou'd e're intend,
> We shou'd our selves against our selves defend:
> And then to let another hand procure,

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other records survive to corroborate Defoe's own statements that he fought under Monmouth. W. Freeman suggests a very interesting piece of indirect evidence that may help in determining whether Defoe was merely an observer, or had actually taken part in the fray. He bases his argument on Defoe's The Memoirs of a Cavalier and explains: "Defoe was not even born when the battle it describes in such detail (together with the inevitable statistics, coincidences, and moralizings) took place; the King for whom his fictitious cavalier fought and endured had ended his life on that bleak January morning in 1649.

But Defoe had taken part in the defeat which ended the career of the wretched grandson of Charles the Martyr and of his followers in the summer of 1685, and that he did not make use of his experiences there to lend verisimilitude to his account of his Cavalier hero's life I refuse to believe." W. Freeman, The Incredible Defoe, 90-91. It perhaps would appear that Defoe practised what he preached. See also Defoe's An Appeal to Honour and Justice, (1715).

[1] Jure Divino, Book I.

> The Mischiefs we're forbidden to endure:
> This consequence for ever will be true,
> He must not suffer, what he must not do;
> And 'tis as Nat'ral still, and full as just,
> That what he must not bear, he may resist.[1]

Not only was non-resistance repugnant to God; but it was repugnant to nature as well. Even if God did not fully explain man's right to rebel, his inner nature urged him to this course of action. For this reason, the scriptures have more to say about man's duty to his king than of his inherent right to rebel which is part of his very nature:

> . . . the duty to ourselves is less spoken of, because 'tis written so deep in the laws of nature; for every mans inclination is to be happy, which, no man can expect under a tyrant. . . . The great fundamental law of nature, is self-preservation: Tis the Magna Charta of all Constitutions, and the very end and design of government itself: Tis a principle so deeply radicated in Nature, that tis engraven upon every man's heart. And certainly every subject has as great a Right to their religion, liberty and property, as the monarch has to his Royal prerogative.[2]

Instead of permitting rebellion as a last resort in an impossible situation, Defoe urged its use as part of man's duty to himself and to God.

> Tell us how man, by Heaven it self made free,
> Has an undoubted claim to liberty:
> The Bondage which his nature feels within
> Is not his nature's happiness but Sin:
> And when he stoops to an unequal force,
> It can't excuse his Guilt, but make it worse

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[1] Jure Divino, Book III.

[2] The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, 27.

> The Freedom Heaven bestow'd was giv'n in vain,
> Unless he does the Mighty Gift maintain.
> And when he parts with the Supreme bequest
> He slights the bounty, and betrays the Trust.[1]

God having given man reason to discern truth and liberty could not at the same time expect man stolidly to bow his head to the tyrant. For Defoe, tyranny was rather an evil which was the "tainted" part of man's personality--a part that would grow with dangerous speed whenever man should permit his reason to be extinguished. The gift of liberty was not something that could be received without effort, but something which could only be maintained by relentless struggle. To answer his country men's question, why tyranny flourished, Defoe explained:

> The Reasons plain, and may be eas'ly known,
> 'Tis not Heavens proper Bus'ness, but our own:
> The Gift he gives he looks that we maintain,
> And till we strive, we cry to Heaven in vain:
> Prayers and Tears no Revolution make,
> Pull down no Tyrant, will no Bondage Break;
> Heaven, never, will our faint Petitions hear,
> Till just endeavours supersede our prayer;
> . . . . . .
> In vain they for Divine assistance stay,
> Unless they learn to fight as well as pray.[2]

But years of experience had shown, to Defoe, that men who possess liberty soon forget its value and hold it lightly. It always remained his task to remind his readers, to guard the freedom that the Revolution of 1688 had brought them. The

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[1] Jure Divino, Book I.

[2] Ibid, Book II. See also Book III.

task of defending freedom would never be easy; man would always have to sacrifice for it. As a warning, Defoe told a story of a debtor who had languished in prison for eighteen years. When he was finally released he was overwhelmed with happiness, only to find, a short while after his liberation, that he could not bear the responsibilities of freedom. And so, as a broken man, he asked to be allowed to return to his prison.[1] It was disastrous to lose one's freedom under absolute government, but if freedom was withheld long enough it would destroy the very spirit of man. Defoe could reassure his readers that, in God's eyes, the tyrant bore full responsibility of rebellion:

> Insulting Tyrants, own the stated Guilt,
> Rebellions theirs, and theirs the Blood that's spilt;
> The injur'd Subject bears no real share,
> The Guilt goes with the causes of the War.

therefore:

> The faithful Subjects then to arms must fly;
> He fights for Heaven, that fights for liberty.[2]

Revolution And Succession

Defoe had embarked on an excursion in the realm of political theory, in order to invalidate the absolute concept of divine right. To disprove the validity of divine right however, was essentially a negative program; he would still have

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[1] *Review*, Aug. 23, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XIX, 263.

[2] *Jure Divino*, Book V.

to establish something in its place. If kings could be challenged, how were they to be replaced? Defoe's attitude to an erring king has been explained above. It was only an additional step in the same direction to arrive at the conclusion: "It does not follow, that if people having chosen a King and capitulated with him, that his posterity shall reign after him, that they must therefore be bound to the posterity, if they degenerate from the Honour and justice of their ancestors, and tyrannize over those they should protect."[1] His rejection of divine hereditary succession was simple and straightforward. It did not matter whether a king was removed by force, or whether he willingly abdicated; in either case, he could have no say in the determining of a successor:

> . . . any Sovereign may Resign, or abdicate the Crown, Divesting themselves of . . . the Regal Authority; But then in such a Case, the Parliament of Britain . . . has the only Legal Authority to declare the Succession, and give the Inheritance the Sanction of their Limitation.[2]

What for Defoe was a simple issue to be cleared through the channels of ordinary parliamentary procedure, proved to be a difficult and thorny problem for the majority of Tory followers, in the first decade of the eighteenth century.

Several crises brought the question of legitimate suc-

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[1] Jure Divino, Book V.

[2] Review, Dec. 5, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 435.

cession into clearer focus. In 1696, the Fenwick assassination plot, aimed at the king, sent a flurry of patriotic feeling through the nation in support of William III. This support manifested itself in the form of a declaration giving William de jure as well as de facto recognition: "Whereas there has been a conspiracy . . . we declare that His majesty is rightful and lawful king . . . and we engage to assist each other in the defence of His Majesty and his government."[1] In 1702, when Louis had presumptuously recognized the Pretender as the rightful king, the English nation responded, as in the first crisis, by passing the Abjuration Bill requiring every person who held office to "deny the theory of divine hereditary right",[2] and to accept William and then Anne as the "lawful and rightful monarchs". Only because of the extreme urgency in both cases did the Tory ranks acquiesce[3] in what they had previously considered the sacred principles of non-resistance.[4] But even then, many of Tory persuasion clung to the old tale that the Pretender was not the legal heir but had been smuggled into the confinement room in a warming pan.[5] By keeping alive the old tale, they were better adjusted to pay

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[1]Quoted in D. Ogg, England in the Reign of James II and William III, (Oxford, 1955), 427.

[2]G.M. Trevelyan, England Under Queen Anne, (London, 1948), Vol. I, 159.

[3]K. Feiling, History of the Tory Party (1660-1714), (Oxford, 1924), 357-359.

[4]Macaulay, History of England, (London, 1897), Vol. II, 186.

[5]Bishop Burnet, History of His Own Time, (Dublin, 1734), Vol. I, 411-415.

lip service to the idea of non-resistance, and at the same time, to support the Revolutionary Settlement.[1]

Defoe would have no truck with these fairy tales: "I have nothing to say here to his Legitimacy of Birth, I always thought that to be a Dispute we have no manner of Concern in . . .". There was no need for Defoe to subscribe to such involved methods in order to soothe a disturbed conscience. For him it was quite simple: "It is the Undoubted Right of the Parliament of Great Britain, to Limit the Succession of the Crown . . .".[2] It must have been with impish delight that he provoked the High Tory with the facts of the Revolution:

> Did her Majesty enter upon the Government of these realms, and take possession of the Crown, upon the Death of King William, upon Terms of Hereditary Right, or upon the Foot of Parliamentary Limitation?--This is evident from her Majesty's Proclimation Upon the Demise of King William, which Proclamation mentions not one word of Hereditary Succession, but recites and refers to the Act of Limitation, whereby the Crown is Entail'd upon her Majesty by Parliament. . .[3]

To rub salt into the wound, he also reminded the Tory body that if Divine Right did have heavenly sanction then Queen Anne was certainly an usurper. By accepting her as Queen, all High Churchmen were contradicting themselves in the most

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[1]Jonathan Swift, Examiner, (Oxford Shakespeare Head Press, 1940), Vol. III, Nos. 39, 43.

[2]Review, Sept. 16, 1712, Vol. IX, Book XXII, 27.

[3]Ibid, May 23, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 94.

blatant fashion.[1] But in full seriousness, Defoe would always reassert that:

> Her Majesties title to the Crown of this realm, is particularly solid, in that it stands upon the foundation of Parliamentary authority. . . To set up the Doctrine of Divine Right is to supersede the conclusive Right of Parliament.[2]

The Role Of Parliament

Defoe never wrote a detailed history of the origin of parliament, but he did refer to it casually in his writings. Although these remarks cannot be said to add to the serious study of the problem, they do reveal something of his thought.

He visualized the English past as an era of anarchy and misery, caused mainly by constant inter-baronial war, where "one nobleman would invade another, in which the weakest suffered most, and the poor man's blood was the price of all."[3] He regognized that the barons were a check on royal absolutism, but he was also aware that "the barons took care to maintain their own tyranny."[4] New developments occurred, which had profound effect. An economic trend, both tangible and psychological, began to ruin the nobility. Defoe explained that

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[1]Review, Aug. 30, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 307, 310, 319.

[2]Ibid, Aug. 30, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 308.

[3]An Argument Showing That a Standing Army with Consent of Parliament is Not Inconsistent with a Free Government, 216.

[4]Ibid, 216.

they were compelled to live luxuriously, largely, because of custom, at precisely the moment when the entire class began to grow poorer. At the same time, the people were profitably affected by this economic trend and found their fortunes increasing. Rapidly growing rich, they were able to take full advantage of the financially embarrassed nobility, and, ". . . exchanged their vassalage for leases, rents, fines and the like. They did so and thereby became entitled to the services of themselves; and so overthrew the settlement and from hence came a House of Commons."[1]

A briefer interpretation with the same curtness would be difficult to find. But it does introduce a theme which was to be reiterated many times in his writing--the plight of the poor man. It would also seem to indicate an appreciation of material causation in man's history. The House of Commons, accordingly, was the by/product of the economic shift in class structure. If it is borne in mind that Defoe was always fascinated by the economic process, and wrote prolifically on the subject, it is little wonder that he should have made some connection between his pet study and the origin of the House.

As hazy and ill-defined as his statements on the origin of the House may be, he was much more emphatic on its role and responsibility. Two primary characteristics, well in accord

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[1]An Argument Showing That a Standing Army with Consent of Parliament is Not Inconsistent with a Free Government, 216.

with Whig temper, emerge. Firstly, that the Commons, representing the people, is the seat of authority. Secondly, that the represented possess greater power than the representatives. In a sense, the first point is the logical outcome of the argument stressing the initiative taken by the people in electing their own kings. Existing as a body before the monarch's entrance, it follows that kings, ". . . owe their power to that which gave it a being."

A certain grandeur and dignity characterizes Defoe's idealized picture of parliament. When he admonished his audience before election time (as he so often did), to elect trustworthy individuals to sit in the Commons' chamber, he spoke in the most solemn manner of the sacred trust placed in parliament. Because of the importance of parliament in the ultimate settling of all problems, representatives should be "men of sense; the House of Commons is not a place for fools; the great affairs of the state, the welfare of the kingdom, the publick safety, the religion, liberties, and trade, the wealth and honour of the nation, are not things to be debated by green heads. . .".[1] The area which came under parliament's surveillance was all inclusive.

Throughout the pamphlet war on the question of a stand-

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[1]The Six Distinguishing Characters of a Parliament-Man, (1701), 279.

ing army, in the latter part of the reign of William III,[1] Defoe consistently hammered out the thesis that parliament was the great power in the nation. When John Trenchard, the Whig pamphleteer, warned the nation of the danger that a standing army would constitute for parliamentary liberties, Defoe confidently reassured him that parliament could master the situation: "Sir, how do you know what a parliament may do? Parliaments are magnipotent though they are not omnipotent and I must tell you, Sir, the commons of England are not a body that can be enslaved with 20,000 men . . ."[2] He urged his compatriots to trust in the strength of parliament, not only to rule wisely but to safeguard the rights of citizens as well. These pamphlets lend to parliament an importance that would easily satisfy the most republican spirit.

Determined as he was to stress the pre-eminence of parliament as the fountainhead of authority, he continued to pay lip service to the idea of the division of power within government. Defoe's view was different from that of Montesquieu. He could boast of "A constitution of government as is this day in England which is so exactly and harmoniously composed, that I know nothing to compare it to but itself.[3] The

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[1]Some Reflections on a Pamphlet Lately Published Entitled an Argument Showing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government, (1697).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 36.

parts of this division consisted of the people, nobility and king:

> . . . here the people have liberty without democratical confusion and fury, the nobility have all the privileges to which aristocracy itself could entitle them without the necessity of running into factions and cabals for it; and the King's power so equally ballanced between the two others that his power can hardly ever degenerate into tyranny.[1]

However, the qualifying phrases limiting both king and nobility soon strip this division of powers of any real sense, and the people, the House of Commons and English law again emerge supreme.[2] A more accurate statement on his view of constitutional checks is given in a piece of doggeral verse written shortly after the death of William III:

> The Constitution's like a vast machine,
> What's full of curious workmanship within:
> Where tho' the parts unwieldly may appear,
> It may be put in motion with a hair.
> The wheels are officers and magistrates,
> By which the whole contrivance operates:
> Laws are the weights and springs which make it move,
> Wound up by kings as managers above;
> And if they'r screwed to high, or down to low,
> The movement goes too fast or else too slow.
> The legislators are the engineers,
> Who when 'tis out of order make repairs:
> The people are the owners, 'twas for them
> The first Inventor drew the ancient scheme.
> Tis for their benefit it works, and they
> The charges of maintaining it defray;
> And if their governours unfaithful prove,
> They, engineers or managers remove . . .[3]

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[1] Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution, 36.

[2] Ibid, 37.

[3] The Mock Mourners, (1702).

The last two lines in particular, would make it appear that Defoe was not very serious about the "division of power" in the English Constitution. The Commons remains the obvious source of authority.[1]

The Relationship Between People And Parliament

The relationship between the people and their elected representatives was a question that occupied much of Defoe's attention. In an analysis of these two component parts, he classified parliament merely as a functioning vehicle for the expression of the people. Because the population had increased so enormously, a representative parliament had become a necessity. It was no longer feasible for the entire nation to meet periodically to discuss its problems. Hence, "whenever the king think fit to advise with his people, they will chuse a certain few out of their great body to meet together with your lordships."[2] But even then, at most, the members of parlia-

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[1] it must have been infuriating for the advocates of absolutism to read Defoe's artful dodging which seemed, at first, to concede all to the king, only to prove in the end, that the king at most was only a symbol and no more: "Monarchy would easily appear the most acceptable of all governments, if Kings would submit to those reasonable Terms and Limitations of Sovereign Power, that have been laid down, to allow the great Council, to hold the balance; as certainly that of England must do, it being a mixt Commonwealth, part, Monarchical, part Aristocratical and part Democratical. And 'tis equally dangerous and unadvisable for the king to infringe the liberties of the People; for the laws of England are above the King.. ." The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, 16.

[2] The Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England Examin'd and Asserted, 135.

ment represented only ". . . an abridgement of the many volumes of the English nation."[1] Defoe lectured to all prospective members of parliament: ". . . I venture to say, that without doubt a member of parliament is to have some regard in Honour, to the Inclinations of the people he serves, at least not to act what he knows is contrary to their desire."[2] It should be observed that whenever Defoe discussed parliament in relation to the king, the latter was stripped of all sanctity, while the former was imbued with an august dignity. Similarly, when parliament and people were compared, parliament became a mere spokesman while the people appeared as the mystic repository of authority. He tried to show the ephemeral nature of parliament:

> But if you are dissolved, for you are not immortal; or if you are deceived, for you are not infallable; twas never yet supposed, till very lately, that all power dies with you.
>
> You may die, but the people remain; you may be dissolved, and all immediate right may cease; power may have its intervals and crowns their interregnums; but original power endures to the same eternity the world endures to: And while there is people, there may be a legal authority delegated, though all succession of substituted power were at an end.[3]

When he pointed out the possibility of parliament's dissolution and stressed that "power retreats to the original", that

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[1]The Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England Examin'd and Asserted, 135.

[2]Advice to All Parties, (1705), 9.

[3]The Original Power of the Collective Body, 136.

is, the people; and when he continued still farther, suggesting that parliament was not infallible, and could be questioned, Defoe was not introducing any startling principle. Andrew Marvell's, An Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government in England had already set the stage in the reigns of the restored Stuarts, for the countless insinuations of parliament's corruptibility. An immediate parallel is found in Locke:

> . . . there remains still in the people a supreme power to remove or alter the legislative when they find the legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them; for all power given with trust for the attaining an end, being limited by that end, whenever that end is manifestly neglected or opposed, the trust must necessarily be forfeited, and the power devolve into the hands of those that give it, who may place it anew where they shall think best for their safety and security. And thus the community perpetually retains a supreme power of saving themselves from the attempts and designs of any body, even of their legislators whenever they shall be so foolish or so wicked as to lay and carry on designs against the liberties and properties of the subject. . .[1]

Defoe was merely repeating these views, and recommending the same cure.

In sound eighteenth century tradition, he argued that all men are endowed with the power of reason. Consequently, because "reason is the touch-stone of laws, and . . . all law or power that is contradictory to reason, is ipso-facto void

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[1]Locke, Treatise of Civil Government, 74.

in itself, . . . ought not to be obeyed."[1] Irrespective of whether it was king or parliament that passed a decree, if the people's reason detected any danger, they were free to begin their defence.

Theoretically, violence should not have been necessary. He had painted a rarefied picture of the legislative process which stood for the essence of good sense:

> The ordinary method with us is well known to be, that the addition of new laws, or amendment of old ones are proposed first by the Commons of England, and immediately publick notice given when the same are to come to a solemn debate; which being several times adjourned there arises opportunity sufficient, for the subjects from all parts of the kingdom to communicate to the respective Members of Parliament, their opinion severally thereupon, so that in this respect seldom anything of importance is concluded concerning the good people of England, without their own tacit consent at least, over and above the benefit of their being represented in common.[2]

But to compensate for the reality of life he had to lay down a method of procedure, should the legislature prove recalcitrant. The people were to petition parliament in order to rectify the grievance. Should this fail, the next appropriate step was to appeal to the House of Lords and finally to the king. If none of these bodies responded to the will of the people, then the people might form an association for their

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[1] The Original Power of the Collective Body, 139.

[2] The Shortest Way to Peace and Union, (1703), 6.

mutual defense.[1] For the people ". . . have an undoubted Right to complain of their Electors . . . and though Original freedom seems asleep, it may be reviv'd again, when an absolute necessity of Tyranny and unjust Oppression shall call for a Redress of Grievances."[2] Apparently, historical precedent had already shown this, when:

> . . . the people's liberties have been trampled on, and Parliaments have been rendered useless and insignificant: . . . what has restored us? The last resort has been to the people; vox Dei has been found there, not in the representatives but in their original the represented.[3]

Some Safeguards

It would be incorrect to surmise that Defoe's intention was an incitement to rebellion. What he desired to see, was a monarch obedient to the will of parliament, who in turn would rule in the interest of the propertied class; whether it should be in terms of the Protestant religion or of commercial expansion. He did not direct his particular views on rebellion at the broad masses. When he used the expression "the people" in this case, he did not mean by it any twentieth century concept, but only the property-holding citizens of England. To understand the importance of property, in judging

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[1] The Original Power of the Collective Body, 139.

[2] The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, 9.

[3] The Original Power of the Collective Body, 145.

the status and rights of a person in the eighteenth century, is imperative. Professor D. Ogg clearly illustrates the problem when he explains:

> It may seem unusual to preface an account of personal status with a reference to property. But property always comes before the person, because the inanimate and tangible are so much more obvious than the subjective things that constitute personality.

Of the eighteenth century, this statement could not be more true. In support of this statement Ogg relates an incident which had occured in 1702. A young heiress was abducted by a woman, who later forced the heiress, against her will, to marry the woman's accomplice. When the woman was later apprehended, Mr. Justice Powell accused her in these terms:

> Your offence hath been in a nation where property is better preserved than in any other government in the world. Here it is death for a man to take away anything, though never so small, by way of robbery; how much worse to take away the child of a man, and with her all that he hath gotten by his industry, a great offence against the publick, being so great a violation of property.[1]

Defoe was very much a part of this thought. He never attempted to free himself of the property qualification in establishing the rights of an individual. The following will indicate the near-brutality with which he explained his view:

> . . . I do not place this right (i.e. to form

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[1]D. Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 70-72.

> a government) upon the inhabitants but upon the free holders; the free holders are the properties owners of the country: It is their own, and the other inhabitants are but sojourners, like lodgers in a house, and ought to be subject to such laws as the free holders impose upon them, or else they must remove, because the free holders having a right to the land, the other have no right to live there but on suffurance.

He goes on to explain why:

> Every man's land is his own property; and tis a tresspass in the law for another man to come upon his ground without his consent. If the free holders hould all agree, that such a man shall not come upon their land; that they will not let him a house for his money; that whose land soever he sets his foot on, the owner shall indict him for a trespass, as by the law he may, the man must fly the nation of course. Thus the free holders having a right to the possession of England, the reason must be good that they must have the same right to the government of the rest of the inhabitants; and there can be no legal power in England, but what has its original in the possessors; for property is the foundation of power.[1]

He was quite serious when he mentioned that those holding no property could be made to leave the land. It is clear, by the stand which he took on military conscription: "Mutual Defence is one of the least Conditions the inhabitants can be requir'd to contribute, to the assistance of their Lords the Freeholders, in Cases of need . . . He that has but 40S a year, Terra Firma, has a right to stay at home, and representatively consider'd,

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[1]The Original Power of the Collective Body, 157-160. See also, Jure Divino, Book V.

to command him that has 1000£ a Year in Tenements, Leases, Copyholds, Fen-Rents, Interest on Bonds etc..."[1]

Defoe's parliament is built exclusively on the vested interests of the propertied citizens of England. The conservative nature of its electoral structure can not be mistaken for anything radical. A government erected on these foundations could be considered reasonably safe to guarantee stable rule. Up to this point, there is little in Defoe's ideas that would cause anxiety for any of the accepted Whig writers. But there are aspects of Defoe which defy his complete identification with the Whig prototype. It is with these differences that the ensuing pages are concerned.

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[1]Review, Jan. 20, 1709, Vol. V, Book XIII, 511-512.

CHAPTER II

SOME DIFFERENCES

The Critic Of Society[1]

Defoe's biographers are perplexed as to the sudden political alliances which he entered, and just as rapidly dissolved. They see this as a major hurdle in solving the problem of Defoe's political activity.[2] The desire to solve this problem seems to have prevented his biographers from examing an equally important contradiction in the area of political theory, which first makes itself noticeable in the period of William III.

According to Defoe's views on the nature and composition of the electorate, one would be inclined to agree that the conservative safeguards which studded his political creed separated him from the radical element in politics. Those possessing no property are sufficiently stripped of a voice in government so as to prevent any direct rashness of action.. The sacred authority of government is vested in the pillars of society--the propertied class. But here the problem begins.

In the same period in which he framed his conservative

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[1]The best study of Defoe as critic of society is J.R. Moore's, Defoe in the Pillory and Other Studies, (Indiana University, 1939), 1-38.

[2]Freeman, W., The Incredible Defoe, 199; Dottin P., Defoe et Ses Romans, 111.

theory of government, a flood of pamphlets and poems gushed from his pen, defending and praising the simple, labouring Englishman. In many passages, his eloquence portrays a sympathy and compassion which is only comparable to the Leveller writings of the seventeenth century. It is an element, so extreme in his writing, that must set him apart from the hierarchy of the aristocratic Whig theorists of his time.

The occasion for this vibrant defence of the lowly actually originated with Defoe's two idols, William and Mary. While William was fighting in Ireland to consolidate his hold on the English throne, his wife issued an appeal to the justices of the peace, and servants of the Crown in general, to suppress the extravagant profligacy which had grown and flourished during the reigns of Charles and James II. Similarly, on the conclusion of the war in 1697, William promulgated an attack on vice which he claimed infected the nation.[1] Actually, Mary and William's pleas for moral rejuvenation were not isolated cries, but must be seen against the background of a reform movement which had begun to accelerate in the later years of the seventeenth century.

A deluge of pamphlets, exposing the licentious nature of the age, appeared in the last decade of the seventeenth cen-

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[1] Minto, W., Defoe, (London, 1879), 19.

tury;[1] while the number of organizations formed, such as the Society for the Reformation of Manners, is astonishing, and seems to reveal a revulsion against the moral breakdown which accompanied the Cavalier supremacy of the Restoration period.[2] A common function of these societies was to catalogue the numerous faults and vices committed by the erring citizens: These compendiums of sin were then distributed to the magistrates in all localities to help them curb the irregular behaviour of a sinful nation. The societies also urged members of the Church of England to inform the magistrates of persons guilty of infractions of the moral code. Infractions of the moral code extended from the serious accusation of keeping a disorderly house to such lesser crimes as tippling during sabbath divine service in an ale house, at "close time"; vending cakes in the street or barbers soliciting trade on Sunday.[3] Swearing and cursing were the most common offences and kept the justices of the peace vigilant in exacting fines.

Defoe's writings for the first time criticized William, for what he considered to be onesided and prejudiced actions. The reform movement, as he saw it, wreaked a perverted vengeance on the petty immoralities of the labouring class, while

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[1]The titles are indicative of the nature of these pamphlets, Proposal for a National Reformation of Manners, (1692); A Help to a National Reformation, (1700); A Specimen of a Declaration against Debauchery, (1701).

[2]Trevelyan, G.M., England Under the Stuarts, (New York, revised edition, 1946), 290-291.

[3]Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 530-537.

the wealthy escaped without the least inconvenience. It is in these pamphlets that a distinct echo of the Leveller past is heard. He wrote:

> . . . We of the Plebeii find ourselves justly agrieved in all this work of reformation; and this reforming rigour makes the real work impossible: Wherefore we find ourselves forced to seek redress of our grievances in the old honest way of petitioning heaven to relieve us: And in the mean time we solemnly enter our protestation, against the viscious part of the nobility and gentry of the nation as follows.
>
> First, we protest, that we do not find, impartially enquiring into the matter, speaking of moral goodness that you are one jot better than we are, your dignities, estates and quality excepted . . .
>
> Secondly, we do not find that all the proclamations, declarations, and acts of parliament yet made, have any effective power to punish you for your immoralities, as it does us. Now, while you make laws to punish us, and let your selves go free, tho' guilty of the same vices and immoralities, those laws are unjust and unequal in themselves . . .

In regard to the legal apparatus he continued:

> . . . These are all cobweb laws, in which the small flies are catch'd and great ones break thro. My Lord Mayor has whipt about the poor beggars, and a few scandalous whores have been sent to the house of correction; some alehouse keepers and vintners have been fin'd for drawing drink on the Sabbath day; but all this falls upon us, of the mob, the poor Plebeii, as if all the vice lay among us, for we do not find the rich drunkard carry'd before my Lord Mayor, nor a swearing lewd merchant. The man with a gold ring and gay cloathes, may swear before the justice, or at the justice, may reel home through the open streets, and no man

> take any notice of it; but if a poor man gets drunk, or swears an oath, he must to the stocks without remedy. . . While our justices themselves shall punish a man for drunkenness with a God damn him, set him in the stocks.

And neither did the Church escape criticism:

> . . . The clergy also ought not count themselves exempted in this matter, whose lives have been and in some places still are so vicious, and so loose, that tis well for England, we are not subject to be much priest-ridden.
>
> . . . The parson preaches a thundering sermon against drunkenness, and the justice of the peace sets my poor neighbour in the stocks, and I am like to be much the better for either, when I know perhaps that this same parson, and this same justice, were both drunk together the night before.[1]

As much as England needed correction, and Defoe was not the person to deny it, he suggested instead: ". . . a Bridewell for a Whoring Justice, a Pair of Capital Stocks for the High Constable and drunken Magistrates, and an Eccleseastical Whipping Post for swearing Prebendaries and lewd Clergy." Only then, he concluded, ". . . we might hope for some Reformation, and . . . have our Laws put into Execution a little. . ."[2]

He was critical of men in comfortable positions legislating on abstract principles. How could a magistrate understand the anguish and frustration of the lower class driven to crime because of grinding poverty?

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[1] The Poor Man's Plea, (1698), 287-300.

[2] Review, Oct. 15, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XV, 331.

> You are an honest Man, you say! Pray, Sir was you ever Try'd? Have you seen your self, Wife and Dear Children, ready to perish for food, and having your Neighbours Loaf in your Cupboard, or his money in your Hands, for tis all one, refus'd to touch it, and let them starve rather than taste it because it was not of your own? I tell you Sir, you would not Eat your Neighbours Bread only, but your Neighbour himself, rather than starve, and your Honesty would, all Shipwrack in the storm of Necessity _____ Agar was a Wise Man, when he Prays, give me not Poverty, lest I steal; to me the words very plainly imply Lord! keep me from poverty, for I shall certainly be a Thief; and I firmly believe, that never was a Man so honest but would steal, before he would Starve, and if he did not, it was want of opportunity.[1]

The demands he made of the judiciary were distinctly modern. He would have preferred to see the laws show a flexibility in each separate case, and take a broader view of the nature of the crime, and the circumstances in which it was committed. Criminal law would lose its primitive, retributive function and actually begin to serve the needs of the citizens of England.

His criticism did not stop with magistrates and clergy. Some of his most savage criticism was directed at the stock-brokers and investors who were reaping colossal profits in a welter of financial speculation. As a merchant himself, he was well aware of the abundance of sharp practise that had a minimum appearance of legality to prevent criminal prosecution.

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[1] Review, March 5, 1706, Vol. III, Book VI, 109-110; also Feb. 8, 1709, Vol. V, Book XIII, 543-544.

These speculators gave the productive merchants a bad name, and confused the population as to the real nature of trade. But for those who were repelled by the trickery of the stock market and all other suspicious forms of speculation, and who reacted by condemning merchant and trade alike, Defoe wrote:

> Really good People, if Trade and Land, which are the Wealth of this Nation are divided and differ, the whole Body will soon stand still._____ and this like the circulation in the Body, will throw the whole into Appolixies, dead Palsies, and every Mortal Disease.
>
> Wretched Folly! Land despise Trade! and Trade set up against Land ____ Can anything be more absurd? Is not Trade the Nurse of the Land? And is not Land the Nourishment of Trade? Does not Land supply the Materials of Trade? And does not Trade enable the Land to supply these materials?[1]

The extreme class conscious attitude of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused him to trumpet the merits and contributions of the merchant to English society:

> I wonder sometimes, at the ignorance of those people and nations, whose Gentry pretend to despise Families rais'd by Trade; Why should that, which is the wealth of the World, the Prosperity and Health of Kingdoms and Towns, be accounted dishonourable.
>
> If we respect trade, as it is understood by Merchandizing; it is certainly the most noble, most instructive and improving of any way of life. The artificers or handicrafts men, are indeed slaves; the Gentlemen are plowmen of the Nation, but the merchant is the support and improver of Power, Learning, and Fortunes.[2]

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[1] Review, May 1, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XIX, 63.

[2] Ibid, Jan. 3, 1706, Vol. III, Book VI, 6.

But the critic in Defoe remained ever alive, and though he could proudly proclaim that: "The general Commerce of this Nation consists of the plain, honest and downright way of Trade, making and manufacturing . . ." there still remained "the Plagues of our Commerce . . . stock-jobbing and wagering." He asked rhetorically: ". . . who do they employ, what Manufacture do they improve, what Encouragement have they been to Trade, what do they export or import? Knavery excepted we see nothing they deal in; they are ever sharping, tricking and circumventing one another. . ."[1] Indeed these were the "cobweb laws, in which the small flies are catch'd," the artisan was fined for swearing, the peripatetic merchant for selling wares on Sunday, but:

> How often has a formal Lye come hot out of the Oven into Exchange Alley, serv'd the Interest of the Contrivers, to the tune of 2 or 3 per Cent in the Price of Stocks between 9 a Clock and 2? And tho it has been cold again before Night, may, tho it has been trac'd in those few hours, How have the Managers made it answer all the Ends of Truth to them? Sold their Stocks off at a good Price, and stand and laugh at you into the Bargain? Nay, make the Advantage of the very detecting their own Forgery, and make a second Gain, by buying in Cheap, what before, they sold out 2 or 3 per Cent dearer.[2]

Here were thieves on a vast scale, and were they ever apprehended? Defoe would agree that the nation was in need of re-

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[1] *Review*, Dec. 2, 1708, Vol. V, Book XIII, 426-429.

[2] *Ibid*, July 19, 1712, Vol. VIII, Book XXI, 831.

form, but had not the societies of reformation better look to the cardinal crimes of the upper class, than concentrate on the pathetic failings of the lowly?

The Leveller streak in Defoe led him into many bypaths in his long public career. To criticize the parasites in society was only one aspect of his daily labours. He also accepted the burden of championing a number of causes such as the plight of the debtor in society, and more particularly, the issue of the Keelmen of Newcastle. In numerous pamphlets and countless pages of the Review, he hammered at the unjust laws condemning the insolvent to useless years in prison:

> Trayters, Murthers, and Felons are sent to Newgate, where they lye till the Session, and being Condemn'd, they obtain the mercy of the Gallows, and get a Good delivery at St. Tyburn; but a Debtor lyes languishing and Starving, sure to Dye, but can't obtain the favour of Dispatch; he Lingers out his Days in Want, Hunger, Cold, and Stench, till he Envies the felicity of those, that do to be Hang'd, and for want of Help, is driven to Dispatch himself out of the way.
>
> And yet all this Man's Crime is Poverty; for God's sake, Gentlemen, consider what Scripture Law Punishes Poverty with Death. . .[1]

It cannot be doubted that the pioneer efforts of Defoe's writing had considerable effect on public opinion for the eventual improvement of the debtor laws.

Another very practical example of Defoe's crusading spirit is seen in the Keelmen Issue. For years the keelmen of Newcastle had voluntarioly contributed to a common fund in order to erect a hospital and create an institution for the

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[1] Review, March 7, 1706, Vol. VIII, Book VI, 115.

needy or retired coal-barge men. Not only was this a retreat for the destitute of their trade, but it also served as a unifying symbol for the keelmen at moments of bargaining with the coal merchants of Newcastle. Because of certain mismanagement, the keelmen were petitioning the Crown for a charter which would permit them complete independence in the direct control of the institution. The coal merchants intervened however, and attempted to prevent their exclusion from the foundation for fear of losing their influence over the keelmen. Defoe took it upon himself to fight the issue for the keelmen. Before the issue was debated in the Commons[1] he devoted several Reviews[2] explaining the threat that faced the keelmen should the coal merchants retain their influence in the institution. It is important to see what pains he took in privately bringing the issue to Harley's notice. He explained to Harley that:

> . . . the Poor keelmen of New Castle, . . . who are Now like to have the Government and Management of Their Own Charity Subjected to the Fetters and Magistrates; by which a New foundation also will be Lay'd to Influence and Enslave The Poor Men, and Thereby Again Make a Monopoly of the Coal Trade.
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> There is So Much Justice and Charity in the Case That I Perswade my Self your Ldpp will be pleased with appearing in behalf of a

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[1] J.H.C., Vol. XVII, 160.

[2] Review, Feb. 12-19, 1712, Vol. VIII, Book XXI, 560-569.

> Thousand Families of poor and Injured Men,
> who None but God and your Ldpp can now Deliver. . .[1]

The Commons, on March 29, 1712, decided in favour of the keelmen.

The Mob

The place of the mob in Defoe's esteem is at first difficult to take seriously after reading his views on the franchise. It is indeed a rare phenomenon for a conservative Whig political theorist to eulogize the merits of mob activity, but that is just what Defoe did. Throughout his life, Defoe spoke consistently with the greatest admiration for Captain Tom, the symbol for the English masses.

A test for determining the sincerity of his statements on the English mob can be made in reference to the Sacheverell riots, that occured near the end of Queen Anne's reign.[2] Doctor Henry Sacheverell, a parson of extreme Tory feeling, had

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[1] Healey, The Letters of Daniel Defoe, 369. Defoe's views on workers' wages set him off from his contemporaries. When it is remembered that eighteenth century economists were unanimously agreed that the majority must be kept in poverty that the whole might be rich, (see E. Lipson, Economic History of England, (London, 1931), Vol. III, 274; Sir Josiah Child, A New Discourse of Trade, (1694), ix-x.) Defoe must be reclassified as a social and political thinker. He was probably the only writer on economic matters that expressed the idea: "To reduce these Wages (to a point) just sufficient for Life, would be a Diminishing the Publick Wealth to a Degree unexpressible, and Robbing England of the Peculiar, which is her Honour, that the Poor Live better than in any Part of the World." For Defoe on wages, see the Review, April 14, 1705, Vol. II, Book IV, 69-70.

[2] A.T. Scudi, The Sacheverell Affair, (New York, 1939).

begun his public career of attacking the Whigs in the first year of Anne's accession to the throne. The "bloody flag of defiance" that he waved was the famous pamphlet The Character of the Low Churchman, abusing the rather moderate Bishops, appointed by William III. Again in 1705, at Oxford University, he gave vent to his feelings against Dissenters, Whigs and moderate Tories. But the explosion occured when he preached his uncompromising sermon of non-resistance on November 9, 1709. The day chosen for his oration, Guy Fawkes day, could not have been more challenging to Whig followers, who were also celebrating William's landing at Torbay. What has been considered a foolish sermon, was interpreted by many as an attack on the Revolutionary Settlement. The Whig Ministry reacted by impeaching Sacheverell. At the height of Sacheverell's trial, in March, huge crowds began demonstrations in favour of the Tory parson. The mob, hooting,and pillaging showed their support of Sacheverell by burning several Dissenting chapels. Defoe was horrified to see an English mob, which had previously cheered and protected him when he stood in the pilloary, come to the assistance of a high Tory with suspicious Jacobite leanings. He immediately set himself the task of analysing the outbreak: He refused to believe that a true English mob could violate the laws of England on behalf of the false principles of non-resistance. Other mobs, he insisted played a prominent role in safeguarding the interest and liberty of the nation:

". . . those Mobs always aim'd at pulling down some real Grievance--Such as Bawdy-houses, Mass-houses, sham Gaols for wrongfully impress'd Men, Nests of Kid-nappers, and the like; and they were always observ'd, when the Work was over, they had no farther Mischief in View, nor would they injure any but those they particularly pointed at _____."[1]

Clearly, this mob was different. Defoe insisted that the people were misled, and referred to them as the "deluded People" and that "nothing is so certain, as that they know not what they are about." What had to be done was to inform the mob of the real intentions of Sacheverell and his colleagues, then:

> I dare say, . . . (when they) . . . that have been drawn into this Folly, know clearly the Crime, for which Dr. Sacheverell stands impeach'd, and the Design He and his Party are carrying on against the Queen and the established Government, the Revolution-Principle and the Protestant Succession, they would more chearfully huzza him to the Gallows, than they do now to this Trial.[2]

Secondly, he insisted that, on closer examination, it would appear that the rioters were not a true English mob, but had become infiltrated by ". . . Thieves and Murthers, Robbers and Incendiaries . . .".[3] Until the end of the Sacheverell epi-

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[1] Review, March 16, 1710, Vol. VI, Book XVI, 587.

[2] Ibid, March 4, 1710, Vol. VI, Book XVI, 566-567.

[3] Ibid, March 16, 1710, Vol. VI, Book XVI, 587.

sode, Defoe continued to defend Captain Tom who symbolized for him ". . . the mass of the English people in their struggle against popery and the pretender . . . the defender of protestantism and parliament."[1]

The Sacrifice Of A Principle

To equate the Leveller characteristics with Defoe's political views on the franchise is impossible, to say the least. But when it is kept in mind, how great his faith in the English masses was, it is simple to understand why he would willingly sacrifice the propertied land-holders, if he felt for a moment that they would betray the Revolutionary Settlement. His previous explanation, as to who was to form the government, was unequivocal. But in 1701, his fear of the growing Tory tide infected, as he thought, with Jacobite leanings, caused him to abandon property qualifications for those partaking in the formation of government. He now explained:

> It was formerly said, chuse men of estates; the reason was, that they might not be tempted by places and pensions from the court, to sell the nations liberties; and, indeed, the caution was

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[1] C.F. Main, "Defoe Swift and Captain Tom", Harvard Library Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. I, 1957, 73. Main has identified five pamphlets as belonging to Defoe on the basis of internal evidence: A Letter from Captain Tom to the Mobb, Now Rais'd for Dr. Sacheverel, (1710); Captain Tom's Ballad .... A Pleasant New Song, to the Tune of Packington's Pound, (1710); The Capt. of the Mobs Declaration: Or, Their New Answer to Dr. Sacheverll by Capt. Tom, (1710); A Rod for a Fools Back, in a Letter from Captain Tom, to the Ministers of Covent Gardends, (1710); Captain Tom's Remberance to His Old Friends the Mobb of London, (1711).

> good; but, gentlemen, the case is alter'd, the court and the nations interest are now all of a side, which they were not then, nor, indeed, never were since Queen Elizabeth. The King desires we should do nothing but what is for the security and prosperity of religion, and the glory of the nation: The caution about estates can do no harm, but a man's estate does not qualify him at all to judge of the necessity of giving.
>
> The article of estates was only suppos'd to make a man cautious what he gave, because he was to pay the more of it himself. Now let a man have but sense to know when there is a necessity to give, and that sense back'd with honesty, if he has not one groat in estate, he will be as cautious of giving away the nation's money, as he would be of his own . . . I do not lay so great a stress upon a man's estate.[1]

It is clear that Defoe felt it necessary to construct a political theory to replace the autocratic philosophy of Divine Right. That he went about performing this duty with considerable seriousness, cannot be denied. But it must also be recognized that because Defoe occupied the peculiar position as propagandist in the forefront of the national arena, he was more interested in the practical results of such a theory. Consequently, he was prepared to modify or even sacrifice a principle which no longer served the interest of the nation, as he conceived it. But, aside from political expediency, it is evident that Defoe's critical remarks on social and political issues, considered as a whole, bear a striking resemblance to

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[1] The Six Distinguishing Characters of a Parliament Man, addressed to the Good People of England, (1701), 281-282.

the Leveller tracts of the seventeenth century. Through Defoe's writings the echo of Rainborough's often quoted passage is distinctly heard:

> Really. I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live, as the greatest he, and therefore truly, sir, I think it's clear, that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government.

CHAPTER III

DEFOE AND PARTY POLITICS

The Nature Of The Problem

The concept of a two party system developing in the reign of Charles II and eventually dominating the eighteenth century, is the standard interpretation of the politics of that epoch. The Crown is seen as an institution largely displaced by an aggressive Parliament, wherein two opposing parties fight to transform the nation in either of their own images. Whigs and Tories struggling in this political arena are considered the necessary keys for an understanding of the reigns of the latter Stuarts and Hanoverians. In the Romanes Lecture given by Professor Trevelyan, this view has achieved its classical form. Elsewhere, he writes that in the immediate years after the Revolution of 1688 "rule of England by the contests of the two parties now began in earnest."[1] Others with a similar pre-occupation concerning the significance of party politics write: "Anne's reign owes its importance largely to the fact that it was the age of apprenticeship for

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[1] G.M. Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts, 378.

English parties" and that, "Her reign is remembered for the first appearance of complete party government," whereas "The failure of the coalitions in 1705 and 1711 proved that party government was inevitable."[1] Still another author adds to this view, explaining that the achievement of the Revolution of 1688 "was inevitably to transfer the executive power from the control of the Crown to that of a party."[2]

Undoubtedly, the attempt of contemporary historians to paint the Stuart political scene around the motif of political parties is due partly to their own proximity to the highly developed party system of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The present parties of Great Britain, with their centralized leadership, frequent party conferences, and elaborate national organizations, have tempted historians to magnify the weak embryonic party associations of the eighteenth century, until they too appear in the modern guise of the contemporary party. But it is not exclusively the result of viewing the past through the eyes of the present. There is much that lends itself to such a theory of a two party system, particularly in the reign of Anne; and it cannot be dismissed too lightly. Historians of this orthodox persuasion tend to support their interpretation of party politics by referring to

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[1]I. Dean Jones, The English Revolution: An Introduction to English History (1603-1714), (London, 1931), 205-207.

[2]E. Wingfield-Statford, History of British Civilization, (New York, 1930), 675.

two major political phenomena, which occurred in the first decade of the eighteenth century.

- They see the span of years, stretching from the election of 1705 to 1709, as indicative of the extreme pressure exerted by the Whig Junto to drive out Tory personnel, and replace them, wherever possible, with Whig candidates. Moreover, this drive is seen not only as a Whig attempt to win supremacy in the arena of politics, but as an effort to achieve supremacy in the Established Church, by nominating as many churchmen with whiggish proclivities as possible.[1] In the same manner, the defeat of the Whig Ministry in 1710, launched the Tory party on its swift assent to power, only now, to repeat the game of expelling the Whigs from office in sound party spirit. St. John, in 1711, striving to exclude from office, a moderate Whig like the Duke of Somerset, serves as a touchstone for this interpretation. It would be rash to deny entirely--regardless of how weak party cohesion was--that some party organization did exist, and that there was a program which each party attempted to put into practise. But nevertheless, this orthodox view has come under attack, and some modifications will have to be made, if historical conclusions on the nature of eighteenth century party politics are to square with reality.

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[1]The fullest treatment of this problem is to be found in two studies by N. Sykes, "The General Election of 1705 and the Cathedral Chapter of Exeter", E.H.R., Vol. XLV, (1930), 260-272; and "Queen Anne and The Episcopate", E.H.R., Vol. L, (1935), 433-464.

The attack was begun with the appearance of Professor Namier's unorthodox study on the period of George II.[1] On the basis of elaborate investigation, he explains that comparisons between modern political forms of organization and that of a previous period are wrong:

> . . . there is more resemblance in outer forms and denominations than in underlying realities, so that misconception is very easy. There was no proper party organization about 1760, though party names and cant were current; the names and the cant have since supplied the materials for an imaginary superstructure.

And then departing entirely from the orthodox view, he suggests that: "The political life of the period could be fully described without ever using a party denomination."[2] Namier's study was soon followed by the investigations of Professor D.G. Barnes, who went farther than Namier in extending this idea to the earlier period of the eighteenth century:

> Practically all the evidence points to the conclusion that neither the framers of the Revolution Settlement nor the first three rulers after 1689--William, Mary, and Anne--anticipated the constitutional developments of the next three quarters of a century.

And then attacking the idea of the existence of political parties, he continues: "Neither the two-party system nor the cabinet solidarity and joint responsibility of the nineteenth

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[1] L.B. Namier, The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III, (2 vols; London, 1929).

[2] Ibid, Vol. I, vii.

century was dreamed of in 1689."[1] However, both Namier and Barnes are actually concerned with the late eighteenth century. Two other works by Professors H.N. Fieldhouse and R. Walcott,[2] attempt to apply the scheme of this new investigation to the period of William and Anne. It would appear, indeed, that a "heresy" has grown up in our midst, and that the fate of an orthodox historical approach is to be decided.

Briefly, the Walcott "heresy" consists of the following. The constitutional developments as witnessed by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries--"cabinet solidarity and joint responsibility"--were entirely unimaginable to both William and Anne. And instead of a clear and rigid two party organization, a closer analysis tends to reveal "not two parties but numerous party groups and that there are no examples of a single party in office faced by a single opposition party."[3]

By implication this statement inverts our view of the government. Instead of a unified ministry choosing its support from either Whig or Tory party, the executive would seek support from the entire spectrum of political views, including various powerful family connections with great weight in the Commons, until it had the necessary

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[1]D.G. Barnes, George III and William Pitt: A New Interpretation Based Upon a Study of Their Unpublished Correspondence, (Stanford University Press, 1939), 1.

[2]H.N. Fieldhouse, "Bolingbroke and the Idea of Non-Party Government", History, Vol. XXIII, (1939), 41-56; R. Walcott, English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century, (Oxford, 1956).

[3]Ibid, 4.

commanding majority in the Lower House. In return for support, the executive in its monopolistic position would promise lucrative office as a reward. The concept of the Lower House majority controlling the executive is almost destroyed. The executive, with its "Queen's servants", (that are so often heard of in the reign of Queen Anne) and various members of the House in debt to the executive for favours of office, could dictate to the legislature.[1] Thus, the two party system is challenged by a view of government based on personal manoeuvering of Queen's servants and powerful family connections.

Professor Walcott's theory rests largely on the electoral system of the early eighteenth century. He devotes an entire chapter of his book to examine the nature of this system. The conclusions which he draws are neither new nor startling, but he utilizes them in a unique manner. The most important feature of the electoral system supporting his theory is the "narrow constituencies" and the manner in which they were manipulated. He demonstrates that: "More that 40 per cent of the boroughs had less than 100 voters, that nearly two-thirds had less than 500, that only one-eighth had 1,000 or more electors, and that only three--less than 1½ per cent--of the boroughs had electorates of more than 4,000."[2] The

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[1]Walcott, English Politics, 5.

[2]Ibid, 23.

overwhelming number of small constituencies made it completely feasible for a group of "realistic members of the government and the upper class" to secure effective control of the House of Commons.[1]

With this as a basis, Professor Walcott is able to drop the impersonal concept of Whig and Tory and substitute the more personal family relationship which would seem to square more accurately with early eighteenth century politics. Instead of narrating the in and out activity of Whig and Tory Ministries during the reign of Queen Anne, he interprets the problem in this manner:

> The process by which the Godolphin ministry changed from a Court-Churchill-Harley-Rochester-Nottingham coalition into a Court-Churchill Newcastle-Junto combination is a logical one, if one recognizes that the architects of governments and parliamentary majorities worked within a multi-party framework. This assumption often fits the facts far better than the two-party interpretation; but the party history of the period 1688-1714 has been explained so universally in terms of "Whig and Tory" exclusively, that the many similarities between it and the later eighteenth century political structure have been commonly overlooked. The more one studies the party structure under William and Anne, the less it resembles the two-party system described by Trevelyan in his Romanes Lecture and the more it seems to have in common with the structure of politics in the Age of Newcastle as explained to us by Namier.[2]

The studies cited above, will force historians to re-

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[1] Walcott, English Politics, 23.

[2] Ibid, 160.

linquish old preconceived ideas of eighteenth century politics. Clearly, on closer examination the "political parties" in office lose their homogeneity and reappear as coalitions of interest. Professor Walcott's thesis is indeed, challenging and helps to sharpen the focus of our view of early eighteenth century politics. But the book also contains a danger. To suggest that the period bears greater resemblance to Newcastle's England, and to implement Namier's idea, that it is possible to discuss party politics without the labels of Whig and Tory, is misleading. To question the orthodox view is to seek after a deeper truth; but to go to the extreme of eliminating the concepts of Whig and Tory, is to distort the picture.

If these terms were meaningless, Anne's anguished pleas to be free of either Whig or Tory were of a hallucinatory nature. She wrote to Harley after the election of 1705:

> . . . I must own to you I dread the falling into the hands of either party, and the Whigs have had so many favours showered on them of late, that I fear a very few more will put me insensibly into their power.

Her last entreaty to him was: "I do put an entire confidence in you, not doubting but you will do all you can to keep me out of the power of the merciless men of both parties."[1] In a similar vein she wrote to Godolphin in 1706: "All I desire is my liberty in encouraging and employing all those that con-

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[1]Quoted in Trevelyan's, England Under Queen Anne, Vol. II, 31-32.

cur faithfully in my service, whether they are called Whigs or Tories, not to be tied to one or the other."[1] It would appear that the concepts of Whig and Tory were very real for Anne.

In an entirely different spirit, and with a tinge of regret, Bolingbroke explained the failure of his political career in terms of party politics:

> I am afraid that we came to court in the same disposition as all parties have done; that the principal spring of our actions was to have government of the state in our hands; that our principal views were the conservation of this power, great employments to ourselves, and great opportunities of rewarding those who had helped to raise us, and of hurting those who stood in opposition to us. The view therefore of those amongst us who thought in this manner, was to improve the Queens favour, to break the body of the Whigs, to render their supports useless to them, to fill the employments of the kingdom down to the meanest with Tories.[2]

Neither would it appear that the concept of party politics was strange or unimaginable to Bolingbroke.

And, in still another quarter, it is possible to sense the anxiety of party politics and its full implication at the critical moment of national elections. Godolphin wrote to

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[1] W. Coke, Memoirs of John Duke of Marlborough, (London, 1820), Vol. III, 91. She expressed the same feeling to Marlborough in 1708: "The parties are such bugbears that I dare not venture to write my mind freely of either of them without a cypher for fear of any accident. I pray God keep me out of the hands of both of them." Trevelyan, England Under Queen Anne, Vol. I, 176.

[2] The Works of Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, (London, 1809), Vol. I, 9-11.

Harley after the election of 1705, explaining, in a very matter of fact manner, his opinion of the composition of the House:

> I think as you do in your letter t'other day that the Tories are more numerous in this Parliament than the Whigs, and the Queen's servants much the least part of the three. My computation runs thus: of the 450 that chose the Speaker Tories 190, Whigs 160, Queens servants 100, of the last about 15 perhaps joined with Tories.

After having decided the composition of the House in terms of Whig, Tory and Queen's servants, Godolphin prepared the next step of determining how to manage the Commons:

> From every one we are likely to get from the 190 we shall lose two or three from the 160. And is it not more reasonable and more easy to preserve those who have served and helped us, than those who have basely and ungratefully done all that was in their power to ruin us?[1]

These statemtns make it difficult to minimize the seriousness with which Godolphin considered the two parties. Again, if they were largely imaginary products of the mind of the modern historian, why would Godolphin evaluate the strength of each party in this deliberate manner? It would seem, rather, that to whatever extent family connections may have determined the outcome of an election, the idea of two specific parties, still occupied the thoughts and hopes of many early eighteenth century citizens.

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[1]H.M.C. Portland, Vol. IV, 291.

Lastly, if Professor Walcott's thesis is accepted without modification, how is the historian to account for the torrential river of party pamphlets that flooded the country during Anne's reign? How is the historian to account for the incessant haranguing on the distinction between Whig and Tory, by men like Defoe, Tutchins, Boyer, Swift and Mist? A cursory glance at the writings of any of these men would reveal how ingrained party politics had become in their political consciousness. Surely they were not living in a world of illusions, unable to determine the true nature of politics.

If the orthodox view, as stated above, is no longer tenable, and if Professor Walcott's recent "heresey" does not fully explain all the manifestations of early eighteenth century politics, perhaps a third approach may prove profitable.[1] Let it be assumed that a minimum amount of party oganization did exist, but was modified considerably in form, by the powerful landed families exerting pressure at elections in the small buroughs, as Professor Walcott suggests. Another characteristic appears, which seems to offer a solution to the problem, without forcing the facts to fit any particular picture. When Anne wrote to Godolphin telling him of her desire to escape the clutches of either the Whigs or the Tories, she also revealed what she felt about the existence of the two parties:

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[1]This view rests largely on the writings of K. Feiling and H.N. Fieldhouse, cited above p. 73.

> . . . if I should be so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of either, I shall not imagine myself, though I have the name of Queen, to be in reality but their slave which as it will be my personal ruin, so it will be the destroying of all government. For instead of putting an end to faction, it will lay a lasting foundation of it.[1]

The existence of the parties was very real for Anne, but their being was repellent. Party politics threatened to dissolve the very fabric of society. Nor of course, was this an isolated opinion, but rather it was shared by Harley, Godolphin and Marlborough, to mention but a few. Harley, the most vocal in expressing this idea, wrote to Godolphin, in 1705:

> I take it for granted no party, in the House can carry it for themselves without the Queen's Servants join with them. The foundation is, persons and parties are to come to the Queen, and not the Queen to them. The Queen hath chosen rightly which party she will take in. If the gentlemen of England are made sensible that the Queen is the head, and not a party, everything will be easy, and the Queen will be courted and not a party.[2]

And, he expressed the same idea again, that: "As soon as the Queen has shewn strength and ability to give the law to both sides, then will moderation be truly shewn in the exercise of power without regard to parties only."[3] This was Harley's, as well as many other statesmen's ideal view of society: A society

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[1] W. Coke, Memoirs of John Duke of Marlborough, Vol. III, 91.

[2] Trevelyan, England Under Queen Anne, Vol. II, 82.

[3] Ibid, Vol. III, 63.

rid of party faction, ruled by a monarch, who governed in the interest of the nation. Meanwhile, they were only too aware of the presence of the party system, and saw in it the inevitable disruption of society, should the party broils continue to inflame the nation with mutual recrimination.

However, the nature of the problem of party politcs remains a difficult one, and an ultimate solution has yet to be found. A review of the most recent "authoritative" text on the earlier part of the period indicates this:

> . . . Mr. Ogg's insecure handling of the problem of political parties merely reflects, as in earlier volumes, the current confusion in seventeenth century parliamentary history, and the dearth of hard, original work being done. It is not for one historian to undertake the work of hundreds.[1]

The suggestion is confirmed by Professor Walcott himself:

> . . . how politics actually worked in Queen Anne's reign ought to be decided on the basis of such evidence as is available and pertinent. This should include detailed data on the electoral system, on the composition of the House of Commons, on party organization and on individual party members. The last point is important. The more we know about individuals, the better we can understand the actual working of politics; and in this connection it should be pointed out that the material presented on individuals in this essay presents the distillation of every scrap of biographical data on some 1,200 members of Parliament that could be collected over a period of some fifteen years.[2]

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[1] J.P. Kenyon, "David Ogg, 'England in the Reigns of James II and William III' ", Cambridge Historical Journal, Vol. XII, (1956), 195-196.

[2] Walcott, English Politics, 6.

Professor Walcott's suggestion may be well carried out, by studying Defoe and his relationship to the two political parties. True, he was not a Member of Parliament; but his close initiation into many secrets of government, and his ever active aim to influence public opinion makes him an unique and valuable specimen for investigation in this problem.

As stated previously, in the introduction, a large accumulation of material relating to Defoe's private and political life has been uncovered. And, in the major biographies, this constitutes the greater part of the narrative. But none of these justly celebrated works adequately explains the checquered, political career of Defoe.

The problem as seen by his biographers is how to classify Defoe in a pre-arranged political scheme. Was he a Whig or a Tory?[1] Establish this cardinal point and, theoretically, Defoe should go through the steps of the Political dance as becoming to either political group. But should he violate the established steps and caper erratically from one political extreme to another, what then?

In the reign of William III, he had identified himself with the Whig body yet shortly violated its cherished principles.

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[1]This attitude can be identified with the "orthodox view". It must be noted, however, that Professor Sutherland steers farthest from this dogmatic approach and consequently has achieved a much more accurate picture of Defoe. See his Defoe, 100-101.

Hardly had he fallen victim to that nightmarish experience of the misunderstood pamphlet--The Shortest Way with the Dissenters--and earned the reward of the pillory and prison, than he was vigorously applying himself in making a contract with the moderate Tory, Harley, for his much needed assistance. But his irregular political habits do not end here; rather they tend to accelerate. As Harley's position deteriorated, Defoe prepared to transfer his allegiance to Godolphin. When Godolphin was abruptly dismissed, Defoe veered back again to support the policies of Harely. In due turn, the Hanoverian Succession won for itself--without great solicitation--the accomodation of Defoe's pen. While in this last period, under the Hanoverians, his political movements became almost impossible to follow.

The attempt to label Defoe a Whig or a Tory, is an indication of the failure to analyse Defoe's political position correctly. His biographers are forced to draw upon materials concerning his private life, in order to explain the aberrations and seeming contradictions in his political career. Here it is hoped, will be found the reasons why Defoe refused to remain, or was incapable of remaining, a consistent Whig or Tory.

William Freeman, one of his latest biographers explains:

> By modern standards many of Defoe's chameleon like changes may appear ignominious and indefensible. But he had always, as a final

> justification the support of his wife and children at Stoke Newington to consider.[1]

Sutherland, in what is perhaps, the finest biography, continues in a similar strain:

> I have constantly reminded myself that for many years he was in the front line of political warfare, a man upon whom many conflicting motives played and who was continually fighting himself no less than his opponents. His voyage through life was concentrated upon keeping the boat afloat. Such considerations should be taken into account when one is inclined to talk too easily of principles and consistency.[2]

Lastly, Paul Dottin who has contributed greatly to Defoe studies, remarks in a much more cynical manner:

> Comme Bunyan, il se recueillit sa prison, mais il tira de ses réflexions des conclusions bien différentes. Bunyan avait résolu de vivre en Dieu et pûr Dieu; Defoe décida que le but de la vie était le bonheur matériel et que, pour l'atteindre, il fallait toujours soutenir les gens au pouvoir: l'opportunisme à outrance fut dès lors en politique sa ligne de conduite.[3]

In all three cases, Defoe's political behaviour is considered irregular, because he seemed to refuse to be pinned down to one specific party for any duration: he appears as an opportunist, or as a petty politician, buffeted by the storms of political life, seeking refuge, now in one haven and then

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[1] W. Freeman, The Incredible Defoe, 199.

[2] Sutherland, Defoe, ix.

[3] Dottin, Defoe et Ses Romans, 111.

in another. The same evidence is used either to apologize for, or to criticize, his actions. And, in all cases, the evidence drawn upon is from his personal life, as though his own political views, ideas, and writings would not supply a solution for his political apostasy.

This chapter will present Defoe's written views on party politics before attempting to establish him within the ranks of any party.

Some Definitions Of Parties

The venereal contagion which spread through Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, was finally given the name of Syphilis in 1530, by Fracastoro, an Italian physician. Until then, and even after, Europeans alluded to the disease in a less scientific manner, preferring to label it according to its supposed national origin. The Italians suffering the ravages of French invasion, referred to it as the French disease; the French were quick to reply, by calling it the Italian disease. In eastern Europe the Russians named it the Polish disease; whereas in Asia, both Japanese and Indians complimented the Portuguese by calling it the Portuguese disease. Apparently, the English were never considered responsible for the contagion and bore no onus for its penetration of Europe. They never achieved eponymous fame as did the French, Italian, Polish and Portuguese.

But, in the first decade of the eighteenth century, Defoe diagnosed a disease which he considered native to England. He of course named it the "English Disease".[1] The chief symptom of this affliction was acute party strife within the nation accompanied by hate, suspicion and intolerance of all others. Defoe considered the disease of party politics far more harmful than the venereal infection which plagued Europe. The "English Disease" not only affected the individual, but threatened to destroy society as a whole. The seriousness with which Defoe considered the plague of party politics should not be minimized. Almost all his political tracts contain some warning of the dangers inherent in this activity; while entire runs of his Review contain the repetitive advice to abandon party politics.

During his career, Defoe often defined the meaning of Whig and Tory; but he also showed his awareness of the numerous splinter groups that complicated English politics:

> In matters of Politicks the numerous kinds have obtain'd the sir names of Court-party and Country-party, Tories, Whigs, Trimmers, Loyalists, Royalists, Commonwealths-men, Williamites, Jacobites, High-Church, Low Church, and No Church, Non Jurants or Church Dissenters, Church Whigs, and abundance of other sorts, which the custom of the Times has been pleas'd to give Titles to.[2]

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[1] Jure Divino, Book XI.

[2] Advice to All Parties, (1705), 2.

It was with the concepts of Whig and Tory that he largely occupied himself; although there is little in his conventional definitions which throw any additional light on the nature of the two parties. His real contribution lay with the comparisons which he drew later between the two parties.

In defining the term Whig, he first offered an etymological account:

> As to the Word Whig, it is Scots, the use of it began there, when the Western Men, call'd Cameronians, took Arms frequently for their Religion . . . it afterwards became a Denomination to the Poor Harrass'd People . . . who being unmercifully Persecuted by the Government, against all Law and Justice thought they had a Civil Right to their Religious Liberties, and therefore frequently Resisted the Arbitrary Power of their Princes.[1]

Whenever Defoe defined the term Whig, he consistently emphasized three points: Firstly, that the Whigs have always insisted on the supremacy of civil right by law; secondly, that men have a legal right in choosing their religion;[2] and thirdly, that armed resistance against tyranny and oppression is a legitimate action. But he confined this definition of Whig to abstract argument. He was very much aware that the Whig body had gone through a considerable metamorphosis in its long history. The old Whig, in the court of Charles II, was a

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[1] Review, Sept. 16, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 297.

[2] On this point Defoe explained, that honest Churchmen, shocked by injustice visited upon the Dissenters joined together and "began the name of Whig". Present State of Parties in Great Britain, (1712), 6.

different creature when compared to the modern Whig of Queen Anne's day; referring to the old Whig he explained:

> You were born in former times, when Governments gave constant Cause of Complaint and Discontent to the Subject, when Taxes were given by them that received Part of the Spoil, and suffer'd themselves to be bribed to betray their Country, when money was obtained by Collusion, extorted by Rapine, and expended in Luxury, when Iniquity triumphed, and vice sat rampant above Law or good manners, and here you learnt so constantly to rail at Government, that Habit prevailing upon Judgment, you forgot to distinguish the subject, or enquire whether with or without cause; in pursuit of this temper, you fall foul without distinction upon the innocent and the guilty, and forgetting that the Government is in Hands after your own Heart. . .[1]

A party whose origin was traced to a period before the Revolution of 1688, and whose cause for existence was opposition, had largely outgrown its use. Unable to readjust itself to the post-revolutionary atmosphere, this same party turned on itself and threatened to disrupt government and society. From the heroic position of opposition, the Whig party had become a selfish body intent on sharing the party spoils. Contrary to the "Old Whig", the "Modern Whig":

> . . . is a Man who makes loud Clamours in his Pretensions to these gold-like Qualities, only to wheedle Fools into a Belief of his Honesty, that he may have it in his Power to betray them, and fill his own Pockets. That rails at Prerogative, when out of Power; but runs it up to its

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[1] Review, May 25, 1708, Vol. V, Book XII, 98. Defoe is here referring to the frictions that continually erupted between the Whig Junto and the Godolphon-Marlborough leadership.

> highest degree of Madness, when employ'd in Making Grants to him, or his Confederates.[1]

He defined the term Tory in parallel fashion:

> The word Tory is Irish, and was first made use of there, in the Time of Queen Elizabeth's Wars in Ireland; it signified a kind of Robbers, who being Listed in neither Army, prey'd in General upon their Country.

referring to the modern Tory in England, he continued:

> These Men for their Eminent Preying upon their Country, and their Cruel Bloody Disposition, began to shew themselves so like the Irish Thieves and Murtherers aforesaid, that they quickly got the name of Tories.[2]

In the same manner that he attributed certain characteristics to the Whigs; he generally associated arbitrary government, religious persecution and non-resistance with the Tories.[3] A more prejudiced definition would be difficult to find, except in the midst of the Whig propagandists. Defoe was eventually forced to abandon such untenable ground for two reasons: Firstly, the Tory party really contained several political groups of different shading, which defied his sweeping generalization; and secondly, the action of the Tory party in office proved to be quite other than what inflamed Whig writers had predicted would happen. An example of Defoe redefining his terms is interesting:

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[1] Rogues on Both Sides. In which are the Characters of some R_____'s not yet described; with a True description of an Old Whig and a Modern Whig; an old Tory and a Modern Tory; High Flyer, or Motly. (1711), 10.

[2] Review, Sept. 16, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 296-297.

[3] Ibid, 295-298.

> The old Tory is an honester Man that the Modern Whig; for he is one, who plainly, tho' very foolishly and absurdly tells us, that we are ordain'd by God, to be Slaves to one Man's Humour and Will; and that to resist him on any Occassion whatever, tho' in defence of all Things sacred and dear, is to incur eternal Damination . . . Whereas, the Modern Whig tells you, that you have Rights and Liberties, and may defend them, and yet usurps upon them . . . The Old Tory may be looked upon as a Fool or Mad-man, but the Modern Whig can Only pass for a Knave. . . . . All that has been said of the Old Whig, may be repeated of the Modern Tory.[1]

On closer examination he distinguished between the High-Flying Tory and the Jacobite. He considered the Jacobites the true enemy, but spoke of their position with a modicum of respect. The Jacobites openly condemned the Revolution, and the Revolutionary Settlement; they were opposed to Queen Anne on the basis of the disputed succession; but essentially they remained men of principle. Their views were based upon beliefs for which they were willing to suffer. True, the Jacobites constituted a dangerous enemy, but it was possible to come to mortal grips with them. It was never too difficult to spot their presence:

> If any bad news is arrived in England, if our ships are taken our enterprizes Disappointed, our Troops routed, if the French prosper, and their armies threaten; constant smiles make smooth his countenance, and he earnestly seeks out some brother of the tribe, whom he

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[1] Rogues on Both Sides, 20.

may safely and freely rejoyce with.

> If the enemy are beaten, if their lines are forc'd, their counts marquisses, and generals taken; if their ships are brought into Plymouth, if our Fleet is gone into the Streights, if the Catalans take arms, if the Queen goes to St. Pauls, and the Nation gives Thanks, the Chagrin of his Countenance Discovers the Repinings of his Soul; Hypocondriack vapours fly into His Head, and he is overrun with the Spleen, when he talks of these Things. . .[1]

He could not approach the High Flying Tory with the same composure. Perhaps this was due to the increasing similarity between Whig and Tory in the post-revolutionary period. He was determined to fight the Jacobite; but it was always his hope to convert the Tory. Years of journalistic effort and frustration in trying to convince the Tory of the soundness of the Revolutionary Settlement are probably the basic reasons for his animosity against them. Unlike the Jacobites, the Tories and the Church of England men had actually made possible the Revolution of 1688, and Defoe would not allow them to forget.[2] Yet, it was still the same Tory body that threatened to betray the Revolution. Defoe explained that the High Flying Tory:

> . . . is a man whose Character is neither to be found in his Pretensions, or in his Practice . . . He appears for the Queen, he

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[1] Review, Sept. 8, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 321.

[2] The Ballance: or, A New Test of High Fliers of All Sides, (1705), 4-5. See also the Review, Aug. 15, 1706, Vol. III, Book III, 390.

> acts on a Revolutionary Scheme, Moves in a Sphere of Liberty; he protests his Duty to the present Government, and his zeal for the Constitution ___ But his Actions have all a secret Retrospect to the direct contraries of all his Pretences; he moves entirely in a Jacobite Sphere, he prays for the Queen, but wishes for the return of her Mortal Enemy; he holds up his Hand for the Constitution, but whispers his desire of its Destruction; his End and Design is completely opposite to his Pretences.[1]

This, Defoe could not understand--the active participation of the Tories in the Revolution and their half-hearted acceptance of the Revolutionary Settlement. Under the most critical circumstances, the Whigs and Tories were capable of uniting to eject James II. In a similar way, the predominantly Tory Church of England could unite with Non-Conformity "in opposition to popery", but short of the Catholic threat, the religious bodies fell out.[2] It would seem, however, that on second thought, he offered himself and his readers some consolation:

> Papists, Non-Jurors, and profess'd Jacobites, steer directly for France, to bring Home the Pretender . . . Our High Flying Abjuring Jacobites in England, steer the same Way, tho' their Sails stand bent for another Course-- . . . But the meer Tory, the meer High Church Man, however, he may set out with them; however his Zeal against the Dissenters, and his Ignorance of the Design of the Jackish Party, may carry him to join with them, and they may set out together; however they may appear as one Fleet--it is evident they cannot sail far together, for they must part at last.[3]

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[1] Review, Dec. 2, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 429-430.

[2] Ibid, Sept. 25, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 349-350.

[3] Ibid, Dec. 9, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 441-43.

The permanent traces of the Tory role in the rebellion against James II, were sufficient proof that the party--no matter how reluctant--would remain true to the Revolutionary Settlement.

Frequently, he addressed the Tories, stating the preconditions for a union of parties:

> If you will . . . declare your selves to believe, that Parliamentary Authority has a Superiour Right to that of primogeniture or inheritance, and can; and may lawfully limit Succession; that the Revolution was a legal Re-assumption of an abused authority, and removing it, because of Male Administration, to the Hand of another. If you will come over to this, something may be, there may be Hopes of you.[1]

But the union was long in coming. Defoe eventually placed the blame for this on the Jacobites, who played on ". . . the blindness and the folly of this nation, in suffering their senses to be stupified and Bewildred with the empty arguments of a Party whose plain design is to embroil us all . . ." His disgust for these proceedings ring with sincerity:

> . . . it is with difficulty I restrain myself in this case, to see Protestants, Fellow Christians, Neighbours, and English Men, Bite and Devour one another, while a Party of Men stand behind the Curtain, Loo them on, as Butchers do their Bull-Dogs, and Shout, Halloo, and Rejoyce, when they see the Blood of the Unchristian Wounds, Stain both Parties; the Object is Melancholy and Moving, and he must have a very small Concern for the Good of his Native Country, who can see it, and not be sensibly affected with the sad Consequence of it.[2]

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[1] *Review*, Sept. 11, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 326.(*Sic*)

[2] *Ibid*, Sept. 22, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 347. "To have a union either of interest, charity, or parties must be the

These definitions offer one important clue. It is evident that Defoe considered the nature of the two parties drastically changed. He sensed, what is only revealing itself today, that the Revolution of 1688 had robbed the parties of their major significance;[1] unfortunately, however, they continued to exist as atrophying appendages, poisoning society. As many times as he defined the parties, and redefined them, because of the restless changes in English politics, he continued to expose their dangerous, and corroding effect upon the nation.

"The Pulpit, the Tongue, and the Press",[2] all contributed to the spread of faction within society. In each case, the result of internal division weakened the nation in its crucial struggle with France. Even in the religious sphere, the nation was at war. Defoe, explained: "I am sorry to affirm . . . That the Inferiour Clergy are at this time, the dead weight against the Nation's Settlement and prosperity; I am sorry to say they are the general obstructors of Peaceable, Healing, and Moderate Principles."[3] By harassing the

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most absolutely destructive thing to the Jacobite party that can happen; while it lasts they are entirely foreclo'd, their only Hope consists in forming a Breach, if possible, among us, and the method taken to do this; are the only Engines to which we owe the invidious title of High and Low Church; by which unhappy distinctions the rage and malice of the party is continued and encreased." Review, Aug. 30, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 307.

[1]H.N. Fieldhouse, "Bolingbroke and the Idea of Non-Party Government", History, (1939), 44.

[2]Review, Nov. 1, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 413.

[3]Ibid, Nov. 10, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 426.

Dissenters with threats of legislation, limiting religious freedom (Occasional Conformity), the Low Church only succeeded in alienating an important minority group, and added to the religious strife of the country. Defoe appealed to the "Dignified Clergy" of "piety and moderation" to apply themselves to heal the rift between the Established Church and Non-Conformity. He reminded them that it was in their ". . . Power to unite the Civil as well as Religious Interest of the Nation".[1] While William III reigned, the relationship between Church and Dissent was cordial; but when William died, the Jacobites seized the opportunity to misrepresent the Dissenters in the eyes of the Established Church, as wild Independents who would destroy the Church.[2] The Jacobites, also stressed the link between the Dissenters and the Whig party, drawing the religious question into the political cauldron.[3]

Political faction even extended into areas of trade:

> I took the Liberty to complain of our Modern Politicians, who are so very fond of running down the Notion of Trade in this Nation, that they would fain make Land and Trade fall into our fatal National Division of Whig and Tory, and the worst misfortune is, that they choose Sides to the greatest Disadvantage imaginable, I mean to them selves, viz. That they make Land be High-Church, and Trade as Whig . . .[4]

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[1] Review, Nov. 15, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 434, 435.

[2] The Ballance: Or, A New Test of the High Fliers of All Sides, (1705), 2-3.

[3] The Protestant Jesuit Unmask'd, 46.

[4] Review, May 5, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XIX, 69.

At the moment when every fibre of the country's strength was being taxed, the pointless struggle of party politics threatened to overwhelm the nation and leave her exhausted, in the face of the French threat. Throughout Defoe's career, the effort to calm the raging battle of party politics, remained his most important chosen task. As a devout non-Conformist, and as a member of the vigorous trading class, Defoe had a vision of England in her true greatness: untrammelled by party strife, his England was ruled by a Protestant king within the confines of law, leading a vast coalition against the scourge of Europe--France. But instead of this picture of a well ordered nation in complete possession of itself, he found that irrational:

> . . . violencies of Parties are now come to that extravagant Biggottry to Men, and not Principle; that if any Demagogue cries out in a Shower of Rain, that it rains butter'd Turnips, the whole Party will face one down, that it is so, nay, believe it so far themselves that they'll bring out their Pewter Platters and Earthen Dishes, and Copper and Brass vessels, to catch them; and eat whatever they receive with a perfect Israelitish Faith, since, it seems to them to be no other, than their Leaders tell them it is.[1]

He could well exclaim, "O that we could have justice done in every Complaint, without making it a Party-Quarrel."[2] As he

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[1]Rogues on Both Sides, 5.

[2]Review, Nov. 1, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 449.

used the Review to neutralize the battle of the parties, so he devoted his poetry to expose the curse of parties:

> And seeds of faction mix the Crimson flood.
> Eternal discord brood upon the soil,
> And universal strifes the State embroil.
> In every family the temper reigns,
> In every action seed of gall remains.
> The very laws of peace create dispute
> And makes them quarrel who should execute.
> Their valu'd Constitutions are so lame,
> That Governing the Governments inflame.
> Wild Aristocracy torments the State,
> And People their own miseries create.
> In vain has Heav'n its choicer Gifts bestow'd,
> And strives in vain to do a Wilful Nation Good:
> Such is the Peoples Folly, such their Fate,
> As all decrees of Peace anticipate.
> Immortal Jarrs in ev'ry class appear,
> Conceiv'd in strife, and nurs'd to Civil War.[1]

The result of this political division was twofold: Firstly, it prevented England from achieving the domestic tranquility necessary for the growth of manufacture and trade; secondly, it thwarted her true role of leading the great coalition of powers against France. Instead, Defoe proposed:

> . . . a harmony of Councils for the Publick Good, an exact conjunction between Queen, Lords and Commons, for the carrying on the safety, welfare and happiness of the Nation, for the ready executing matters both of peace, war and trade; when all agree in love and charity at home, vigour and force abroad; and every attempt against this, is crush'd by unanimous council and application; what can happen amiss to such a People? What have we to fear with respect to our selves? It adds a singular vigour to our preparations, a cer-

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[1]The Dyet of Poland a Satyr, (1705).

> tain terror to our arms, and promises success in a manner different to every thing that ever went before it.[1]

Defoe's writings clearly show how preoccupied he was with the problem of party politics. And, as has been stated, even if his definitions of the parties fail to add much to the understanding of early eighteenth century political life, one fact does emerge--his relentless fight against the existence of political organizations, which he believed, divided the nation against itself. To what extent Defoe actually implemented his views on non-party politics in practical life is the problem of the ensuing pages. Only by examining his political actions on important issues, whether in the reigns of William III, Anne or George I, can it be determined to what party he belonged, if any.

Defoe And William III

From the date of publication of Defoe's first political tract in 1689, to the end of the reign of William III, Defoe was responsible for roughly thirty-five pamphlets and poems, almost all containing some word of support for William's rule. His first pamphlets: Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution (1689); and The Englishman's Choice and True Interest, In a Vigorous Prosecution of the War Against France; And Serving King William and Queen Mary, And Acknowledging Their

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[1]Review, Dec. 6, 1705, Vol. II, Book V, 470.

Right (1694), set out openly to defend the Revolution and justify William's seizure of power. In other pamphlets and poems: A New Discovery of an Old Intreague: A Satyr Level'd at Treachery and Ambition (1691); The True-Born Englishman (1701); The Villainy of Stock Jobbers Detected, and the Cause of the Late Run upon the Bank and the Bankers Discovered and Considered (1701); and The Present State of Jacobitism Considered (1701), Defoe attempted to expose all who were working against the Revolutionary Settlement. In short, these tracts and poems were written with the hope of convincing the nation of the legitimacy of James' expulsion, and of William's assumption of power.

More important, perhaps, were the numerous tracts which he wrote on specific problems, such as, the issue of a standing army, or the role of England in the anti-French coalition. On the basis of these writings, Defoe appears as a fervent supporter of William III. It is also on this basis that he first earned the appellation of Whig. To some degree this verdict is justifiable. Before the important election of 1701, Defoe wrote a pamphlet entitled, The Six Distinguishing Characters of a Parliament Man, address'd to the Good People of England. The purpose of the pamphlet was obvious: in 1698, the nation had elected a strong body of Tories with isolationist feelings, Defoe was determined to convince the nation that it should not

repeat the mistake, should the French Monarch continue to threaten the peace of Europe. Because the Whigs were less reluctant to oppose Louis XIV, Defoe's pamphlet read very much like a professional appeal to elect a Whig government. It is understandable that his contemporaries labeled him a Whig; but a closer examination of his political activity defies so abrupt a classification.

Of the many differences existing between the Whig and Tory mentalities, the attitude of the citizen towards a standing army was generally considered a reliable indicator of that person's politics. Popular myth identified all Tories as staunch supporters of the King's right to possess a standing army; whereas the Whigs, in this fantasy, were seen as the active opponents of a military force, which as they perceived, was the diabolical threat to English freedom. The myth grew until it was finally embellished with a new twist. In the immediate moments of '88, William III was seen as the private possession of the Whig party. The Whigs, emerging from the level of a minority opposition, to the pinnacle of power within the nation, now found themselves encumbered with an armour of antiquated political slogans. Were they to persist with arguments of a "limited prerogative", and staunch resistance against a "standing army"? Or rather, did not the coalition with the new King (which they thought insoluble), transform

the old idea of a Whig party in opposition to a corrupt court, fighting for "parliamentary freedom?" It would seem that the old idea had become an obstacle in the way of their own progress. It was generally thought that the Whigs had faced this dilemma, had rapidly made their decision, and that the old ideas, like useless baggage, had been quickly jettisoned. Swift could then write of the post revolutionary period:

> To be against a standing army in time of peace, was all High-Church, Tory and Tantivy . . . To raise the prerogative above law for serving a term, was low-church and Whig. The opinion of the majority in the House of Commons, especially of the country-party or landed interest, was high-flying and rank Tory. To exalt the Kings supremacy beyond all precedent, was low-church, Whiggish and moderate . . . To resume the most exorbitant grants that were ever given to a set of profligate favourites, and apply them to the public, was the very quintessence of Toryism.[1]

A closer view of the scene, however, produces a much less consistent picture of political reversals than Swift's colourful generalizations would lead one to believe. Nor would it appear that all the Whigs had the intellectual energy to free themselves from an encrusted habit of thought which had warped their action throughout the seventeenth century,[2]

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[1]Jonathan Swift, The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, Ed. H. Davis. (Oxford, 1940), Vol. III, 164.

[2]As for the other view of identifying the Royal party as the force supporting the creation of a standing army, that too is no longer tenable. Trevelyan writes quite emphatically: "The Cavaliers in 1661 were no less . . . hostile to a standing army than the Presbyterians in 1660 . . .

There was to be no standing army. Not the least beneficial result of Oliver's rule was that the party most favour-

particularly, in reference to the question of a standing army.

The signing of the Peace Treaty of Ryswick made a fight over the army question certain. It was too much for William to hope, that years of propaganda against a standing army would remain dormant when eighty-seven thousand men were under arms, in an England now at peace. Regardless of the continued danger from France, the antipathy of English men against such an army was so great that the explosion soon followed.

The first rumblings were made by the pamphlets that fell from the pens of John Trenchard and Walter Moyle. Both men were writers in the avant garde of Whig propaganda. Trenchard had occupied himself by formulating reform schemes for church and state;[1] while Moyle served in the Commons as a reliable Whig from 1695 to 1698.[2] Their first major pamphlet,

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able to Kingly power henceforth was least favourable to the instrument by which Kingly power is maintained; no loyalist captain of militia could see a company of regulars straggling friendlessly from their bad quarters in one public house to their grudging welcome in the next, without twinges of bitter memory and jealous fear." England Under the Stuarts, 280. See also D. Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 440; Macaulay, History of England,Vol. IV, 332.

[1]A. Gordon, "Trenchard, John", The Dictionary of National Biography.

[2]W.P. Courtney,"Moyle, Walter", The Dictionary of National Biography.

An Argument Shewing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government, and Absolutely Destructive to the Constitution of the English Monarchy,[1] drew immediate rebuttal from William's supporters and that, in turn, added, to the Trenchard-Moyle standards, the alliance of the Whiggish, Reverend Samuel Johnson. Johnson's preoccupation had been to turn the pulpit into a sounding board of Whig ideas. He too joined the fray, aiming particularly at William's lord chancellor, Sir John Somers, who had attempted to answer Trenchard and Moyle with his Ballancing Letter.[2]

It is undeniable that the most vocal opposition to the standing army came from the Whig ranks; while, at the same time, William was forced to rely for support on his ministerial Whigs and the ubiquitous Defoe. The Whig party, far from going over to the King's support en masse, was badly split and showed unmistakable signs of confusion.[3]

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[1]Articles identified by S. Halkett and J. Laing, Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature.

[2]Halkett and Laing identify A Letter Ballancing the Necessity of Keeping a Land Force in Times of Peace With the Dangers that May Follow It, as being Somers! The Johnson pamphlet entitled A Confutation of a Late Pamphlet Intituled, A Letter Ballancing the Necessity of Keeping a Land-Force in Times of Peace; with the Dangers that May Follow It, attacked Somers and is also identified by Halkett and Laing. For Johnson see also the D.N.B.

[3]Macaulay had recognized that "On this occasion the Tories though they felt strongly, wrote but little. The paper war was almost entirely carried on between two sections of the Whig party . . ." History of England, Vol. IV, 335-336. Similarly, Clarke mentions that "The Whigs were divided and undisciplined . . .", The Later Stuarts, (Oxford, 1949), 180-181; also E. Arnold Miller, "Some Arguments Concerning a Standing Army", Journal of Modern History, Vol. XVIII, (1946), 313.

The Whig anti-standing army pamphlets had a set form about them. In general they began by showing how almost all nations originally lost their liberty because of a standing army, which, in an hour of peace, had seized control of government. And, where this had not occurred, the inevitable friction caused by a rough and vulgar soldiery continued to harass the productive citizens. Arguing against the use of the army, these writers compared the virtue and superiority of a swift navy and a people's militia to the inherent dangers of an army. The two former would do away with the threat to England's liberty; the navy had always supported parliament, and the militia comprising the sons of England would certainly safeguard those liberties. Moreover, militia and navy would be infinitely cheaper than a standing army. And, to cap their arguments, the anti-army writers questioned the sphere of England's interest. In full agreement that it lay upon the sea, and not on the continent, they could attack the purposefulness of the army from yet another angle. In this case, a navy would be quite sufficient to protect English interests. The only precaution would be, not to enter any continental obligation which the English navy could not fulfil.[1] With England pursuing her natural interests on the high seas, any standing army at home would only jeopardize England's freedom.

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[1] Trenchard, J., An Argument, Shewing, that a Standing Army is inconsistent with A Free Government, and Absolutely destructive to the Constitution of the English Monarchy, (London, 1697).

This disarmament propaganda, seen against a European situation threatening to erupt into open hostility, seems incredibly foolish. The transition of seventeenth century Whig concepts, induced a rigidity that many Whigs were incapable of overcoming--even in the face of a new danger. An outmoded idea no longer had any contact with a current reality. Perhaps this development is a concrete manifestation of what Goethe meant when he wrote, "Every idea operates tyrannically as soon as it emerges into public recognition, the advantages it brings with it are transformed all too soon into disadvantages."

Defoe veered sharply from the position taken by other Whig pamphleteers. He plunged into the pamphlet war, criticizing obsolete ideas, heaping ridicule on unrealistic assumptions and offering advice which had deep implication. Defoe's three pamphlets[1] were companion studies to Somers' Ballancing Letter. In all, they quite demolished the anti-army position.

The conventional Whig belief that an invasion of the island was a very slight risk, and that, in any case, the people's militia (in place of the sacrificed army) could defend England, did not satisfy Defoe. His own remembrance of

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[1] Some Reflections on a Pamphlet Lately Published Entituled, An Argument Shewing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government, and Absolutely Destructive to the Constitution of the English Monarchy. (1697); An Argument Shewing that a Standing Army, with the Consent of Parliament, is not Inconsistent with A Free Government (1698); A Brief Reply to the History of Standing Armies in England, with Some Account of the Authors (1698).

Monmouth's invasion and, more particularly, of William's successful penetration of the island, made the Whig attitude seem flippant. What would prevent the French from repeating a similar action? But to Defoe, the height of conceit was the blind belief and faith that the Whigs had in a citizens' militia. Defoe was a voracious reader and abreast of modern technological developments. He realized that:

> War is no longer an accident, but a trade and they that will be anything in it must serve a long apprenticeship to it: Human wit and industry has raised it to such a perfection; and it is grown such a piece of mannage, that it requires people to make it their whole employment; war is now like the gospel, men must be set apart for it; the Gentleman of the club may say what they please, and talk such fine things at home of the natural courage of the English but I must tell them courage is now grown less a qualification, of a soldier that formerley; not but that tis necessary too, but management is the principle art of war.[1]

It was not a question of preference or distaste, militia or standing army; rather it was a necessity induced by a revolution in the science of warfare. There was no choice to begin with.

Trenchard's insulting remarks, referring to the vulgar and mischievous redcoats, played directly into Defoe's hand. Here, he could assume a very censorious tone and accuse his opponent of lacking patriotic pride in the heroic achievements

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[1] A Brief Reply to the History of the Standing Armies in England, 14.

of English soldiers on the continent. These remarks did not require any ingenuity and are more the sign of Defoe the journalist than the constructive thinker.

These arguments were the mere preliminaries, the vital question was still to be posed; did a standing army constitute a threat to liberty, and if so, could this be overcome. Defoe was keenly aware of the backlog of prejudice that existed against the army. It was his intention, therefore, to change the nature of the question so as to make the dependence of the army on parliament certain from the start. Moreover, the axiom upon which he built, stated categorically the "magnipotent" quality of parliament.[1] He wanted his audience to understand the importance of the wording of any such agreement:

> In the claim of right, presented to the present King and which he swore to observe as the Pacta Conventa of the kingdom, it is declared 'That the raising or keeping of a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be by consent of parliament, is against law. This plainly lays the whole stress of the argument not against the thing itself, a standing army, nor against the season in time of peace, but against the circumstance, consent of parliament.[2]

Clearly, the standing army in his view was to be the creature of parliament. To explain more fully the meaning of "by consent of parliament" he wrote:

> I humbly suppose (this) may among other things

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[1] See above, 43.

[2] An Argument Shewing that a Standing Army, with the Consent of Parliament, is not inconsistent with a Free Government.

> include these particulars. 1. That they be raised and continued not by a tacit, but explicit consent of parliament; or to speak directly, by an act of parliament. 2. That they be continued no longer than such explicite consent shall limit and appoint. If these two heads are granted in the word consent, I am bold to affirm, such an army is not inconsistent with a free government.[1]

This concept of the army's dependence is consistent with his views on the nature of a limited monarchy, and its counterpart of parliament holding the reins of authority. But, if his audience had not yet reached that state of complete trust in the efficacy of parliament, he was willing to placate their timidity by offering their own solution as an additional sop:

> . . . the sword is in part in the hand of the people, already by the Militia, who, as the argument says are the people, themselves. And how are they ballanc'd? Tis true, they are commissioned by the king, but they may refuse to meet twice, till the first pay is reimburst to the country: And where shall the King raise it without a parliament? That very militia would prevent him. So that our law therefore in authorizing the militia to refute the command of the King, tacitly puts the sword into the hands of the people.[2]

Fundamentally, the pith of the argument lay in the careful qualification "with the consent of parliament". This one phrase transformed a struggle between king and opposition to a purely private matter that could be settled by Parliament alone.

The issue of a standing army can be seen as a domestic

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[1] An Argument Showing, that a Standing Army, with Consent of Parliament is not Inconsistent with a Free Government, 13.

[2] Ibid, 17.

problem concerning the Whig-Tory struggle, or as a matter of opposition to the Crown, or again, as an illustration of the tenacity of dogma. But it also contained implications in a totally different area.

Defoe was not only making capital of an issue in order to propagate his conviction of parliament's supremacy in government, he was also writing for a particular international situation. Convinced as he was that the Peace of Ryswick was only a temporary cessation of hostilities, he was determined to awaken his audience to the danger of the outbreak of war, which he expected to follow the death of the sickly Spanish monarch. England's modern trading position in the world had made the magnificent Elizabethan view:

> This other Eden, d@mi paradise,
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall
> Or as a moat defensive to a house,
> Against the envy of less happier lands . . .

a mere rhetorical flourish. England's commercial interests were no longer confined by the Channel moat; rather they were dispersed over the globe and were inextricably woven into the continental fabric as well. Defoe fully realized how greatly changed was England's interest in the late seventeenth century as compared to an earlier period. Thus he accompanied all

his arguments with the admonition to "carry war into your enemies' country, and always keep it out of your own",[1] a course which "makes it absolutely necessary to have always some troops ready to send to the assistance of those Confederates if they are invaded."[2] It is not for "defence from insurrection or invasion" but "to beat the enemy before he comes to our door . . . Our business is to preserve Flanders, to garrison the frontier towns, and be in the field in conjunction with the Confederate Armies. This is the way to prevent invasions and descents."[3]

Seen in this light, the controversy appears as the conscious realization in Defoe's mind, of England's new position as a world power, with definite continental responsibilities. But this must be continued in the following chapter discussing foreign policy.

One important question remains: How effective were Defoe's efforts to invalidate the residual canons of Whig theory, or, more pointedly, to what extent did he mould public opinion in favour of a standing army. His biographers tend to agree that this argument helped salvage something of the greatly reduced army with which William had to remain content.[4]

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[1] Some reflections on a Pamphlet Lately Published Entituled an Argument Shewing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government, 5.

[2] Ibid, 5.

[3] Ibid, 6.

[4] W. Minto, Defoe, 15; Sutherland, Defoe, 62; B. FitzGerald, Daniel Defoe, 106.

Historical evidence must judge more harshly of his labours.

William opened the third session of parliament in December, 1697. The members of the House had already been exposed to the barrage of pamphlet literature on the issue of the army. William proceeded to emphasize in his formal speech that:

> The circumstances of affairs abroad are such, that I think myself obliged to tell you my opinion, that, for the present England cannot be safe without a landforce; and I hope we shall not give those who mean us ill, the opportunity of effecting that, under the notion of a peace, which they could not bring to pass by a war. -- I doubt not but you, gentlemen of the House of Commons, will take these particulars into your consideration, in such a manner as to provide the necessary supplies which I do very earnestly recommend to you.[1]

Apparently the leaven of the Whig pamphleteers and Tory antipathy to William had begun to work, and a determined opposition against a standing army rose to overwhelming proportions. On December 10, Harley opened the attack on the King's speech. His immediate suggestion was to pay and disband all the land forces raised since September 29, 1680.[2] His motion was immediately seconded by Howe.[3] In quick succession, Harley's words of criticism were repeated by following speakers, who were vehementally opposed to a standing army. After the completion of debate, the ministerial Whigs

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[1]Cobbett, Parliamentary Debates, 1809, Vol. V, 1166.

[2]Calendar of State Papers, Vol. VIII, 1697, 505-507; Luttrell, Brief Relation of State Affairs, Vol. IV, 317.

[3]Ibid, Vol. VIII, 1697, 506.

were overwhelmed by a vote in favour of Harley's proposal, by 185 to 148.[1] For the moment, the situation lingered midway between an efficient standing army and no army.

It soon appeared that a compromise would be the final answer on the question. The last reading of the Bill, on the nineteenth of January, 1699, determined that the army was to consist of not more that seven thousand native-born subjects. In order to sustain the army, a sum of £350,000 was allowed. The vote on this last occasion was now 221 in support of the Bill to 154.[2] It should be noted that solid Whigs like Pelham, Hartington, Onslow, Molesworth and Methwen voted with the opposition, much to Montague's dismay.[3] It is little wonder that William was dismayed and perplexed by the enigma of party politics.

Swift's original assertion therefore, contained much truth, but was nevertheless a hasty oversimplification. In regard to Defoe, it had particular significance. It revealed the ability that Defoe possessed, to emancipate himself from principles that had degenerated into dogmas. Regardless of how unsuccessful he was in turning the anti-militarist tide,

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[1]Macaulay, A History of England, Vol. IV, 344; Luttrell, Brief Relation of State Affairs, 317.

[2]Feiling, History of the Tory Party, 331.

[3]Calendar State Papers Domestic, 1698, 23; Feiling, History of the Tory Party, 331; Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 440-441.

it does reveal his open attitude to the realities of life, always capable of re-evaluating a situation on the basis of material objectivity. This characteristic reappears throughout his career and may explain the suspicion aroused in many of his biographers, as to his "steadfastness to principle." Defoe's political behaviour was neither motivated nor conditioned by party principles. His activities in arousing public support for a standing army were based on his view of international relations and military strategy. Should party interest have clashed with what he understood to be the desirable line of action for the good of the nation, he was prepared to abandon the party.

In later years, Defoe revealed what he felt for the Whig party in William's reign:

> ... King William, at first coming to the Crown, did put the whole Management of affairs into the Hands of the Whigs ...
>
> And what was the Consequence? . . .
>
> . . . How Scandalously the King was abused in his own family, how places were bought and sold perpetually, and some sold to two or three People at a Time; how frivolous Quarrels were rais'd to put men out of their Lively hoods, who perhaps had lately bought these places at exorbitant Rates, and the most scandalous abuses, that could possibly be imagin'd offer'd _____
>
> Let them look into the Treasury, Customs and Excise! What Party-making! What Buying and Selling! What Misapplying! what juggling! What accounting! And all this Gentlemen under the first Whig Administration! And tho I must own, Gentlemen, the Whigs being in the first Administration is what I always wish'd; yet I cannot blame the King, turning out with Abhorrence a sort of Men that abandon'd their country . . .

The Whig party had been given its chance to help govern the

nation. But the old party had outlived its day, and now was only capable of fomenting factional strife. When William:

> . . . growing a little acquainted with Things and Men, (he began) to be more master of Men's character, and able to choose for himself, then the restless Power of the Faction . . . [1]

Only then did William succeed in ruling the nation.

Defoe would not have been content to be classified, and neatly pigeon-holed as a Whig.

Defoe Serves The Ministries

Defoe, who has so often been alluded to as a shrewd opportunist, acted with surprising faithfulness to the memory of William III, and to his own political principles. It was all very well to court favour, and take liberty in castigating High Church and Tory Party while the Monarch's protection prevailed, but it was a different matter after the death of the King. Yet Defoe persistently continued his attacks on the Tories, while praising the greatness of William. In his poem The Mock Mourners (1702), Defoe portrayed William as England's ideal king: a Protestant Monarch, fighting the Popish threat; ruling within the body of English common law; and leading a great coalition against Louis XIV, the tyrant of Europe. For the Tory gentlemen who drank to Sorrel, the horse that had thrown William, Defoe had nothing but contempt and scorn. In one issue of every year of the Review's existence, Defoe praised

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[1] Review, March 20, 1707, Vol. Iv, Book IX, 66. Defoe

the memory of William. He frequently reminded his readers of his "late Glorious Monarch", whom "I had the Honour to know more of . . . than some of these that have thus insulted His Character, knew of his Horse."[1] He indicated that he had seen William, "oftener than my jesting friend G____ saw the outside of the House he lived in".[2] He claimed to have been heard and valued,[3] even "Belov'd by that Glorious Prince."[4] He continued in this vein throughout his career, never ceasing to glorify William, or to proclaim his own previous connection with the dead King. Even in the moments of the keenest anti-Williamite activity, he openly asserted his allegiance to the Protestant Monarch. Surely this is not the stuff of which opportunism is made. But it is Defoe's conscious effort to work with the Tory Harley, that causes Defoe's biographers to question his political sincerity.

The seed of this relationship lies buried in the time when Defoe languished in prison for having written the famous pamphlet, The Shortest Way with the Dissenters (1702). Harley,

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expressed similar views in verse:

> In vain the new Crown'd Monarch strives to please,
> Or curse th' Hereditary vile Disease.
> In vain confed'rates with the Nations Friends.
> In vain their Laws and Freedom he defends.
> The Parties joyn, in Grand Cabals they meet
> The Monarch's healing Projects to defeat;
> Grasp at his gifts and share the high Reward,
> But not his honour or Commands regard.

[1]Review, March 20, 1707, Vol. Iv, Book IX, 67.

[2]Ibid, November 8, 1712, Vol. IX, Book XXII, 58.

[3]Ibid, October 25, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XV, 341.

[4]Ibid, October 31, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 372.

who was then Speaker of the House of Commons, wrote to Godolphin, suggesting that the talented Defoe could be used to support the Government. He explained to Godolphin that it would be a great advantage to have a writer defend the policies of the Government, or "if only to state the facts right."[1] It would seem that Harley was one of the first English statesmen to appreciate the power of the press. But before use could be made of Defoe's pen, he would have to be released from prison. Meanwhile, Defoe was writing to a friend, William Paterson, asking him to "make my acknowledgements To a Certain Gentleman (Harley)."[2] Why Defoe decided to approach Harley is not entirely clear, unless he hoped to play upon Harley's previous non-conformist attachments, or more important, if he realized that Harley was not a Tory in the conventional sense of the word. Apparently, Godolphin was also satisfied with Harley's suggestion and replied that he had:

> Found it proper to read some paragraphs of your letter to the Queen. What you propose about Defoe may be done, when you will and how you will.

Several days later, after having persuaded Anne of Defoe's usefulness, Godolphin again wrote to Harley stating: "I have taken care in the matter of Defoe."[3] No sooner was Defoe released

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[1]Hanson, L., Government and the Press 1695-1763, (Oxford, 1936), 93-94.

[2]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 5.

[3]Portland MS. Vol. IV, 68, 75.

from Newgate, then he wrote to Harley, thanking him for his release and offering his services:

> . . . Sir Tho' I think my Self bound to Own you as the Principall Agent of this Miracle, yet haveing Some Encouragement from you to Expect More Perticularly to kno' my Benefactors; I can Not but wish for that Discovery that my Acknowledgements my in Some Measure be Proportion'd To the Quality of the Persons, and the Vallue of the Favour.
>
> It remains for me to Conclude my Present Application with This Humble Petition that if Possible I may By Some Meanes or Other know what I am capable of Doeing, that my Benefactors whoever they are May Not be Asham'd of their Bounty as Missapply'd.[1]

On the surface, the picture appears quite simple: Defoe, incarcerated in prison, was recognized by Harley for his literary talents; desiring release, Defoe sold his pen to the Government in return for his freedom; and so a Whig pamphleteer became a Tory journalist.[2] The reasoning involved in this generalization does not bear the weight of detailed analysis. An examination of both Harley and Defoe's view of party politics reveals a different picture.

Consideration of Harley's views on the nature of the political parties and his advice to Godolphin, (See above Page 80) necessitates some modification of his classification as a Tory. His repeated statements, attacking the use of a specific

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[1] Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 10 - 11.

[2] FitzGerald, Daniel Defoe, 134; Bateson, T., "The Relations of Defoe and Harley", E.H.R., (1900), 238-250.

party with which to govern the country, clearly indicate, that Harley was striving after a different goal. His aim, however nebulous, was non-party. The ideal to be sought after, was that of all Englishmen united in their efforts to serve the Queen. Only a government constituted of this all embracing character could bring peace to the nation's broils. Defoe was evidently aware of Harley's attitude. In his earliest correspondence with Harley, he lectured to him that: "The first Principle of Government is Allow'd to be the Publick Safety, The Capitall Branches Whereof are Union at Home, Power Abroad."[1] Government was to safeguard the interests of the nation, it was not to be looked upon as the prize for the victor of the two contending parties. Even though the nation seemed to be divided into: Whig and Tory, High Church and Low Church, Conformist and Dissenter[2], Defoe explained that:

> Tis my Opinion the Moderate Men of both Partyes are the Substantial part of the Nation. They are its Refuge when the Men of Heat Carry Things to farr.
>
> These are the Men in whom alone the Government Can be Safely Lodg'd and when it is So No Men That are Lovers of Their Country Can be Uneasy.
>
> I can Never Believ We are Safe in Any hands but These. The Lords May be Hott on One hand, and the Commons On Another, So far as Either Run On to Extreams, So farr they are to blame, Injure The Peoples Peace, Torment Partyes, and Hazard Our Safety.
>
> These Breaches May Perfectly be Heal'd

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[1] Healey, Letters of Defoe, 50.

[2] Ibid, 50.

> by the Queen. Two words at the opening the Next session shall Finish it all without a Dissolution.[1]

Defoe's distaste for the party system, and his suspicion as to its applicability, were based on his observations of English history. It seemed as though every group which achieved an abnormal prominence and control in society, was abruptly pushed aside because of its inability to satisfy the broader and more inclusive demands of the nation. He explained to Harley that:

> The Papist, the Church of England, and the Dissenter, have all had their Turns in the Publick Administration; and when Ever Any One of Them Endeavour'd their Own Settlemt by the Ruine of the Partys Dissenting, the Consequence was Supplanting themselves.[2]

To investigate the relationship that existed between Defoe and Harley on the assumption that one was a Whig and the other a Tory is to begin with a false premise. Both men expressed their abhorrence for the party system, while their practical activity largely bears this out. The most important bond in this symbiotic relationship was the non-party attitude they both shared. This was the common ground upon which they both laboured.

A chosen problem well illustrates Defoe's application of non-party principles in practical life. In the reign of

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 50. It is interesting to note that in the following October, Anne opened the session with the suggestion that: "We should be entirely united at home," and "There will be no contention among you but who shall most promote the publick wellfare." Parliamentary History, Vol. VI, 356.

[2]Ibid, 50.

William III, Herbert, later Lord Torrington, known for his Whig sympathies, assumed control over the navy.[1] As the performance of the English fleet against the French oscillated from victory to defeat, Defoe felt that the naval administration had failed the nation. He was unconcerned as to the politics of Torrington; he was only interested in the defeat of France. The welfare of the entire nation came before the question of party politics. He wrote of his Whig colleague in a scathing fashion:

> No wonder English Israel has been said
> Before the French Philistines Fleet t'ha fled
> While T_____ Embrac'd with whores appear'd
> And Vice it self the Royal Navy Steer'd.[2]

A similar situation occurred in the early years of Defoe's service to Harley. Now however, the target was the Tory Admiral, Sir George Rooke. His hostility toward Rooke had a double motivation. Defoe's friend William Colepeper, who was also one of the Kentish petitioners, had openly criticized Rooke's naval conduct. The Admiral replied by sending three of his men to assault Colepeper. The affair immediately became public and was brought to court, where one of Rooke's henchmen was found guilty and fined. Defoe drew attention to the affair, exposing Rooke in the worst light.[3] When Defoe

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[1]See D.N.B., and Ogg, England in the Reigns of James and William, 229.

[2]The Mock Mourners.

[3]Review, May 20, 1704, Vol. I, Book I, 101-104; Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 19.

wrote to Harley concerning Rooke, he emphasized, however, that: "I have Onely One Thing to Premise, and which I Entreat you to believe of Me, That I have No Manner of Personall Design as to Sir Geo. R_____."[1] In the same letter, there was an enclosure running to six pages, discussing and criticizing almost every action of Rooke's while at sea. Actually, the entire nation was talking of the Fleet's suspicious failure at Cadiz, and its more spectacular performance in attacking the combined treasure fleets of the French and Spanish at Vigo Bay, in 1702. But Defoe remained distrustful of Rooke's naval action, and raised the question in his letter to Harley:

> Besides, who knows whether Sir G.R. has Miscarry'd for want of Discretion, or for want of honesty, or for want of Judgement, Courage, or any Thing Elce, and if This be Doubtfull how can Such a Man be Trusted with the English Navy before the Case is Decided? If a Miscarriage has happened There ought at least be a Suspension of Command Till the Man Charg'd is Justified . . .
>
> The Queen Can Not do an Action More Agreeable or Obliging to the Generallity of the Nation than to Remove This Gentleman and Commit the Navy to Another. If he be after wards Accquitted, her Majtie may Restore him with Honor to himself and Satisfaction to the World but to Employ him while all the World Suspects him is Taking all the blame of a Miscarriage on the Queen and Ministry if he be prov'd guilty . . .[2]

Several months later, Admiral Rooke was dismissed from his duties and was replaced by the Whig, Sir Cloudesley Shovel.

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[1] Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 19.

[2] Ibid, 20-25.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine how serious Defoe was in mentioning treason as a possible explanation for the strange conduct of Rooke at Cadiz. But it is much simpler to understand his concern, when he discovered, during his frequent trips into the countryside, that "the high Church Party look upon him as Their Own." Rooke was being raised as a great hero amongst the Tory ranks as a counter to Marlborough and his victory at Blenheim:

> The Victory at Sea they look upon as Their Victory Over the Moderate Party, and his health is Now Drunk by those here, who wont Drink the Queen nor Yours. I am Oblidg'd with Patience to hear you Damn'd and he Prais'd, he Exalted and her Majtie Slighted, and the Sea Victory Set up against the Land Victory, Sir Geo: Exalted above the Duke of Marl..., and what Can the Reason of this be, but that they Concieve some hopes from This, that their high Church Party will Revive Under his Patronage.

Better that Rooke's "Victory had been a Defeat" than it should provide the nucleus for further division in the nation. He suggested to Harley that, if Rooke truly wished to exonerate himself, he must "be won over to Disown the proceedings of this Party, and to Check those which affront the Government on his behalf"; or inevitably "the Civil feuds of Partyes will Encrease, Rather than Diminish."[1]

In both the case of Torrington, and later in that of Rooke, Defoe's criticism was based on what he considered the

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 61.

good of the national interest. He did not hesitate to abandon his party allegiance even if it meant criticism of party colleagues.

Harley's attitude was similar to that of Defoe's. He was repeatedly informed by Defoe of a new poem which was being prepared for the public -- The Dyet of Poland, (1705).[1] This contained a cutting attack on Rooke which Harley made no attempt to soften.[2] For Harley as well as for Defoe, the successful conclusion of the war against France counted far more than party allegiance. The existence of party served only to divide and weaken the nation.

Defoe's service to Harley manifested itself in two areas--journalism and secret service. It has been seen that the Government was interested in securing a pen, in order to present its policies in as favourable a light as possible.

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 119.

[2]His voyages never have been made in vain,
He took such care of coming Home again:
No man cou'd ever give him a defeat,
And none can match him at a safe Retreat.
The carefull 'st Officer the Poles could choose,
For when they bid him fly, he'll ne'er refuse:
A neg'tive Soldier, always in the Right,
Was never Beaten, and would seldom Fight:
Poland will ne'er her antient Glory sho,
While Knaves and Cowards fight her Battles so.
Rakoski now supports the Polish Crown
And Fights the Quarrels of his master's throne,
But fights by Proxi when he fights his own.

Poland, how past retrieve must be thy Fate,
When cowards guide thy arms, and knaves thy State!
The Dyet of Poland, A Satyr, (1705).

Defoe, wasting in prison, had already approached Harley for assistance and, after his release, asked the Speaker of the House how he could possibly repay the debt. It was more than coincidence that, on February 19, 1704, there appeared the first number of A Weekly Review of the Affairs of France, Purged from the Errors and Partiality of News-Writers and Petty Statesmen of all Sides.

In the first issue, Defoe explained his position and purpose. The need for the Review grew out of a society shot through with rumour, false accusation and scandal. The "people are possest with wrong notions of things, and nations wheedled to believe nonsense and contradiction." In this chaotic state, a legion of hack writers spread their prejudiced views, adding to the confusion. Defoe felt it his responsibility "to prevent the various uncertain accounts, and the partial reflections of our street-scribblers"[1]-- for once, he would clear the atmosphere of lies and falsehood.

Through nine years of the Review's existence, Defoe explained (at times in a rather irritating fashion) to whom he was appealing: "This paper is writ to Enlighten the Stupid Understandings of the Meaner and more Thoughtless of the Freeholders and Electors";[2] or more politely, "to open the Eyes

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[1] Review, February 19, 1704, Vol. I, Book I, 1.

[2] Ibid, May 24, 1705, Vol. II, Book IV, 138.

of the deluded People, and set them to rights in the things in which they are impos'd upon."[1] His contemporaries were suspicious of his motives and more reluctant to believe his explanations. The repeated cries that he was a tool of the Ministry forced Defoe to defend himself. He wrote:

> . . . the Ministry are not under one Farthing Obligation to me, for any Thing I write, or say, or do, and if they give me any Thing for writing the Review, as these Men falsely alledge, they throw the Money away.[2]

Previously he had written:

> . . . throughout the whole course of this Ministry, I have neither written, or forborn to write one Word by the Direction of the Ministry or to oblige or serve any Party; nor have directly or indirectly been paid or rewarded for so doing . . .[3]

His claim that he was not being financed by the Government has long been exploded.[4] His own ocrrespondence with Harley bears full witness to financial transactions which transpired between the two. But the much more subtle problem of whether he had written for the Ministry against his own principles can only be decided after examining his entire political career. The problems so far considered--aspects of his political theory; his treatment of the issue of a standing army; his defence of William in the reign of Anne; and his attacks on high govern-

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[1] Review, June 5, 1707, Vol. IV, Book IX, 199.

[2] Ibid, July 22, 1712, Vol. VIII, Book XXI, 834.

[3] Ibid, July 10, 1712, Vol. VIII, Book XXI, 816.

[4] Hanson, L., Government and the Press, (Oxford, 1936), 101-105.

ment personages--would indicate sincerity and consistency of principle rather than self-seeking opportunism. It would also indicate an attitude that could not be contained in the narrower confines of a single party. Defoe's concern for the national interest prevented him from remaining faithful to a particular party, much in the same way that Harley became alienated from the more fanatical elements, in the last Tory Ministry of Anne's reign. From this point of view, there would be much truth in Defoe's evaluation of party journalism:

> The particular Crime of this Sort of People is that they are not directed by Truth of Fact, but mere Party-Policy. Their Business is to amuse deceive, embarrass and perplex; when they act upon their adverse Party, they accuse, aggravate and enlarge upon every Mistake, heighten every Loss, lessen every Advantage, and upon all Occasions speak to their Disadvantage: When they act on their own Party, they magnifie their Actions, make invidious comparisons, panegyrick Persons without Fame, and Actions without Merit; and in short, their Business is to be always placing things to be look'd at obliquely not directly, that Shadows may deceive your Sight, and Misrepresentations may state Actions, not as they are, but as they would have them to be to serve a Party.[1]

The question of how effective Defoe's journalism proved, is a more difficult one. He had already stated that he wrote for the enlightenment of the "Meaner and more Thoughtless of the Freeholders." Professor Sutherland, in discussing Defoe's True-Born Englishman and his Jure Divino, pointed out that

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[1]Review, January 20, 1708, Vol. IV, Book XI, 586-587.

they "were all addressed to the unlearned (and) were . . . educational (rather) than literary."[1] The popularity of these early works is startling. Four years after the publication of the True-Born Englishman, Defoe claimed that it had been reprinted nine times and had been pirated twelve times, the illegal sale amounting to eighty thousand copies.[2] Figures for the sale of Jure Divino do not exist, but the fact that the first edition was twice pirated, in a very short period,[3] would again indicate how popular Defoe's works were.

A curious entry was sent to the Treasury by an anonymous writer in 1705. The information listed the approximate daily circulation of nine newspapers, including the Review, then in print. The figures should not be considered more than conjectural.

Daily Courant	800	London Post	400
English Post	400	London Gazette	6,000
Flying Post	400	Observator	1,000
Post Boy	3,000	Post Man	3,800
		Review	400

Whereas the Daily Courant appeared six times a week, other papers only appeared two or three times weekly. The writer estimated the entire weekly circulation of the nine papers at 43,800 copies. Six years later, Defoe estimated the

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[1]Sutherland, Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry, 48.

[2]An Appeal to Honour and Justice, (1714).

[3]Sutherland, Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry, 46-47.

weekly total circulation to be 200,000,[1] almost five times the amount of the anonymous writer. But even if the figure of four hundred is accepted for the Review, it would not indicate how many persons read the same issue in the countless coffee houses throughout London, or for that matter across the entire country.

Several scraps of evidence suggest that Defoe had built up a fairly complex distribution scheme in order to bring the Review and other pamphlets into the countryside. John Fransham, a friend of Defoe, had written to him from his home in Norwich, explaining how he was publicizing the Review:

> I read it to several Gentlemen . . . in the chief Coffee-house here where we have it as oft as it comes out and is approv'd of as the politest paper we have to entertain us with. I had some difficulty to prevail with the Master of the House to take it in but now he finds I advis'd him well there being no paper more desir'd.[2]

This correspondence continued for some time, and a year later, in 1705, Fransham reported to Defoe that he had "receiv'd as mention'd in yours 6 of them (Consolidators), 12 of Gill's case (The Experiment: or the Shortest Way With the Dissenters) and 24 of the Supplements (Review, March 10, 1705)." The demand for Defoe's works was brisk: "Gills case you perceive by my last I had read before yours arriv'd and had given such

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[1] Review, (Preface), Vol. VII, Book XVII, v.

[2] Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 70.

a representation thereof to some topping Dissenters that they were very glad to hear I had some coming to dispose of amongst them."[1] A letter by Defoe, written to Samule Elisha, a lawyer of Shrewsbury, reads:

> This made me give you the Trouble of a Parcell yesterday, by the Carryer, in which are 50 books, which you will find are a few Thoughts on the late Victory (Defoe's, Hymn to Victory) if you please to Let him (a bookseller in Shrewsbury?) have them, or any Friends that Desire them. If they are too many, he may return what he mislikes.[2]

A glimpse of Defoe is given in a letter to Fransham, as he prepared an attack on the Tory move to pass the Occasional Conformity Bill in 1704:

> Last week I rallyed some Forces against it and brought out some thoughts on that subject in print. (Queries upon the Bill Against Occasional Conformity) I have sent about 25 of them to you and should be glad to hear how our Friends approve it. . . . my purpose . . . is to furnish our Friends with arguments to defend the cause against a clamorous noisy Enemy . . . and for this purpose we are establishing a method to send them in small parcels amongst Friends all over England. And yet I am so far from making a profit of it that if any are so poor as not to afford it or too narrow spirited to spend 6d. I am very free to give them to such rather than they should not be improv'd by anything I am able to do, and you have my free consent to give them to any body you think fit.[3]

Similar letters to Harley reveal how closely they both worked in framing suitable answers in defence of the Ministry, and

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 84.

[2]Ibid, 56.

[3]Ibid, 72.

distributing pamphlets throughout the country. The most important of these is a letter sent to Harley in April, 1706. The content of the letter accounts for the mass distribution of a pamphlet entitled Remarks on the Letter to the Author of the State-Memorial which set out to defend the actions of the Ministry. Approximately seventy towns are listed as having received varying numbers of the pamphlet; the total distribution appears to have reached 2,065 copies.[1] In preparing the ground for the eventual unification of England and Scotland Defoe informed Harley ". . . I have just 13 guineas left, about 6 of which I propose to lay Out for the Effectual spreading this letter at Glasgow and Over all the West, and therefore purpose to print about 2500 of them and send them to Glascow, Lanerk, Hamilton, sterlin and Dumfreis."[2]

From the scanty amounts that Harley paid to Defoe for his service,[3] it would appear that Harley received more than his money would warrant. However, there were moments of disappointment which most writers eventually encounter. John Fransham explained to Defoe:

> I have sent you a List of the Subscribers to your Book (Jure Divino) which I have procur'd in our Town pursuant to the request you made me. I could have wish'd it longer and can

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 115-118.

[2]Ibid, 170.

[3]Sutherland, Daniel Defoe, 108.

> assure you there was nothing wanting on my part to have made it so but, when I consider First how few there are amongst Tradesmen of which our City chiefly consists that set any great value upon Books, secondly of such as do how many have resolv'd never to subscribe for a Book again having been bit in former Subscriptions, Thirdly that the greatest part of this City would have subscribed for the contrary subject, and lastly of them that like the undertaking how many of them that like their Money much better . . .[1]

It was always Defoe's desire to obtain permanent employment with the Government. He considered his journalism a serious contribution, but would have felt more secure if he could have held an official position. Soon after his release from prison, he frankly asked Harley to help him find such employment, either abroad or in England.[2] It was never in Harley's interest to see Defoe become financially independent and so he led him on with hopes, and an occasional sum to keep the Defoe family together. Beside his role of unofficial government pamphleteer, Defoe managed to convince Harley of the use which he could be, touring the countryside and reporting to the Government the state of public opinion regarding the Ministry.

Early in August, 1704 Defoe wrote to Harley, outlining the nature of an effective secret service.[3] He advised that

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 64.

[2]Ibid, 15.

[3]Ibid, 35-39.

the Secretary of State should have a complete picture of the country's political forces:

> 1st A Perfect List of all the Gentry and Familys of Rank in England, Their Residence, Character, and Interest in the Respective Countyes
> 2 Of all the Clergy of England, their Benefices, Their Character, and Moralls, and the like of the Dissenters.
> 3 Of all the Leading Men in the Cittyes and Burroughs, with the Partyes they Espouse.

Most important: "They Ought to have a Table of Partyes, and proper Callculations of their Strength in Every Respective Part, which is to be had by haveing the Coppyes of the Polls Sent upon all Elections, and All the Circumstances of Such Elections Hystorically Collected by faithfull hands, and Transmitted to the Office." He warned Harley that Louis XIV had reputedly spent "11 million in One year" on secret service, whereas the English Secretary of State "is Allow'd £12000 per Annum for This Weighty Article."[1] He reminded Harley that the English intelligence service had previously been tended by "Mr. Milton" who had "kept a Constant Epistolary Conversation, with Severall forreign Ministers of State, and Men of Learning . . . but So Woven with Politicall Observations that he found it as Usefull as any Part of his foreign Correspondence." Not only was the operation of secret service to apply at home, but was to apply abroad as well. "A Settl'd Intelli-

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[1] Defoe was not well informed on this point. In the middle of Anne's reign, the Secretaries of state were receiving a maximum of £3,000 annually for secret service. (M.A. Thomson, Secretaries of State, 1681-1782. (Oxford, 1932) 150.

gence in Scotland, a Thing Strangely Neglected There, is without Doubt the Principall Occaision of The present Missunderstandings between the Two kingdomes." And even in the heart of enemy territory, he would have placed his secret agents: "There are 3 Towns in France where I would have the like, and They might all Correspond, one at Thoulon, One at Brest, One at Dunkirk." He confidently assured Harley that:

> A hundred Thousand Pounds Per Annum Spent Now for 3 year in forreign Intelligence, Might be the best Money Ever This Nation Laid Out, and I am Persuaded I could Name Two Articles where if Some Money had been well Apply'd Neither the Insurrection in Hungary Nor the Warr in Poland should ha' been So Fatall to the Confederacy as Now They are.

It would appear that Harley was impressed with Defoe's scheme, because, for the following years, until Harley's dismissal, Defoe was kept occupied in touring the countryside , reporting to the Ministry and constantly explaining the Government's policy.[1] Defoe failed to secure a permanent position, and had to rest content with the unofficial duty of serving as Harley's secret agent. But even here, his consistent non-party attitude ran like a bright thread through his misty undercover work.

Defoe's first assignment was in the summer of 1704. The purpose was to travel through the country and gather as

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[1]Sutherland, Defoe, 148-165.

much political information as possible. He travelled as a private citizen under the assumed name of Alexander Goldsmith. These early years seemed to be happy ones for Defoe. True he had not secured an official positon but he was employed in interesting and exciting work; besides he had a splendid opportunity to propagate the ideas of non-party government wherever he went.

Soon the reports began to filter back to Harley. While in the County of Hertford (September, 1704) he explained "This Country is under Severall Characters. That part of it adjoyning to Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire is whiggish and Full of Dissenters. That Part adjoining to Huntingdon, Cambridge and Essex, Entirely Church and all of the High Sort."[1] And so the reports came in.

But his jaunt was not without interruption or anxiety. On September 28, 1704, Defoe wrote to Harley of his financial difficulties: "I would ha' hinted that the Magazine Runs Lowe, and is Recruited by Private Stock, which is but Indifferent."[2] Worse, however, was the rumour that Defoe was wanted by the authorities, and that his absence from London was proof of this. Quite frequently, Defoe's political enemies began rumours of this nature to hamper his movement through the countryside. In

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 57.

[2]Ibid, 62.

this case Defoe bitterly compalined:

> Tis Something hard that while I am Spreading Principles of Temper, Moderation, and Peace Thro' Countrys where I go, and Perswadeing all People That the Government is Resolv'd to proceed by those Rules, I should be Chosen Out to be made the Object of a Private, hight flying Revenge, under Colour of the Governments Resentments, for be it Sir that you find Sir G.R faithfull and that This fight or Victory at Sea be the first Proof of it.[1]

In the following year, when Defoe set out to investigate the western counties, he asked Harley to supply him with a governmental pass which he could use if he ever found himself in a difficult position.[2] Even with the pass he continued to have trouble, particularly at Weymouth, where he gave instructions to have his mail sent to a friend of his--Captain Turner. Unfortunately his mail was sent to another Captain Turner who, upon reading the correspondence, immediately reported it to the town authorities.[3] Before they could take action against Defoe, he had left the scene and had reached Crediton, where the Justice of the Peace issued a warrant for his arrest. But again he escaped arrest and arrived in Cornwall. At this point he could report to Harley "I have a perfect skeleton of this part of England, and a settled correspondence in every town and corner of it."[4] Defoe was laying the foundation for an

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 60.

[2]Ibid, 99.

[3]Ibid, 97-100.

[4]Sutherland, Defoe, 153.

intricate intelligence service throughout the country.

At the same time, Defoe took it upon himself to advise Harley on certain political problems. The advice is again revealing of Defoe's political attitude. The Godolphin-Marlborough ministry, which had begun in 1702, was composed of all types of Tories. But as the war against France progressed, the less enthusiastic High-Flyers, such as Rochester and Nottingham, were slowly ejected from the Ministry. By the end of 1704, the composition of the Government had changed in so far as the High Flyers had been dropped from their former positions of power, yet the Whigs had not been introduced to fill the apparent vacuum. A sudden crisis seemed to develop in the House of Commons. The Ministry had antagonized the extreme elements in the Tory Party and gave no sign of approaching the Whigs; both elements threatened to unite to overthrow the Triumvirate of Godolphin, Marlborough and Harley. Actually, their first aim was Harley. Defoe wrote to Harley of the threatening danger:

> It Wounds me to the Soul to hear the Very Whigs Themselves, and who for Saying So I fancy in the Confederacy which you hinted you had Some Notice of, Tell Me and Speak it Openly "you are lost", That your Interest in the House wont keep you in the Chair, That the Party Suppressing you There will Consequently Ruin your Interest in the Queen's favour, and give a new turn to your management at Court.

Paraphrasing the Whig sentiment, Defoe showed how confident

the opposition was:

> Mr. Harley is Out, he has Lost his Intrest, the house will Certainly lay him by, and if There be Nothing Elce in it, 'tis a Tryall of the Strength of the house, and a Proof he has lost Ground; besides, both Sides are against him, he has Trim'd So Long On both Sides, and Cares't both Partys, Till both begin to See themselves ill Treated, and now, as he Loves Neither Side, Neither Side will Stand by him. All the Whigs of King Williams Reign Expected to ha' Come in Play again, and had Fair words Given Them, but They See it was but wording them into a Fools Pardise, and Now The Two Ends will be Reconcil'd to Overturn his Middle Way.[1]

Defoe was cautious in giving his advice to Harley for fear of appearing impertinent. He slightly camouflaged his approach by relating an incident in which he had the honour to serve William III.

> I Remember Sir when haveing had the honor to Serve the Late King William in a kind like this, and which his Majtie had the Goodness to accept . . . I had the heart or Face . . . to give my Opinion in Terms like These: Your Majtie Must Face About, Oblige your Friends to be Content to be laid by, and Put In your Enemyes, Put them into Those Posts in which They may seem to be Employ'd, and Thereby Take off the Edge and Divide The Party.

Then addressing Harley directly, he continued:

> Sir, The Whigs are weak; they may be Mannag'd, and allways have been so. What Ever you do, if Possible Divide Them and they are Easy to be Divided. Caress the Fools of Them Most, There are Enough Among Them. Buy Them with here and There a Place; it may be well bestow'd.
> If you have him Not allready, as all I

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 66-67.

> can Talk with That are Friends Wish you had, My Lord Somers, who all allow to be a great Man, Must if Gaind From Them, weaken and Distract the Party.
> . . . . . .
> Tis Pitty Two Such Men should Not understand one another (if it be so). United, what may you Not do! Divided what Mischiefs Must Ensue to both, and the Nation in Generall!

Perhaps Defoe was unaware of the strong feeling that Anne had against Somers. Harley made no attempt to approach the Whig chief; but, in another way, Harley acted in full accord with Defoe's advice. He began an active and friendly correspondence with Newcastle, the moderate Whig, who had extensive borough control in Yorkshire. By bringing Newcastle in, Harley hoped to placate the Whigs without actually uniting with the Junto.[1]

Defoe had another plan with which to prevent the union of disgruntled Whigs and Tories. He advised Harley to have "trusty hands" bring a Bill against Occasional Conformity into the House. By "bringing an Occaisionall Bill upon The Anvill in Such a juncture would be of the last Service in This Case. Twould break the Confederacy, Twould blacken, and Expose The Party, yours are Sure of giveing it a Toss at last . . ."[2] It was well known that Whig power rested on the overwhelming support received from the Dissenters. As long as the

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[1]Feiling, The History of the Tory Party, 376.

[2]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 69.

Whigs fought for office there was little likelihood that they would willingly antagonize their non-conformist allies. But, in this case, Harley did not act in accordance with Defoe. The Bill against Occasional Conformity was brought in during the session by a Tory manoeuvre, rather than by any "Trusty hands" of Harley's choosing.[1] But it was a dangerous suggestion for Defoe to have made, because as solid as the Whig-Dissenter Alliance may have appeared in 1704, seven years later the Whigs were to sacrifice Non-Conformist support in a political bargain with Nottingham and the extremist element in the Tory party.[2]

Defoe's greatest effort in serving the "Triumvirate" was probably made in the year 1705. From the dissolution of Parliament, on April 5, until the actual polling two months later, the country was kept in a state of political excitement. The Ministry had gone a great distance in alienating the extreme Tory factions; whereas the country seemed to promise an election revival for the Whigs. The question in all minds was whether the Ministry would admit the Whigs into office. As the election drew near, pamphlets and newsheets fanned the flames of party broils to a white heat. The animosity amongst citizens threatened to divide the nation at the moment when

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[1]Feiling, A History of the Tory Party, 376.

[2]See Trevelyan, England Under Queen Anne, Vol. III, 279-284.

it was called upon to lead the coalition against the French military machine. Defoe feared that the internal divisions would incapacitate the English nation when its greatest strength was needed. He threw himself into the election campaign, devoting his energy to supply the Ministry with a total picture of the political scene in the country; at the same time explaining the nature of the Ministry's policy, and urging his readers, through the pages of the Review, to elect men who would make possible the defeat of France instead of those who were interested in the selfish victory of party.[1]

Defoe's correspondence with Harley, during 1705, is filled with political reports on English towns.[2] Even after the election, they continued to stream in. A good example is a dispatch which he wrote to Harley in November 1705, entitled "An Abstract of My Journey with Casuall Observations on Publick Affaires". It contains brief comments on the dozens of towns that Defoe visited during July, August, September and October. Some entries read:

July 23	Lyme	A Town Entirely United and all the Church men Very Moderate and well affected.
	24 Honiton	A Terrible Mob Election here, but Sir Jno Elvill of Excester is so Cow'd by Sir Wm Drake and Fra: Gwin that he Dares not petition.
	25 Excester	Here I have a list of all the partyes Exactly and a Modell how Sir Ed.

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[1]Bishop Burnet wrote ". . . and it was said, that the Earl of Nottingham and the Tories seemed to lay hold on every thing that could obstruct the progress of the war . . ." History of His Own Time, Vol. II, 208.

[2]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 108-113.

> Seymour may be Thrown out against Another Election without any Difficulty at all. Here I learnt the history of the Family of Coll Rolles and how the young Gentleman Kt of the shire for Devon will be brought off from high church.
>
> Augt 3 To Plympton. A little Town all Low Church and Very well United but a poor place. Ld. Chief Baron Treebys Town.
>
> 12, 13 Tiverton. Here the Alarm of the Devonshire Justice Hurryed me too fast but I have Establish't Correspondence at all these Towns.
>
> Sept. 2 Teuxbury. A Quiet Tradeing Drunken Town, a Whig bayly and all well.
>
> Oct. 2 Nottingham This is a Violently Divided Town. I have the Exact Schedule of their leaders.[1]

But Defoe did not restrict himself to reporting political alignments in the country. He countered every blow of the opposition press with his own newsheet, and with separate pamphlets. Perhaps Defoe's ablest demonstration was his answer to Dr. James Drake's Memorial of the Church of England. Dr. Drake, writing for the High Church circle, expressed the anger of the extreme Tory for the treatment given to Rochester and Nottingham by the Ministry. The pamphlet was a biting criticism of Godolphin and Marlborough who were accused of owing "their present grandeur to the protection of the Church, and, who with a prevarication as shameful as their ingratitude,

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 108-113.

pretend to vote and speak for it themselves, while they solicit and bribe others with pensions and places to be against it."[1] Godolphin was particularly incensed by the High Church pamphlet; he previously had written to Harley that "a discreet clergyman is almost as rare as a black swan." Now stung by the Memorial, he complained again to Harley:

> I have heard of several insolences of the clergy, which are really insufferable and next door to open rebellion, and I don't find the least notice taken of it, or the least thought or disposition to reprehend any of them.[2]

But Godolphin did not wait too long. In July 1705, Defoe wrote to Harley:

> I have Answerd This High Church Legion (i.e. the Memorial of the Church of England);[3] I have Dedicated it to my Ld Treasurer. From your hand Sir, My Ld Can Not but accept it, and I hope to my Advantage; if not, I am sure tis for the publick good.[4]

Meanwhile, he kept up a sustained attack in the Review, from July 12 to August 21, 1705, on those associated with the Memorial.

A peculiar letter of Defoe's to Halifax (1705) has survived which would indicate how popular Defoe had grown with all moderate elements. In the letter he wrote: "I Frankly

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[1]James Drake, Memorial of the Church of England, 5 .

[2]Bath MS. Vol. I, 63, 76.

[3]Defoe's pamphlet was entitled The High-Church Legeon, Or the Memorial Examin'd, (1705).

[4]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 90.

acknowledge to your Lordship to the Unknown Rewarders of my Mean Performances, That I do Not See the Merit They are Thus Pleased to Vallue."[1] As much as Defoe may have tried to appear innocent as to why he should have received such handsome Whig rewards, it must have been quite clear for all to understand. His active stand against the tacking High-Fliers and his constant pleas for religious moderation and a final national effort against France, won for him support from all elements satisfied with the Revolutionary Settlement.

But it was the Review which served as his big guns, aimed at all extremists who threatened to divide the nation. Almost the entire run of Reviews for 1705 carried the longest and most impassioned denunciation of party politics. He went to great pains in explaining the international scene for his less sophisticated readers. After pointing out the overwhelming danger of a France militarily unchecked, he exposed the danger of irrational party strife at home, which could only result in the dissipation of English strength. In page after page he urged his countrymen to unite behind the coalition Ministry of Harley, Godolphin and Marlborough--a Ministry devoted to the overthrow of French power and the continuation of the Revolutionary Settlement. Anyone who consciously or unconsciously attacked the Ministry on party grounds worked

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 87.

for French interest and endangered the Protestant Succession. Harley had not hired a sluggard when he had Defoe released from prison.

And so the situation continued from the election year of 1705 until Harley's sudden dismissal from the Ministry in 1708. Each week, each month, saw Defoe busily explaining the position of the Ministry in as favourable a light as possible. When Tory disapproval condemned the Ministry's handling of the war in Spain, Defoe wrote to Harley:

> I am Impatient to Mention also the subject of the Three last Reviews which if you have not seen is my loss, since without doubt I might be enabled by you to have Carry'd on that subject Exceedingly to the Governments advantage.[1]

In three separate Reviews (May 2, 4 and 7, 1706) Defoe had striven to defend the Ministry's Peninsular strategy. And when the news of Marlborough's victory reached London, Defoe asked Harley:

> Will a short Essay on These Mighty Affaires be accepted from me in This juncture? is a question which if answerd by your Sir would help inspire the performance.[2]

But, what Defoe, is perhaps best known for was his direct effort in helping the Ministry to bring about the union of England and Scotland.[3] And even here, though he may have

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 122.

[2]Ibid, 122.

[3]As mentioned in the preface above, H.F. Grave's Daniel Defoe: Director of Propaganda offers a detailed study of Defoe's activities in bringing about the union. The only mention here of Defoe, is to illustrate the intimate political relationship between Harley and his subordinate.

advocated Union on behalf of the Ministry, the idea was nevertheless an integral part of his own reasoning. As long as Scotland led an independent existence, England would face the threat of a two-pronged French invasion.[1]

Throughout the Union negotiations, the Defoe-Harley relationship continued as previously depicted. After Harley had instructed Defoe to take up his post in Edinburgh, Defoe wrote to Harley, both to verify and to gain further information for his assignment:

> . . . I beg leav, tho' it be beginning at the wrong End, to Set Down how I Understand my present bussiness--as foll.
> 1. To inform My Self of the Measures Takeing Or Partys forming Against the Union and Applye my Self to prevent them.
> 2. In conversation and by all Reasonable Methods to Dispose peoples minds to the Union.
> 3. By writing or Discourse, to Answer any Objections, Libells or Reflections on the Union, the English or the Court, Relating to the Union.
> 4. To Remove the Jealousies and Uneasyness of people about Secret Designs here against the Kirk etc.[2]

And, of course, the Review was brought into action: "I have been Considering About Treating of Union in the Review and Unless your Judgemt and Orders Differ believ as I shall Mannage it, it Must be Usefull, but beg hints from you if you find it otherwise."[3] In the Review of September 26, 1706 Defoe

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[1]Review, May 1, 1707, Vol. IV, Book IX, 138.

[2]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 126.

[3]Ibid, 128.

began his propaganda attack in favour of union with Scotland. Almost until the consummation of the Union, the Review contained little else but Anglo-Scottish relations, until finally Defoe admitted that his readers had begun to complain of the monotony of the subject.

The Marlborough-Godolphin Ministry slowly began to gravitate toward the Whig party. Actually the great influx of Whig chiefs did not occur till 1708. Defoe, meanwhile, had been seen as a Whig supporter of William and then as a collaborator of the Tory, Harley. Now the versatile journalist seemed to be offering his pen to a Ministry which, to all intents and purposes, was rapidly assuming a Whiggish air. But in the same manner that Defoe had remained faithful to William, he now pledged his services to Harley at the very moment when it appeared that Harley would be dropped. He wrote: "I Sir Desire to be The Servant of your Worst Dayes . . . I Entreat you Sir to Use me in Any Thing in which I may Serve you, and that More Freely Than when I might be Supposed following your Riseing Fortunes."[1] Strangely, Harley advised Defoe to remain the servant of the Ministry, and explained that his duty was to the Queen. Harley's words were: "Pray apply yourself as you used to do! I shall not take it ill from you in the least."[2]

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 250.

[2]An Appeal to Honour and Justice, (1715).

Godolphin, who had previously agreed to Harley's suggestion of utilizing Defoe, was only too eager to continue the arrangement.[1] The year 1708 was fraught with danger for the Ministry. In Spain, the Allied CAUSE had met disaster, whereas the French General Villars had again broken through into Germany. More critical, was the spreading rumour that the French were to attempt an invasion of Scotland. It was Godolphin's desire to dispatch Defoe to Edinburgh, in order to have first hand information from a dependable source. Defoe, who had laboured for years to rouse the nation against the French threat, and who had consistently advocated service to the Government rather than to a party, was called upon to assist the Ministry in its most critical moment. Would it have been politically wise of him to refuse to serve the greater interest of the nation by standing idle with his fallen hero? Defoe could not visualize that type of allegiance. As long as the Ministry practised a positive policy; safeguarding the security and integrity of the nation, as well as the Revolutionary Settlement, Defoe would work with it. Thus, until Godolphin's dismissal, Defoe continued to supply political information to the Ministry, and to explain Government policy to the nation through the agency of numerous pamphlets and the Review.

It was during his service to Godolphin, that Defoe ex-

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[1]W. Minto, Daniel Defoe, 76.

pressed in the most lucid terms, his fully matured political observations:

> What can we divide about then--that the wisest man can say is worth the Risque of a National Division? If the interest is the same, why whould we not meet one another in granting and yielding, in rectifying and resting satisfy'd; the Question is not now Court and Country, in Place or Out of Place, a Party up or a Party Down _____ But it is French or British 'tis Queen Anne the Nation's Darling, or a Popish French Pretender; tis the Protectoress of Truth and Liberty or the invaders of our Peace and Destroyers of the Nation; tis the Sovereignty of the Law over Arbitrary Tyrants, or the Dispensing our Laws, and taking Liberty and Persecution together.[1]

The statement ". . . the Question is not now Court and Country" indicates that Defoe no longer considered the Party system as serving any function whatsoever. In the reigns of the seventeenth century Stuarts, the existence of the parties had great significance in determining the structure of English politics and government. But, the Revolution of 1688 had established the form of monarchy that was to rule the nation. The Revolutionary Settlement ended an epoch and had begun a new period. But, in the same way that it completed the solution to an old problem, it introduced new problems in turn. The Parties, in the last moment, had united to expel James II and the absolute theories of government for which he stood; they had also freed England from her subservient role in the

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[1]<u>Review</u>, November 25, 1708, Vol. V, Book XIII, 415.

Versailles scheme of international affairs. The Revolutionary Settlement was rapidly consolidating itself; but the new won freedom in the international sphere promised the greatest challenge. The Parties that had solved the monarchical problem, showed little ability in adjusting themselves to the new situation. What the nation needed most was a united opposition to the power of France, in order to safeguard everything that 1688 stood for. Because the Parties could only promise dissension, Defoe wished to do away with them. That is why he urged his readers to see national politics, not in terms of Whig or Tory but rather as the Protestant Succession jeopardized by a "Popish Pretender".

But, for purposes of practical propaganda, Defoe still urged his readers to prefer Whig candidates at the polls. Before the election of 1708, he wrote:

> . . . let me beforehand take the Freedom to say . . . if ever we have a Tory, High-Flying Parliament this Nation will be betray'd and sold by them to Tyranny and French Government, our Liberties will be invaded, our Sovereign insulted, our Laws be abused, our Treasure be exhausted, honest Men will be crush'd Knave be advanc'd, and in short the Nation will be undone.[1]

It would be incorrect to lose sight of these pro-Whig passages, which at first glance would seem to contradict everything that Defoe condemned in his non-party arguments. As long as the

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[1]Review, June 16, 1708, Vol. V, Book XII, 139.

Whigs seemed resolved to support the continued war effort, and as long as a large faction of the Tories dabbled in Jacobitism, Defoe revealed his Whig preferance; but in the approaching political upheaval of 1710 he abandoned this position entirely and explained his reasons clearly.

Undoubtedly, the greatest hurdle that Defoe faced in his political life was the realization that the Godolphin-Marlborough Ministry was losing its grasp, and that a growing sentiment in the nation favoured a return of the Tory Party to the House of Commons. Perhaps the greatest reason for this change in popular will was the fact that a military deadlock had developed in the Spanish peninsula. At an earlier period, the situation would have produced ever greater efforts to defeat the French and the Spanish. But Blenheim and Ramillies had sapped French strength to a point at which the Peninsular War had lost its urgency of earlier years. Besides, continual bad harvests from 1709 to 1711 had driven food prices ever upward, making the war generally unpopular.[1] To aggravate high prices there was also the tax burden which had rested heavily on the shoulders of the nation. A war weariness settled over the country that now caused the electors to reconsider the Tory Party as the only hope of achieving a peace.

The great reshuffle began at Court. Anne, who had

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[1]Trevelyan, Blenheim, Vol. I, 437; Ramillies, Vol. II, 395.

never relished the intrusion of the Whig leaders into the Ministry, complied with the suggestions that Harley and Mrs. Masham gave her. The first Whig chief to go, was the Marquis of Kent. He was replaced by Shrewsbury who became Lord Chamberlain.[1] Whereas the suspicion was generally prevalent that a full scale attack would be made on the Whig Ministers, a curious apathy infected the Junto. Instead of closing their ranks against future dismissals, a complete breakdown of co-operation ensued, as each member of the Government attempted to salvage his own political career at the cost of his colleague.[2] In June, Sunderland was dismissed to be replaced by the Tory Dartmouth. The greatest blow came on August 8 when, without the slightest ceremony, Godolphin was commanded to break the White Staff of his office. The net result of the political revolution at court was that the nation now had a Tory Ministry but a Commons still distinctly Whig. Anne however, did not designate anyone for the Lord Treasurer's office, it remained vacant for the moment. Harley, meanwhile, had returned to the political scene as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Defoe's behaviour, during the onslaught on the Whig members of the Ministry, is of the utmost importance. One fact can be established: he remained faithful to Godolphin

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[1]Trevelyan, The Peace, Vol. III, 65.

[2]Ibid, 65.

until the Lord Treasurer was dismissed. For that matter, he went out of his way to defend the reputation of those who were dismissed by the Queen. When Sunderland was dropped, Defoe spent several issues in praising the honourable work that Sunderland had performed as the Queen's Minister.[1] It is certain that he was not in favour of ministerial changes. He wrote:

> . . .Removing the publick Ministry would be a blow to National Credit, and an interruption to our prospects of Peace, especially while we have no View of the Probity or Capacity of those that shall come after; and People are just now perplexing themselves upon those articles--So Heaving and Thrusting as I c all it, perpetual Alarming the Nation with these Removes, cannot but do some Harm in those Cases; at least they are far from making our public Credit Advance, or our Allies Depend the more heartily upon us. Or in short, from Advancing our general Interest in the World. Nor do the Views of an unsettled Posture in our Court, our Ministry, or Councils, contribute any thing to the Discouraging our Enemies.[2]

Regardless of what Defoe wrote, the dismissals continued until his only consolation lay in the fact that the House of Commons was still predominantly Whig. He told his readers to ". . . have Patience, the Elections are not to Morrow, no neither God be thank'd are they this year."[3] Little did Defoe know of Harley's strategy--the elections were due for October.

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[1]Review, June 17, 20, 22, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII.

[2]Ibid, June 17, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII.

[3]Ibid, April 1, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 10.

Presumably, if Defoe was motivated by nothing else than his own advancement and security, he should have deserted the Godolphin Ministry with the first rumours of its inevitable fall. But the facts indicate the opposite. He persistently toiled to inform his readers of the positive contribution that the Ministry had made for the salvation of the nation; how the Ministry had led the coalition in destroying France as an aggressive power; and how the Ministry secured the Revolutionary Settlement and the Protestant Succession.

In the light of Defoe's earlier political career his loyalty to Godolphin appears both consistent and logical. Defoe believed that the interests of the nation were in proper hands. For him to have deserted the Ministry and heralded the Tory victors (who were still thought of in the popular mind, as associated with the Pretender's cause) would have been a reversal negating everything that he fought and struggled for. But even Defoe was shaken by the dismissals during the summer of 1710 and, as the impression became more clear that the Tories would be swept back into power in the next election, Defoe resumed his correspondence with his former employer--Harley.

And again the relationship that was resumed between the two, was distinctly coloured by their non-party attitudes. Defoe believed that Harley would not lead a Tory party, hot

for spoils, onto office. He hoped rather, that the moderation in politics which Harley had always shown, would prevent any calamity in future elections. When he first wrote to Harley after a silence of two years, he repeated in a similar manner his earlier aims and ideals:

> I can Not but hope That Heaven has yet Reserv'd you to be the Restorer of your Country by yet bringing Exasperated Parties and the Respective Mad-Men to Their Politick Sences, and Healing the Breaches on both Sides which have Thus wounded The Nation.
>
> If I can be Usefull to So Good a work without the Least View of private advantage I should be Very Glad, and for This Reason I presume to Renew the Liberty of Writeing to you which was Once My honour and Advantage, and which I hope I have done Nothing to forfeit.[1]

It has been pointed out, however, that the letter to Harley, was written approximately one month before Godolphin's dismissal. This fact is thought to cast some doubt on Defoe's inegrity. Defoe's own explanation of his actions seems quite convincing when judged in the light of non-party politics:

> It occurred to me as a principle for my conduct, that it was not material to me what ministers Her Majesty was pleased to employ. My duty was to go along with every Ministry, so far as they did not break in upon the constitution, and the laws and the liberties of my country.[2]

It appears that Harley was not reluctant to renew his relationship with his former servant, because, on July 28,

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 271. Compare to 118-119 above.

[2]An Appeal to Honour and Justice.(1715)

Defoe was again writing to him. In this letter, there is evidence that the two had met, and that Defoe had consented to work once again for Harley. He wrote:

> . . . I can Assure you by Experience, I find, That accquainting Some people They are Not all to be Devoured and Eaten up--will have all the Effect upon Them Could be wish't for; Assureing Them That Moderate Councils are at the Bottom of all These Things, That the Old Mad Party are Not Comeing in; That his Grace the D of S(hrewsbury) and your Self etc. are at the head of This Mannagemt and That Neither have been Mov'd however ill Treated to forsake the Principles you allways Own'd, That Tolleration, Succession or Union are Not Struck at, and They May be Easy as to the Nations Libertys. These things Make Strong Impressions, and Well Improved May bring all to Rights again.[1]

The quotation again illustrates Defoe's impression and appreciation of Harley's moderation. More important, it reveals a problem that the two men would have to face should the Tory party, led by a Tory Ministry, achieve power. Regardless of how sweeping the changes were in the Ministry or how great they would be in the House of Commons, the great monied interests would remain staunchly Whig. But, in contrast to their small numbers, they wielded a strength and influence far disproportionate to their size. The first to recognize this were the Tories, who complained that as the cost of the war soared, the Government was forced to borrow heavily from the monied interest who slowly extended their power over

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[1]Healey, Letters of Daniel Defoe, 272.

the Queen's Government. This process threatened to continue until the Government would become entirely subservient to a small financial clique in the city of London. How true this was becoming can be seen in a letter of Godolphin's to Marlborough after the battle of Malplaquet in 1709. Godolphin wrote:

> Upon the strength of your victory I have spoke yesterday to the Bank that pursuant to the latitude given in the last session of Parliament, they would now contract with me for the circulation of £600,000 more in Exchequer bills to the carrying on the public service. What I said seemed to be pretty well received, and I hope it will succeed. But upon that occasion Sir Gilbert Heathcote, who is Governor (of the Bank of England), said to me, "Pray, my Lord, don't lets have a rotten peace." "Pray tell me," I answered,"what you call a rotten peace?" "I call any-thing a rotten peace," he said, "unless we have Spain!" "But, Sir Gilbert," I said "I want you a little to consider the circumstances of the Duke of Marlborough and me; we are railed at every day for having a mind, as they call it, to perpetuate the war." He replied very quick, "They are a company of rotten rogues: I'll warrant you we'll stand by you."[1]

It was the monied class that was most opposed to any changed in the Ministry and that feared a Tory victory at the polls. The logic was simple; many who loaned money to the Government eventually turned Whig, because if the Pretender entered England, it was generally thought that he would repudiate loans made to the post revolutionary government.[2] Consequently,

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[1]Quoted in Trevelyan, The Peace, Vol. III, 21. Harley was no less conscious of the Whig threat to destroy credit, than Godolphin, see: Portalnd MS, Vol. IV, 545.

[2]Trevelyan, Bienheim, Vol. I, 292; W.R. Scott, Joint Stock Companies, Vol. III, 283, 293.

Whiggish inclinations were intensified amongst the monied interests as talk grew of the return of the Tories to power.

Early in 1710, even Defoe shared this view, and he explained what the public reaction was to the dismissal of Sunderland:

> Upon the late Remove of a Minister of State, the People, whether Alarm'd at that Remove singly, or in Apprehension of farther Alteration shew'd great Concern, and the Publick Credit felt it immediately, and would have felt it more sensibly, had it not been reviv'd by Assurance which we were told her Majesty gave to the Directors of the Bank, that no other Alterations were then design'd.[1]

But "alterations" did follow, and when rumours of a dissolution began to spread the ". . . Stock fell; and as that Rumour Encreased, they fell farther and farther, till the Bank fell from 126 to 118, and others in Proportion."[2] Defoe was grieved to think what the final effect would be to the national credit if this continued: "If the very Rumour of a Tory Party coming into the Administration has sunk every Man's Personal Estate 14 or 15 per cent. What will the blow itself do?" Then addressing the Tories, Defoe asked, "And can you retrieve it? Can your Party put in their Thumb and stop this Tide? Should you employ all your little cash, and go to Exchange-Alley, and by all the Stocks the Whigs would Sell, could you raise the Price? No, not 2 per Cent."[3]

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[1] Review, July 13, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 181.

[2] Ibid, 182.

[3] Ibid, July 18, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 189.

Defoe soon determined what his role was to be during these trying moments. From Sunderland's dismissal until the victory of the Tory Party at the polls in October, he kept up a rumming commentary on the problem of credit and finance. He explained:

> The Government has made Alterations, the Queen is Changing Hands for the Administration, some go out, some come in ____ We say, we are sure Honest Men go out ____ It is our Business to hope and Time must Answer . . . At the Entrance of this Change, we are all in surprize, Trade stops, Credit suffers a terrible Shock, everything runs down in its Value, and fears encrease . . . What must we do?
>
> To cry out we are all undone is to make it be so; to run down the Publick Credit, to break our Bank, to tear our selves to pieces ____ who do we serve? ____ This is to Ruin the whole Nation, and give our selves up to France ____ What must we do?
>
> To pluck up our Spirits, to appear pleas'd, and Encourage one another again, to go on as we were, and take no Umbrage at the thing, to speak in favour of our own Circumstances, and approve things, raise our Credit, bid for Stock, and prevent the sinking Prospect. This would be to Encourage the Change and Strengthen the Hands of those, that design to push it on to a farther Extremity . . .[1]

It was in this moment that the dilemma of party-politics and national interest became fully exposed. If Defoe continued to work for the Godolphin Ministry, criticizing the Tory manoeuvre to win power and warning the nation of the shaky financial platform of the Tory party, he would only succeed in adding to the growing panic amongst the monied interest, and speed the collapse of English credit. That Defoe

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[1]*Review*, July 18, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 189.

was aware of this is clear. He formulated the problem in this manner: "If the King of France were ask'd who has done his affairs most harm, the Duke of Marlbo' and Prince Eugene, or my Lord Treasurer; who would he lay it to?" Obviously the great resource of English credit had made the Duke's victories possible. He continued therefore: ". . . it is your Credit, not your army will ruin the French; and he that strikes at the Credit of the Nation, effectually beats the Army . . ."[1]

By considering the entire political scene, instead of debating the merits of a particular party, Defoe was able to argue:

> I should be very sorry, to see a Tory administration; I should think it a Melancholly View of Things, to see the Old Game of Persecution reviv'd among us; to see the Tolleration broken in upon, the Union Invaded the Whigs Trampled upon, the Dissenters Harrass'd and Plunder'd. . . But were it to be so, if it must come to that hard Choice, I had rather see all this, than France Triumphant, the Queen Dethron'd, the Pretender Establish'd, and Popery Erected--I had rather the Queen (God preserve her Majesty from that Suggestion) should Tyrannize over me, than the Pretender ——— I had rather a Tory Government, than a French Government.

And what is more the Whigs would be forced to support the Tory Ministry, and the national credit because "the Nation is at Stake" and because "the Nation must not be given up. . . this would be to pull our own Houses down with a Witness, this would be to give us all up to France."[2] In reality, the Whigs

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[1] Review, July 18, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 190.

[2] Ibid, August 15, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 238-239.

had more to gain with a Tory Government in power, than financial bankruptcy and chaos in the seat of power. He concluded:

> Gentlemen, we agree in this, that the Ship is to be kept a-float that the Leaks are, if possible, to be stop'd. . .--Let us join together so far for the common Safety, whether Whig or Tory, to keep the French out--It would be hard, that because we differ in many Things, we can agree in nothing, if your House is on Fire, I presume no Man will ask whether a Whig or Tory throws Water upon it, whether it be a High-Church Engine or a Low Church Engine, that is brought to play upon it. . .[1]

To jeopardize public credit was tantamount to destroying England's position in international affairs. Defoe could not escape the parallel between credit and international affairs, and credit and domestic industry. As the Whig rumours grew that the monied interests would sacrifice public credit in order to bring down the Tory Party, recently returned to power in such great numbers, Defoe wrote in the Review:

> Gentlemen, you that are for Ruining the Publick Credit, you are at War not with Tories, not with Whigs, but with Trade; you are at War with Industry, at War with general Improvements; in short, in some respects, you are at War with Mankind--Credit keeps Thousands of Families at Work and gives Breat to Nations; he that would destroy our Publick Credit, would destroy Private Credit, destroy Trade, starve the Poor, undo the Rich, and beggar the Nation . . .

And then, for the first time, he declared his position--a position destined to win for him the undying suspicion and hatred of all doctrinaire Whigs: "If this be to serve

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[1]Review, August 15, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 239.

Tories, I must serve Tories, I'll rather Sacrifize my private Peace to a Tory Party, than Sacrifize a Nation's Bread to Misery, and a Nation's Poor to Famine and Distress."[1] Previously, he had urged "moderation" in politics and hoped that the two parties would achieve some reconciliation. Now he was prepared to abandon any or all parties, provided the Government was capable of safeguarding the basic liberties and interests of the nation:

> . . . What Party soever will keep up our Credit be they Turk, Jew Pagan or Presbyterian whom you hate as bad_____ To them you must flie, to them you must adhere, for Credit is the Nations Life, and without it you are undone, you can neither preserve the Peace, nor carry on the War.[2]

Defoe's propaganda outburst must have come as a shocking surprise to his readers who still remembered previous Reviews that had repeated and repeated the warnings not to elect a Tory majority, because of the dangers which such a house would bring to the freedoms of the land. Defoe, himself complained of how Whig merchants and ship owners were harrying him because of his advice to support credit, even under Tory administration.

> The Master is a Whig, of a kind more particularly than Ordinary--He comes to the Port, my Bill of Loading is produc'd, my Tittle to my Goods Undisputed--No Claim, no Pretence--But my Goods cannot be found--The ship Sail'd again, and I am told my Goods are carry'd back again,

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[1] Review, December 26, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 471.

[2] Ibid, July 29, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 212.

> in the same ship--And all the Reason given is, they belong to De Foe, Author of the Review-- And he is turn'd about, and Writes for keeping up the Publick Credit.

He lamented "I can neither Trade nor live"[1] and complained, "He that writes against the Sense of two Potent, Contending and Violent Parties, is likely to be Censur'd by both, and certain to be Crush'd by one--as I thank God I have never Written for any Party yet, so I find myself almost Writing against every Party now;. . ."[2] Perhaps the last statement appears shocking, but in the light of Defoe's political past, discussed to this point, it was a justifiable remark.

His clearest and most emphatic declaration condemning party politics was made at the end of 1710:

> I have sometimes thought it hard, that while I endeavour so manifestly to steer the middle Channel between all Parties, and press either Side to pursue, at least preferably to their private Prospects, the Publick Interest, I should be maltreated by any, much more that I should be so by both Sides. . .for my part, I have always thought, the only true Fundamental Maxim of Politicks, that will ever make this Nation happy, is this --That the Government ought to be of no Party at all . . .
>
> Statesmen are the Nation's Guardians, their Buisness is not to make Sides, and divide the Nation into Parties, and draw the Faction into Battle Array, against one another, their Work ought to be to scatter, and disperse Parties as they would Tumults, and keep a Ballance among the Interferring Interests of the Nation, with the same care as they would the Civil Peace.

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[1] Review, July 29, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 491.

[2] Ibid, December 11, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XX, 499.

> . . .Ministry should be of the Nation's Party; the Ministry, the Government, is a Party by itself, and ought in Matters of Parties, to be independent; when they cease to be so, they set the Shoe upon the Head, they set the Nation with the bottom upward, and must expect to be Mob-ridden till they cease to be a party at all, but become Slaves to the Party they espouse, and fall under the Party they oppose: and this is what has Ruin'd all the Ministries that have been these last 20 years.[1]

The advice that followed this statement was to allow the Queen to "put out and put in who she pleases." Of course, Defoe qualified this advice with the proviso that the Queen's ministers were only to be obeyed, as long as they adhered to the constitution, and ruled within the framework of English law. Because the constitution was the embodiment of the wishes of the nation, even a new Tory Ministry, as long as it ruled according to law, would be forced to continue in the general direction of the preceding Ministry.[2] Defoe also cautioned his readers against a grave misunderstanding attached to the word revolution, as it was now being used in reference to the change of Ministries. He explained:

> There is a manifest difference between a Revolution in the Government, and a Revolution in the Administration; the first is a Change of the Constitution itself, settling it upon New, or restoring it to its old Foundation; the latter is only a Change of Persons; in a Change of the Constitution I must be entirely for, or against and Claim an active Concern, as a Member of the

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[1] *Review*, Preface, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII.

[2] *Ibid*, October 6, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XX, 338.

> Constitution: But in the latter, I am passive, because it is the Act and Deed of the Sovereign, to whom I am a Subject, and do, by law submit. . .[1]

Instead of questioning "Who are in the Administration?" Defoe preferred to ask "how do they administer?"[2] The terms Whig and Tory no longer offered meanings of any practical use.

But was it notdifficult to accept Defoe's simple advice to obey the Queen's chosen Ministers regardless of what party they belonged to, particularly after he had written so fervently before each election of the danger in electing Tories? Defoe was prepared to support his argument. In a sense, his defence was an important insight into the shifting political forces within the nation. He understood what few of his fellow citizens perceived, and what only served to baffle others.

The entire structure of his argument rested on the foundation that "Credit is a Whig" and that "National Credit is Founded on Revolution Principles."[3] When rumours were flying, before the election of 1710, that the Tories would swamp the Whigs, but that they would fail to consolidate their victory because the Whigs would destroy credit and bring the Tories to their knees in bankruptcy, Defoe offered the Tories a simple solution:

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[1] *Review*, October 6, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XX, 338.

[2] *Ibid*, October 6, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XX, 339.

[3] *Ibid*, February 17, 1711, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 563.

> Let them come to Exchange-Alley, and give Premiums to take Stock at the present Price; when Parliament shall be Dissolv'd, let them agree to have the Stock put upon them at an Advance; when the Ministry is Chang'd, let them engage to Circulate the Exchequer-Bills at Par, and take off the Annuities at 16 years Purchase; let them agree to accept the Bank-Stock at 126, and to give 1 per cent for Seal'd Bills; I warrant they shall find People enough to Contract with them.
>
> If they will back their Cause, like Brave Fellows, this is the way; and let them put Sense of the Nation upon this Tryal.[1]

Defoe had already illustrated what was false in the rumour that the Whigs would sabotage credit. Theoretically, perhaps they could; in reality, by witholding their financial support, they might destroy the Tories, but they would destroy the nation as well. Previously, Defoe had stated "National Credit is Founded on Revolution Principles", and even though the Whig financial investment was greater in pounds and shillings, the Tories would lose in much the same manner if they attempted to betray the Revolutionary Settlement and invite the Pretender to England.

> The Sum of all I have been saying is this, That if the People of Britain would give themselves leave to look into the Case of their Funds and Loans, and in what Condition they shall all stand, as to the Payment of their Annuities, Tickets, Tallies etc. Upon the coming in of the Pretender, no Man need to be in pain for them, that they will ever be broughtto hear of the Pretender.
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> And this is another Reason why I say it is absurd to suppose the Ministry, or Government, now in Power, can be for the Pretender; they are Men of too much Penetration to see it, practicable upon the Nation; supposing, for Arguments'sake

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[1] Review, July 8, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 175.

> only, that it was in their Inclination.
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> . . .The Example of King James is too recent: Pray what was it arm'd the Clergy, the High-flyers, the Persecutors of Dissenters, the Tories, and all that Race . . .Was it not their Money? Was not the Language the same as now (the Funds)? Were not the Clerics all Frighted with the High Commission Court? "O, we shall loose our Funds"! (Benefices). Were not the Gentry all frighted with the Return of Popery? "O we shall all lose our Funds"! (Abbey Lands) and this made them all face about, and in spight of twelve years professing the Doctrine of Passive Obedience, and their Abhorrence of King-killing, they took up Arms against Non-resisting Principles; chac'd their right Line Successor out of the Nation; advanc'd to fight him in Ireland; and if they did not king-kill him at the **Boyn**, it was none of their Fault.[1]

And even if there were Tories interested in the Jacobite game, what could so small a group do? It would take more than a fragment of Tory Jacobites to betray the Revolution and invite the Pretender. That would only come about when:

> . . .the Shop-keepers are willing to live without Trade. Merchants without Navigation; the Landlords without Rent; the Poor without Manufactures; the Rich without Interest of their Stocks; the Ladies without Portions; the Commons without Liberties; the Lords without Privileges, and the whole Nation without Religion.
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> When these things fall out, I shall, I say, expect the Pretender.[2]

Defoe finally showed that, irrespective of which party assumed power, only one course of action was open. The economic development of the later seventeenth and early

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[1] Review, March 12, 1713, Vol. IX, Book XXII, 138.

[2] Ibid, March 31, 1713, Vol. IX, Book XXII, 154.

eighteenth century had tended to fuse the economic interest of both groups belonging to Whig or Tory Party.[1] The inevitable result was that "Whoever comes into the Ministry, or into the Church, or into the Parliament, must recognize the Revolution, and carry on the Administration."[2] Defoe repeated himself on this point "Whatever the Persons the Queen shall Employ were before, they shall be Whiggs in the Administration." The only qualification he made was: "Negatively I do not mean they must turn Presbyterian, or Dissenter. . .But Positively, I mean they must recognize the Revolution, and pursue all the Principles that were the Occasion of it, and have been necessary adjuncts to it."[3]

Defoe's understanding of how economic and sociological forces had robbed the party system of any practical meaning was his greatest contribution to the analysis of political events. He pointed out that the Jacobites themselves had also perceived the new phenomenon. In the form of a dialogue, he illustrated the frustration of the Jacobite who complained, after the Tory victory at the polls, of the Party's failure to bring in the Pretender:

> This is the old Whiggish game still, and our Prince will never come in this way: Do not all your New Men, go upon Old Measures? What do you tell us of their being of other principles,

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[1]See Trevelyan, Blenheim, 29, 33, 100.

[2]Review, September 26, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 313.

[3]Ibid, August 19, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 240.

> let them be what they will in Principle, they are whiggs to us in Practice; we find 'tis all but a Cheat upon the Jacobites, and we are but just where we were before.

To which Defoe replied:

> I confess it is my Opinion, as it is my hope, my Jacobite Friend was in the Right--The Case is plain, the Nature of the Thing is plain, our Constitution must run in its old channel: no man can direct it; Whosoever comes into the Work, must do it the same Way it was done before--
>
> When an Engine, a Jack, or a Clock is made--And fixd--It will go no Way, but according to the Original Frame of the Work; You may bring new Workmen to it as often as you will, they may mend any Wheel or Spring, turn the Dial-Plate, change the Hand, make new-fashioned Figures, put new Weights or Lines, wind up the Spring higher or Lower, and make an Hundred repairs; but they must still keep to the Frame of the Work, follow the First Scheme--Or else they make an entirely new Engine 'tis no more the same clock, but another--And they are not the Guiders, but the makers of it____ The Clock of State is Fram'd already, its great Artificer was the Revolution____ Her Majesty may Employ what Workmen she pleases, to Mend, Clean and keep it in Repair--But the Frame remains it is not in their Power to alter it, that is the work of other hands. . .[1]

It was not that Defoe casually told his reading public to support the Tories because they were now in power, but rather, that he believed that the forces of political life supporting the Revolutionary Settlement were so strong that they would mould and transform any party which should attain power. "Gentlemen may call themselves what they please, and

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[1]Review, August 22, 1710, Vol. VII, Book XVII, 250.

talk of High-Church Men--But when they come to wind up this Clock--She will strike at no Hours, but as Moderation and Revolution, which are the main Wheels, shall direct."[1] This was the safeguard which Defoe urged his readers to recognize and understand. Because of this peculiar outcome of eighteenth century English political history, citizens could support any Ministry, irrespective of party. In this light, Defoe's numerous and shifting political alliances take on a deeper political meaning and also add to his stature as a political thinker and realist.

Until the fall of the Tory Ministry, after the death of Anne, Defoe continued to serve the Government in the manner in which he felt would be to the greatest interest of the nation. Even though he wrote under the watchful eye of Bolingbroke, he did not betray the principles he had expounded in his varied past.

And to a very great extent his activity as a "secret agent" and journalist under the Whig Government during the Hanoverian reigns duplicated his former career. No sooner were the Whigs entrenched for their protracted stay in power, then Defoe was again in service for the "King's Government." For this period, his biographers have ably uncovered the complex game that Defoe played. By writing for the Tory press,

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[1]Review, August 22, 1710, Vol. II, Book XVII, 251.

he dexterously removed the blatant Jacobite sentiment, substituting a more moderate criticism of the Government.[1] Until the end of his life, he continued, in this manner, dedicated to the non-party principles and the greatness of the nation for which he laboured so long.

Defoe could have justly boasted, at the end of his career, that although he had been in the pay of many Ministries, he had consistently supported the Revolutionary Settlement and the Protestant faith, and had safeguarded what he believed to be the interests of the nation.

Defoe's views on foreign policy complete a picture which reveals an unusual grasp of balanced opinion and a recognition of political reality.

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[1]Sutherland, Defoe, 205-226; FitzGerald, Daniel Defoe, 172-174; Minto, Defoe, 117-133.

CHAPTER IV

DEFOE AND FOREIGN POLICY

The Treaty of Ryswick (September, 1697) brought to an end nine years of European conflict. But, for Defoe and many of his contemporaries, it also brought a realization that the Treaty was a momentary cessation of hostilities, convenient for the clearing of the diplomatic chess board. Wars of Devolution and Reunions were inconsequential when judged against the ambitious possibilities of inheriting the Spanish throne and its colossal possessions. As the century drew to a close, a morbid anxiousness gathered, until it filled the corridors of all the European chancelleries--when would the decrepit Spanish King, Charles II, die? What would the will of the childless monarch proclaim? To a world growing more and more sensitive to the concept of political equilibrium, this question had assumed proportions of great magnitude. It was, therefore, the possibility of greater profit in the plundering of the Spanish Empire, that helped to end the War of the League of Augsburg. But, as tension mounted, politicians and ambassadors were whipped into ever greater activity, to solve for themselves what the incapacitated Charles II might solve otherwise. Courts and ambassadors wove a complex net of schemes, agreements and partitions with which to catch the crumbling pieces of empire, so energetically undermined

in secret conclaves and muffled conversations. And yet, the unceasing labour of the diplomatic staffs was to prove meaningless, because in the last resort, the problem was solved, not by the secret machination of seventeenth century diplomacy, but by the fierce encounters at Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet. But this was still wrapped in the future.[1]

William And English Foreign Policy

During the negotiations between England and France, the diplomatic scene at Hampton Court and its channels of foreign dispatch, was overwhelmed by an atmosphere of pessimism. King and ambassadors, held the same view, that the mounting strength of France threatened to destroy the balance of power in Europe and in the colonial world. Even during the moment when Louis showed himself disposed to talk of partition, Portland continued to warn William that war was at hand. Apparently, the same gloom pervaded the Estates General. Heinsius reported this fear to William, that it was unlikely that Louis would honour any treaties. To examine the diplomatic correspondence of the period is to share in the despair. The Earl of Manchester, ambassador to Paris, expressing his views to Alexander Stanhope at the Hague, wrote: "I fear that the

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[1]The events of the Partition Treaties are fully dealt with in the standard works, such as, The Cambridge Modern History, (1934), Vol. V, 372-401. A more recent and provocative approach is taken by Prof. M.A. Thomson, "Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession", R.H.S.T., Vol. IV, Fifth Series, 111-134.

affairs of Europe are in a very ill condition and that in a few years France will be master of all."[1]

It should be kept in mind, that as William was being bombarded with dispatches from his ambassadors, who were convinced of the inevitability of war with France, the Commons was proposing a reduction in the army, which would leave nothing but a skeleton force.[2] And, as has been stated, there was an overwhelming body of opinion, favouring the accession of Philip V, rather than William's partition treaty, which it was felt, would cripple English interest in the Mediterranean. The misunderstanding between nation and sovereign was near complete.

Under this wave of opposition, William almost succumbed. The often quoted words of his farewell speech, announcing his abdication, reflect the proverbial voice crying in the wilderness:

> Seeing that you have so little regard to my advice, that you take no manner of care of your own security, and expose yourself to evident ruin, by divesting yourselves of the only means for your defence, it would not be just or reasonable that I should be witness of your ruin.

But the energetic appeal of Somers, and the possible realization that abdication would not solve, but only aggravate,

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[1]Stanhope, History of England, (London, 1871), 4.

[2]See above 111-112.

the international problem, induced William to remain in England.

His desire to remain guaranteed one final conflict. It had been an accepted view that foreign policy lay well within the king's prerogative. But, in 1688, this orthodox view was seriously challenged, although the Commons did not specifically settle what it now considered its due measure of right in this area. William, with calm assurance, continued to look upon questions of foreign policy as being his exclusive concern. He continued to formulate foreign policy as though the Commons had ceased to exist. When parliament met in February 1701, parliamentary suspicion of William's foreign commitments, and of his previous army plans, had reached a dangerous pitch. In order to "conciliate opinion" William made extensive ministerial changes, which he hoped would placate the growing opposition.[1] Consequently, at the moment when he faced the wrathful onslaught of the Commons, he was least able to influence the House, or to channel its energy. His only hope of reestablishing contact with the lower house was by extra-parliamentary means.

In 1700, Louis publicly agreed to the stipulations of the Spanish will, and the French prince became Philip V of

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[1]For William's attitude to foreign policy and his weakened position after the ministerial change, I have relied heavily on M.A. Thomson's, "Parliament and Foreign Policy 1688-1714", History, (1953). See also D. Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 451.

Spain. When William received intelligence of Louis' move, he wrote to Pensionary Heinsuis:

> The blindness of the people is incredible. For though this affair is not public yet, it was no sooner said that the King of Spain's will was in favour of the Duke of Anjou than it was the general opinion that it was better for England that France should accept the Will than fulfil the Treaty of Partition . . .It is the utmost mortification to me in this important affair that I cannot act with the vigour that is requisite and set a good example, but the Republic must do it; and I will engage people here by a prudent conduct, by degrees, and without their percieving it.[1]

Disappointment and frustration are again the key notes of William's utterance. It represents the blighted hopes of years of political manoeuvering to check Louis XIV. But it contains not a word of surrender; on the other hand, it does supply a vital clue in the problem of Defoe's relationship to the government and his role as political propagandist. William was aware of his loss of control in the Commons and was more determined than ever, to resort to outside pressure to procure his ends. A journalist of outstanding talent would prove of inestimable value.

Defoe's Major Aim In Foreign Policy

To appreciate Defoe's views on foreign policy, his activity must be seen against the fluctuating tension of the

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[1] Hardwicke Papers, (London, 1778), Vol. II, 394.

international scene. The atmosphere in which he formulated his ideas must always be kept in mind. In the first chapter, effort was made to illustrate the practical incentive given to Defoe's theoretical political writings. The same, if not greater, practical incentive can be seen in his writings on foreign policy. Each pamphlet that he wrote on the complexity of a sound foreign policy served as a step in the education of the middle class. Each written effort brought clarification to some enigmatic area of international relations. Taken as a whole, the dozen odd pamphlets illuminated England's international responsibility; and particularly its significance for the active middle class English citizen.

In his Review, the great vehicle with which he reached the masses, Defoe explained:

> This paper is the Foundation of a very large and useful Design, which, if it meet with suitable Encouragement, Permissu Superiorum, may contribute to Setting the Affairs of Europe in a Clearer Light, and to prevent the various uncertain Accounts, and the Partial Reflections of our Street-Scribblers, who Daily and Monthly Amuse Mankind with Stories of Great victories when we are Beaten, Miracles when we Conquer, and a Multitude of Unaccountable and Inconsistent Stories, which have at least this Effect, That People are possest with wrong Notions of Things, and Nations Wheedled to believe Nonsense and Contradiction.[1]

From the outset Defoe felt it to be his pressing duty to explain, to his audience, the nature of the existing political structure; to simplify the involved marriage relation-

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[1]Review, February 19, 1704, Vol. I, Book I, 1.

ships that blurred the question of the Spanish succession; and to demonstrate the basic logic of a balance of power. Like Demosthenese, he worked feverishly to warn the nation of the true enemy--France, and her preponderant strength, hoping thereby, to spur the nation on to active resistance against the colossus.

Because he believed deeply in the danger of a belligerent France, he was appalled by the flippant manner in which "street-scriblers" minimized French power. In order to change this, he demanded of himself and his audience, the courage to face the naked realities of foreign affairs. He prided himself on what he considered, was the Review's unflinching willingness to admire success and victory, but to admit error and defeat. When British forces met disaster at Almanza, Defoe wrote to explain:

> What do I think? Why I think Sir as, everybody must think--I think we were beaten--entirely defeated, routed, overthrown, or whatever a Jacobite, a Frenchman, or what you please can desire.[1]

The struggle for political and religious survival was so serious, that he warned his readers against false news and undue optimism:

> Tis strange that we cannot bear to hear the Truth, if the fact itself does not please us; That we should be willing rather to feel than hear of the Greatness of our Enemies.[2]

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[1] Review, July 10, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 253.

[2] Ibid, March 11, 1704, Vol. I, Book I, 25.

Instead he suggested:

> Tis an allowed Maxim in War, Never to Contemn the meanest adversary; and it must pass with me for a Maxim in Politics, Not to Condemn the Power that is so far from mean, that 'tis match for half the World.[1]

Defoe's candid appraisal caused some annoyance to less intelligent readers, who claimed that any man acknowledging French power must be in French pay.[2] He was forced to explain his position repeatedly, urging that to analyse the situation honestly was not to weaken the English position but to strengthen it:

> I have always been of the Opinion That our slighting, or not rightly understanding the Greatness, the Power, the Policy, the Conduct, and Managment of our Enemies, has been one of the most Fatal Errors of our Age.
> I think no man in so much danger as he that is to fight an Enemy, and knows not his Strength.[3]

In addition to dishonest publications, he attacked another social phenomenon--rumour,[4] which promised to revive the madness of the Popish Plot. Almost every day brought some new threat: the French were to invade the island, the Dutch had quit the Confederacy, the Dutch were signing a separate peace. Rumour had begun to shake the morale of the

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[1] Review, March 11, 1704, Vol. I, Book I, 26.

[2] Ibid, July 4, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 154.

[3] Ibid, July 4, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 154.

[4] Ibid, July 3, 1705, Vol. II, Book IV, 206.

nation; but, worse, it could jeopardize the alliance.

The credulity of the masses caused him to write with exasperation: "We are a nation willing to be deluded, willing to be imposed upon, and nothing is so absurd but we are pleased with it rather than not have some news."[1] As for the rumour-monger, Defoe was of the opinion, that such a "man ought to be punished as a criminal."[2]

But, ultimately, Defoe tried to instil optimism and hope by steady encouragement in the feasibility of his suggested program. This program, however, could only be understood and utilized in an atmosphere where calm reason prevailed. As long as the war dragged on, he cautioned the public:

> Expect this war to go on, as it has always done, by inches, little and little, and if you will have patience and go on hand in hand with Providence, it may at last issue well, but if you will have every design prosper your own way, if you will fancy names and terrors will carry towns and that the former Victories will hatch the future, you must expect to be disappointed.[3]

It would be no exaggeration to say that Defoe's views on foreign policy were all-embracing. Indeed his mind was open to all the forces acting and reacting on the international scene. He did not approach the problem from any one specific

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[1] Review, December 18, 1707, Vol. IV, Book XI, 532.

[2] Ibid, July 3, 1705, Vol. I, Book II, 207.

[3] Ibid, September 23, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 383.

prejudice, but rather considered Europe, and more particularly England, from a variety of positions. Only then did he propose a concrete solution. The most enviable quality in his writing, is the thread of unity which brings together the various components that make up a sound foreign policy--military strategy, economic interest and foreign commitments. These factors were inextricably interwoven to form a comprehensive argument, capable of explaining and giving direction to the English citizen.

It has been shown that Defoe's efforts to support William's succession and, later, a standing army, earned him the reputation of being an opportunist hack, his writing on foreign policy earned him a similar reward from the isolationist elements in English society.[1] However, it would, of course, be mistaken, and indeed, be an injustice to Defoe to minimize his services to William in the latter's attempt to shape public opinion in the field of foreign policy. A more fruitful approach would be to question: How genuine and consisent were Defoe's views on foreign policy; and to what extent was Defoe, as a journalist, capable of influencing the government and the nation?

Foreign Policy And Legitimacy

The secularization of politics was launched by the

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[1] Remarks Upon a Late Pamphlet, 1700. See also C.E. Burch, "Attacks on Defoe in Union Pamphlets", Review of English Studies, (1930), 318-319, Vol. VI.

appearance of Machiavelli's The Prince. But it was to be a long while before treaties between foreign nations were completely divested of the sanctity and the trappings of which God appeared as a witness. In Defoe, we find,occasionally, the mildest hint of the sacredness of a signed treaty, but this is the exception. Louis XIV, in 1659 agreed to his wife's renunciation of the Spanish inheritance, and the separation of the two crowns. Defoe referring to this treaty, wrote: "It is effectually binding to the King himself, if there be any such thing as a binding force in the obligation of the most solemn and sacred oaths in the world."[1] But, even here, it is posed more as a question than as a convincing principle. It is very much the other story of secularized politics with Defoe. In regard to this same Treaty of the Pyrenees, Defoe could criticize its originator, Don Lewis de Haro, for foolishly believing that "A Treaty of Renunciation would ever be esteemed of force enough to limit the ambition of future times."[2] The orthodox view of legitimacy no longer satisfied Defoe. And because he was very much alive to the transformation of values in that early period of the modern world, he could write:

> . . .titles to crowns are generally disputed by

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[1]The Interest of the Several Princes and States of Europe Consider'd, (1698), 6.

[2]Ibid, 7.

> the sword, not by deeds and instruments; and that the Succession to the Crown of Spain, if ever it fell by the demise of the incumbents to the heirs of that marriage, would receive very little obstruction from so weak a defence as the paper of a renunciation; for we find contracts and writings of that nature, have very little effect against a title to a crown backt with an army of 50,000 men. The Spanish ministers acted the part of men of honour indeed, but not at all of politicians.[1]

At the outset, he had established that power is the foundation of politics, and he would have little recourse to the orthodox view of legitimacy.

More astonishing, considering his puritan upbringing, is the conscious division he made between morality and politics. In the last quoted sentence, they "acted the part of men of honour, indeed but not at all of politicians", the dichotomy is complete. If legitimacy could not serve as a basis for politics, Defoe would build on a more tangible found-

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[1] The Interest of the Several Princes and States of Europe Consider'd, 7. In another pamphlet, Defoe wrote: "If the fight of Sedgemore had favoured him (Monmouth) with power to have backt that affirmative with the longest; for victory, which gives crowns, takes off attainders, and makes anybody legitimate." The Succession to the Crown of England Consider'd, (1701), 10. Writing in a similar vein of the nymph Victory, Defoe explained:

> A partial Nymph! that scorns to smile where
> The unresisted baits of power are:
> Thy mercenary favours do'st divide,
> Not to the best but strongest Side.
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> Invading numbers are thy Bait,
> Too oft, on potent Treason thou canst wait,
> Bestow't thy favours without sence of Right,
> And barely stoop'st to fawn on Men of Might
>
> A Hymn to Victory

ation.[1]

Foreign Policy And Military Strategy

Defoe's works are punctuated with reference to military strategy and military history. Throughout his pamphlet literature and his newspaper, the Review, he criticized and praised, alternately, the blunders and successes of the military personages of the time. On occasion, he allowed himself the luxury of prophetic opinion and, needless to say, blundered painfully. But his accurate knowledge of geography, and his wide reading in the internal history of individual European countries, gave him a sufficient foundation to discuss profitably the problem of military strategy, as a department of foreign policy.

His task was twofold; he had first to overcome what is sometimes referred to as, the "blue water school", before he could convince his audience of his own ideas. The "blue water school" was made up chiefly of the High Tory group. Its representatives were Rochester and, to a lesser extent,

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[1]As for those princes who attempted to camouflage a political stratagem under the guise of religion he had little sympathy. He wrote: ". . .the Hungarians tho' their leaders are papists, cry out the Protestant Religion, to heighten the Claims of their declaration against their Prince; the Bavarian joyns with the French to secure Religion; the Duke of Savoy breaks off with the French to secure Religion; the Cardinal Primate brings in the Protestants to secure the Popish Religion, and we all joyn with the Roman Catholic Emperor to secure the Protestant Religion; the Lutherans joyn with the Calvinists, the Calvinists with the Lutherans, and both with the Papists, and all to Establish'd Religeon. Review, July 29, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 182.

Nottingham. In later years, Swift rationalized these views for the Tory party, in his Conduct of the Allies. As the name of the school implies, it was basically antagonistic to continental alliances. It was thought that, by winning supremacy upon the ocean, England could best defend herself. Foreign entanglements would only prove costly and misleading. Rochester fully expressed this when he advised English politicians, "To study (and) to maintain the sovereignty of our seas, so natural, so anciently, and so justly the true defence of this kingdom." Secondly, he warned that it would be dangerous to confuse the English problem of defence with that of a European land power:

> Well may other princes and states, whose situation requires it for their own security, find it their interest, for the preservation of their credit and reputation amongst their neighbours, to keep constantly in pay great numbers of land forces; in which they are still vieing one with the other, and boasting who can raise his thousands, and who his ten thousands; but they will be found but young statesmen for our government, who can think it advisable that the strength of this island should be measured by proportions so unsuitable to its true glory and greatness.[1]

Safe with a large fleet, England could now take the offensive, by attacking the Spanish West Indies; and if possible capture the Spanish treasure fleets. Even Bolingbroke suggested, in later years, that the loss of this bullion would have hastened

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[1]E. Clarendon, The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England. The quotations are to be found in the introduction written by Rochester.

Louis' exhaustion.[1] But, it is also true that Bolingbroke was not entirely opposed to a minimum of assistance to the continental allies. In all, it can be said that the "deep water school" was essentially isolationist, desiring to see the anti-Bourbon coalition defeat Louis XIV, without English military assistance.

It was not that Defoe was opposed to naval engagement, as urged by the "blue water school"; rather it was the narrow and limited scale of warfare that he disagreed with.[2] Convinced, as he was, of the threatening might of France, he could not feel secure unless the entire military potential of the nation was harnessed to the Grand Alliance:

> I well know, some there are, who, as they desire we should fall by our selves, suggest that we may stand so; that our Navy men guard our coasts against invasions; or our militia, and other forces at home, may be enough to preserve us if enemies land.
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> These men cannot but own, that it is much better for England to be at charges in keeping the enemy at a distance than to be the seat of war: And that if any one of those allies, which they undervalue, joyn'd with France, it were such an accession to its power, as the French party here would be very glad of. . .
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> But it is evident, that if the French should swallow Flanders (which they had certainly done before now, if it had not been for the confederacy) Holland, which has lately set us so good

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[1]Bolingbroke's views on the military and naval strategy of the Wars of the Spanish Succession are elaborated in the eighth of his "Letters on the Study and Use of History", The Works of Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, (1809), Vol. IV.

[2]In the early years of the conflict, Defoe showed his

> an example since the Battle of Landen, must necessarly truckle, and their navy be at the command of France: And how could we expect a fleet able to secure us aginst both; when hitherto, we and Holland in conjunction, have done so little against the naval force of France?[1]

Because he placed his entire confidence in a forward policy of attack, the army would have to occupy the centre of attention. This reasoning was based on the developments in Europe. When Louis accepted the will, he won Spain as a close ally; when he seized the Spanish Netherlands, he threatened Holland and promised to overturn the balance of power in Europe. For Defoe, this was a continental problem, first and foremost. But he was not blind to its inevitable growth and its future threat. For nine years, Louis had demonstrated French power in a virtually isolated position--what would France threaten with Spain as an ally and Europe at his feet? It was barely within the power of England and Holland combined, to check

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anger for the mishandling of the fleet, in a vitrolic poem--The Spanish Descent (1702). It is clear that he considered naval engagement as an important aspect of war. In 1708, he went so far as to write: "Would you have Victory, then you have nothing to do but go fetch home the Galeons, and you fetch Victory; get but their Silver, you defeat all their projects, and prevent all their Conquests; in short, if you get but the Spanish Plate Fleet, you recover Spain in two years, France cannot support her, nor can Spain defend herself; the Money is the Victory, and without it you do nothing." Review, June 6, 1708, Vol. V, Book XII, 170. See also Review, Jan. 18, 1711, Vol. VII, Book XVIII, 511.

[1] The Englishman's Choice and True Interest, (1694). Similarily, "but tis always the interest of England to keep danger at a distance, and it has been the practice of England to do it by Leagues and Confederacies, as the only proper method. The Two Great Questions Further Consider'd, (1700), 371.

French sea power, during the War of the League of Augsburg. How could the High Tory naval stragegists be so blind to the increased naval powers of France, in a fundamentally transformed Europe? Defoe wrote: "Spain. . .as now considered in the hands of the Spaniards, has but an inconsiderable naval power; but Spain in the hands of the French must be otherwise considered."[1] There was the danger--not France and a degenerate Spain; but France and a revived Spain:

> The present growing greatness of the French genius infus'd by vigorous councils into the Spaniards, may once again make them, as they formerly were, the most powerful nation in the world, both at land and Sea; if then the French and Spaniard united, should make themselves in proportion too strong at Sea for the English and Dutch, they may bid very fair for a universal empire over this part of the world.[2]

It is clear, therefore, that Defoe was not oblivious to the naval aspect of warfare, but in this particular situation, considered it more as a secondary problem, in point of time. In his mind, the immediate task called for an instant attack on France to prevent her from conquering Europe, and reviving the Franco-Spanish navy.

Defoe's views on a standing army have been outlined in a previous chapter. He had persistently fought to convince the nation of the absolute need of such a permanent force. But, in essence, his view was not defensive. He did

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[1] The Interest of Several Princes and States of Europe Consider'd, 27.

[2] Ibid, 22.

not suggest an army as the sole solution of England's international problems. Nor did he visualize the army as a protective curtain, shielding English soil. Rather, the army was to be immediately utilized, before the grievous harm done by France to the existing equilibrium in Europe was disturbed beyond repair. To rely upon England's moat was a form of national suicide. His plan, he claimed, was deduced from a "Constant maxim of the present state of war; and this is to carry the war into your enemies country, and always keep it out of your own."[1] How this squared with his puritan conscience, is well worth wondering. But, still more important, this idea carried within it the antithesis of High Tory isolationism. In order to keep war out of England, he conceived of the Low Countries, as a vast buffer belt containing France. The support of this protective belt implied, of course, England's continental responsibilities:

> Our business in case of a rupture, is to aid our Confederate princes, that they may be able to stand between us and danger: our business is to preserve Flanders, to garrison the frontier towns, and be in the field in conjunction with the Confederate armies: This is the way to prevent invasions and descents.[2]

Defoe had attempted to discredit the "blue water school" because he believed their views were prejudicial to

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[1] An Argument Showing that a Standing Army is not Inconsistent with a Free Government, 5.

[2] Ibid, 6.

England's defence. In turn, he substituted a role of foreign alliance and active military assistance to check France before she achieved European hegemony. But, the entire military and naval strategy of the nation was dependent upon one essential fact. Defoe constantly emphasized the danger of internal political strife at home. It would have to be overcome before positive action would win success:

> Hail Goddess! Welcome to thy old abode!
> Be thou the Guardian of the Nation's Good.
> Let Civil-Strife and Party-Fire
> Under thy weighty hand expire:
> Under thy banner let us always fight,
> Conquer abroad, at home unite.
> . . . . . .
> Hail Victory, the welcome blow!
> How great, how mighty, is the overthrow!
> So shall he conquer that for England fights:
> So shall the people conquer that unites.[1]

Foreign Policy And Economics

Generations of school children have been taught that when Louis XIV accepted the Spanish crown for Philip, and then recognized James II's son as King of England, he precipitated the conflict, sometimes known as Queen Anne's War. As to the first assertion, it is well known that the English population did not look with a favourable eye upon the Partition Treaty and would have preferred to see Philip as King. The Dutch went so far as immediately to recognize Philip as such. To the second assertion, modern scholarship has definitely said no.

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[1] *A Hymn to Victory*.

No less an authority than G.M. Trevelyan has written:

> The proclamation of the Pretender was not indeed the reason why England joined in the War of the Spanish Succession. Her participation had become certain a week earlier when Marlborough had set his name on her behalf to the Treaty of Grand Alliance. Though the Tory Ministry and Parliament were ignorant for some time of the precise terms of the Treaty, they had given their previous sanction to the formation of an Alliance to obtain security and compensation from Louis and Philip. They would in any case, have gone to war in support of the Treaty.[1]

Trevelyan prefers to build his explanation, not on the acceptance of the Will, but by the interpretation Louis gave it:

> . . .seizing the Dutch Barrier, by showing that he regarded the Spanish Netherlands as French territory, by excluding the English merchants from American trade, and by treating the Spanish Empire as a prize for French commercial exploitation and a field of manoeuvre for French armies. By these measures he converted the English Tories to the need of war, before ever he crowned the edifice of pride and folly by proclaiming the Pretender as King of England.[2]

In a more specific and detailed manner D. Ogg has stated:

> . . .in the last two decades of the century England was doing all in her power to encourage trade with the Spanish colonies, even at the expense of prejudicing English planters. . .and it was natural that this should arouse the jealousy of the many European nations engaged in the slave trade. Of these the most formidable was France. She wanted the Asiento for one of her West Indian islands; she was prepared to contest the steady English infiltration into the trade of the richest colonial empire in the world; still more the effective acquisition of Spain

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[1] G.M. Trevelyan, Blenheim, 152.

[2] Ibid, 135; also 97.

> in 1700 by the will of Charles II gave her full power to oust everyone else from that trade. This was one of the main causes of the War of the Spanish Succession.[1]

Theoretically, the Spanish possessions were to trade exclusively with the mother country. For decades, Madrid had tried to force this mercantilist view on her colonies. Eventually, the policy had broken down. Spain could not supply the necessary needs of her own colonies and was reluctantly driven to allow foreign nations to ply their trade in these hitherto restricted areas.[2] The disintegrating industrial scene in Spain was to prove England's great advantage in the Carribean.

Two years before Louis accepted the Will of Charles II, Defoe showed his anxiety over the Spanish American trade.[3] He explained, to his countrymen, the position of the Spanish colonies in the economies of England and Holland. In the first place, the colonies were the chief consumers of the manufactured goods of both countries. Whereas this was a profitable venture in itself, it gave employment to a large part of the English working class. Any interference in this trade would cause unemployment in England. And, then, in true mercantilist spirit, Defoe pointed out that the manufactured wares of England were purchased by the colonist in good hard bullion,

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[1] D. Ogg, England in the Reign of James and William, 17.

[2] G. Scelle, The Slave Trade in the Spanish Colonies of America: The Asiento, "American Journal of International Law", (1910), Vol. IV, 612-661

[3] The Interests of Several Princes and States of Europe, 24-25.

which "makes always an account of profit to the publick stock of a nation." From another point of view, the Spanish trade, whether in the New World or in the Mediterranean, gave "an increase of navigation, and encouragement to seamen, the Spaniards not only trading with us all in our own vessels, but employing our ships in their own affairs from port to port. . ."[1] Commercially profitable, this same Spanish trade was an incentive to English shipbuilding, at a moment when England was fighting for mastery of the seas.

The economic necessities of the English nation could not allow the Spanish empire to be lightly dealt with. In much the same manner that Defoe dreaded the probable results of a vigorous French influence in Spanish naval matters, he pointed out what was to be expected if France were to take an active part in Spanish economic matters:

> I'll give but one instance, Spain is a very hot country, yet such is the constancy of the Spaniard to the old ridiculous custom, that they wear their cloaks of course black English bays, should the French King, when he is master of Spain, forbid the Spaniards the wearing of bays, and introduce some antick French druget, or other thin stuff, such as they made in Normandy, it would at once destroy our trade of bays, which is the noblest manufacture in many respects that we have in England, and send 40 thousand people, who depend on that trade, to beg their bread, or seek other work, which other must of consequence lessen the employment of other poor families which it maintained before.[2]

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[1] The Interest of Several Princes and States, 23.

[2] The Two Great Questions Consider'd.

This was but one case. Defoe could promise that once the French established themselves in Spain they would very probably, "admit their own merchants to import their manufactures custom-free, while we shall pay 23 per cent, 'Tis easy to see that our trade thither must dye."[1]

The greatest blow, however, would fall on colonial trade. "What will the Virginia colony be worth when the French come to be strong in the Lakes of _____, and have a free commerce from Quebec to Mexico behind ye?"[2] Emphatically, he traced the downfall of every colonial enterprise, should the French assume control of Spanish trade; for example:

> We take our fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and on the coast of New England and the French do the like; but the market is general and equal to both nations, if their be any advantage tis on the side of the English; but if Spain, which is the place where all this fish is disposed of, falls into the hands of the French, tis but prohibiting fish, excepting in their own Bottoms, and all our Newfoundland colonies must sink and be destroyed and three hundred sail of ships be at once unemployed.[3]

And then focusing on the Southern colonies, he continued:

> Our interests in the West-Indian colonies of America, come next into consideration. Tis absolutely necessary for the security of our plantations, whose extent is exceedingly great, that no union be made between the French and Spanish Dominions; otherwise the whole trade from these parts of the world, to both East and West Indies, may lie at the mercy of the

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[1] The Interest of Several Princes and States, 25.

[2] The Two Great Questions Consider'd, 25.

[3] The Interest of Several Princes and States, 28.

> French; for England and Holland being nations subsisting and depending wholly upon trade and foreign negoce, any union in the world, which should be too strong for them at sea, may in the end reduce them both those nations to what terms and what subjection they please.[1]

At this point, it is possible to stop and consider Defoe's ideas. Are they so different from any grasping merchant's of the eighteenth century? In essence, they represent nothing but the selfish egoism so essential to the trading classes of modern Europe. The views presented are aggressive in their candid acquisitiveness; but Defoe added another note which proclaimed the transformed character of the nature of the state in regards to war and foreign policy:

> If the French get the Spanish crown, we are beaten out of the field as to trade, and are besieged in our own island, and never let us flatter ourselves with our safety consisting so much in our fleet; for this I presume to lay down as a fundamental axiom, at least as the wars go of late, tis not the longest sword but the longest purse that conquers. If the French get Spain, they get the greatest trade in the world in their hands; they that have the most trade will have the most money and they that have the most money, will have the most ships, the best fleet, and the best armies; and if once the French master us at sea, where are we then?[2]

Once and for all, the feudal concept of war is laid to rest. The personal element of the chivalrous warrior[3] has

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[1] The Interests of Several Princes, 23.

[2] The Two Great Questions Consider'd, 26. (My emphasis)

[3] For Defoe's view of the role of the individual in history the following will suffice: "I tell you, your discouragements proceed from these senceless dependencies; for those that build upon the Foundation of Personal confidences, are always the readiest to despair--Because as they did not look into

lost its meaning, and foreign policy is not to be formulated on the basis of the whims of a personal ruler. War has become an activity that is to be computed in pounds and shillings, and foreign policy has been removed from the austere ambassador's chamber, to the money marts of the world. To achieve victory in arms one would have to understand the nature of victory:

> Now thou'rt become the Whore of War,
> Strowling with Bully Mars and coward fear,
> Thou tak'st the vile degenerate part,
> A prostitute to stratagem and art;
> Submittst to treason, avarice and blood,
> And art no more for justice understood.
> By modern Methods art procur'd,
> The longest purse, subjues the longest sword,
> Trick, sham, contrivance, and surprise,
> In these thy new acquirements lies;

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the Reasons and nature of circumstances, when they build their rhodomontading, blustring hopes, so neither do they consult the reasons and causes of things in the disappointments; and this makes them rise and fall all in extremes, and by wholesale; 'tis true, not as to Providence only, but as to the rational conduct of Mankind, and the management of all the great things in the world."

A more specific example of Defoe's view of the hero is his comment on Eugene at Toulon. "Toulon not be taken! Tis impossible! Cry'd the mighty Men of Politicks, and what was the reason assigned?--Why, Prince Eugene is there, the Great Prince Eugene, the Invincible Prince Eugene--He must take it, 'tis impossible to miscarry--And now what has become of Prince Eugene? It is true, he is a great man, and I have a high value for him. He is a Great--A Great what, a Great Man; read it again, Gentlemen--A Great Man! He is but a Man however Great--. . .and now you are made to see, 'tis not a Man, 'tis not the reputation of a Name, 'tis not the Wisdom or Policy of one man could carry such an attempt as this; and thus your Pride and puff't up Timerity have run you upon Dissappointments. Review, September 23, 1707, Vol. Iv, Book X, 382-383.

> Number not Valour now prevails,
> Art wins, and courage oftner fails:
> He conquers soonest that's the most afraid
> The camp's a market, and the wars a Trade.[1]

Military strategy and commerce are, at last, welded together to form, what Defoe considered, a correct foreign policy. D. Ogg, in discussing the two political views as held by France and England, respectively, writes:

> . . .it is at this point that one can clearly distinguish two contrasted conceptions of power; the one dynastic and territorial, thinking in terms of areas and populations; the other maritime and commercial, based on the newer conceptions of markets, trade routes, and zones of influence.[2]

Ogg's view is given additional support in Defoe's writings.

Foreign Policy And The Ultimate Aim

Modern idealistic internationalism, embodied in the schemes of Sully's Grand Dessin, and later in the Abbe Saint-Pierre's Projet de Paix Perpetuelle, found their beginnings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[3] But such ideas are virtually non-existent in Defoe's writings. The stern religious puritan was, paradoxically, overtly practical. He was far too occupied to busy himself with projects of perpetual peace, when the history of Europe seemed one protracted war.

During the Nine Years War, Europe was divided into two camps. At the turn of the century, a new alliance system

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[1] A Hymn to Victory.

[2] D. Ogg, England Under James II and William III, 448.

[3] E.H. Carr, The Twenty Years Crisis, 85.

had sprung up and Defoe asked, "What is the reason for this Confederacy against France?"[1] He supplied the following answer:

> . . .the great reason, which as I conceive, gave birth to the first project of this League, setting aside private reasons of state and the maintaining the balance of power in Europe.
>
> This has been the foundation of all the wars in our age aginst the French, and in the last ages against the Spaniard and the Emperor.
>
> A just ballance of power is the life of peace.[2]

But, it is clear that this important term, "The balance of power", which played a very great part in his concept of foreign policy, was an expression based upon concrete realities. It was never employed by Defoe in an abstract manner, as the following will indicate:

> To let the French possess the Spanish dominions would overthrow the balance purchased in this war with so much blood and treasure, and render fruitless the Treaty of Reswick. 'T would especially ha' been fatal to the English and the Dutch, by the increase of wealth from the mass of money returning yearly from the Empire of Mexico and Peru which the French would be better husbands of than the Spaniards; by there increase of shipping which would make them too strong for all the world at sea and by their ruining the Spanish trade which is the greatest and most profitable in Europe; 'twould immediately unhinge all the settlement of our merchants and factories and turn the whole channel of trade.[3]

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[1] Two Great Questions Consider'd, 15.

[2] Ibid, 15.

[3] Ibid, 18.

Based, as this concept is, on commerce and military strategy, it too becomes totally secularized. By his own definition of the balance of power, we learn:

> . . .that it is found by experience that the only way to preserve the peace of Europe is to form the several powers, and princes, into parties and interests, that either conjunctively, or separately no one party or power may be able to suppress another; and so by addition of the power supprest to his own, grow too strong for his neighbours.[1]

Divorced from any spiritual or ethical basis, he can conclude "if a war be necessary it is just."[2] To say the least, these ideas played havoc with the orthodox views of legitimacy. He introduced this concept of the balance of power to explain the origion of the War of the Spanish Succession and, moreover, to discredit the idea that the war was inevitable because Louis chose to recognize the Pretender. On the contrary:

> To me it is a thing. . .not worth our notice and had better have been passed over a trifle, than fastened on as the principle ground of a war, when there are such material points always required to make a war just, and when there are such other just reasons for taking up arms now before us.[3]

The balance of power theory, as wielded by Defoe, was a purely functional tool in manipulating foreign policy. In a way, it served as a term encompassing military strategy and commercial development. But it must be admitted that it was a pessimistic term when compared to the utopian dreams of

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[1] Reasons Against a War with France, (1701), 13.

[2] Ibid, 9.

[3] Ibid, 11.

Sully and the Abbe St.-Pierre. Because it was concerned almost solely with the solution of an immediate problem and only remotely, if at all, with the future, it lacked the unbounded optimism which was to be found in the writings of the two French theoreticians.[1]

Defoe's great injunctions to his contemporaries, both in England and in Europe, are summed up in the following:

> From the whole I take the freedom to draw this conclusion, that such a union of two such powerful monarchies as France and Spain, would be very pernicious to the trade of England and Holland in general, and absolutely destructive to some branches of it in particular; it would be hazardous to the peace and liberty of the Dutch, and absolutely inconsistent with the Ballance of Power in Europe; it would be to the Princes of Italy, the Cantons of Switzerland, and the Kingdom of Portugal; 'twould be very troublesome and uneasy to the Empire, and would very much endanger the liberty of Christendom.
>
> And so, then it must be the interest of all the princes of Europe to join their forces with the utmost vigour, and endeavour to prevent it.[2]

These ideas of Defoe are important, not only for his

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[1]That Defoe was conscious of this can be clearly seen in the following quotation. After explaining the significance of the Partition Treaty, for maintaining the balance of power and keeping open the arteries of trade, he wrote: "This is the short History of this League, which really has more Policy than Right in it, for strictly considered, the Right of Succession can devolve but upon one Person, let that one be who it will, is not the present buisness. But publick good, the peace of Kingdoms, the general quiet of Europe prevails to set aside the point of nice Justice, and determine in favour of the publick Tranquility." The Two Great Questions Consider'd, 14. Several years later Defoe again wrote of a "League of Nations": "I doubt the World is not in a Temper suitable to so much Good, nor are our Eyes open to so great Advantages, as would attend such a Concert of Interests . . ." Review, April 21, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XIV, 29.

[2]The Interests of Several Princes and States of Europe Consider'd, 29.

career under William, but also for a just understanding of the position he took when the negotiations for the Peace Treaty of Utrecht were under way.

In 1701, a noticeable change had taken place in English political thinking. The ominous movements of Louis XIV had begun to create doubt and fear in England. But it was in the areas closest to France that the alarm was most articulate. In Kent, talk was that the "farmers had sown their corn, but the French would reap it."[1] It was in this atmosphere, that the general quarter session, made up of gentlemen, justices of the peace, grand jury, and other freeholders, "a responsible and weighty body";[2] met at Maidston, Kent, on April 29, 1701.

The assembly was overwhelmingly in favour of petitioning Parliament, in order to force its attention to a danger which the Commons seemed oblivious. Five Kentish citizens: William Colepeper, Thomas Colepeper, D. Polhill, Justinian Champneys and William Hamilton[3], were instructed to present Parliament with the petition imploring:

> That this House will have regard to the voice of the People; that our Religion and safety may be effectually provided for; that the loyal addresses of this house may be turned into bills of supply;

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[1]Sutherland, Defoe, 170.

[2]G.N. Clarke, The Later Stuarts, (Oxford, 1949), 187.

[3]H. of C.J., Vol. XIII, 517.

> and that his Majesty may be enabled powerfully to assist his allies, before it is too late.[1]

The immediate reaction of the House was a thunderous:

> Resolved, That the said Petition is scandalous, insolent and seditious; tending to destroy the Constitution of Parliaments, and to subvert the established Government of this realm.[2]

The petitioners were then ordered to be taken into the custody of the sergeant at arms.[3]

But, the international scene had become so precarious, that the nation was unwilling to look upon the imprisonment of the petitioners with indifference.

Quick to realize the importance of the political capital afforded by the case of the Five Kentish Petitioners, the Whig Party set its propaganda machine in high gear. By playing on the sensational imprisonment of the modest Petitioners, the Whigs hoped to focus the public's attention on foreign policy, and thus weaken the Tory Government.[4]

On May 14, Defoe accompanied by a well armed company of gentlemen of quality, marched into the Commons and presented the Speaker of the House (ironically, Harley) with the famous Memorial signed "Legion-for we are many".[5]

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[1] H. of C.J., Vol. XIII, 518.

[2] Ibid, 518.

[3] Ibid, Vol. XIII, 518.

[4] Leopold von Ranke, A History of England, Vol. V, 260-261; W.S. Churchill, Marlborough, Vol. I, 531; W. Freeman, The Incredible Defoe, 138; K. Feiling, History of the Tory Party, (1660-1714), 350-351.

[5] Sutherland, Defoe, 71-74.

The brevity of the Memorial accentuated its frankness, the sharp rebuking tone could not be easily misunderstood. The Memorial condemned the House for imprisoning the Kentish petitioners; then it went on to attack the House for its mistaken attitude in foreign policy; criticizing it for abandoning the Dutch and for failing to provide the King with sufficient supplies; and ending with the hope that the French King would be forced out of Flanders, and war declared on France. The paper also contained a defence of a citizen's political rights; but, fundamentally, it was a direct attack on a foreign policy, which the Memorial, as the voice of the people, of England considered incorrect.

That Defoe was not arrested, may indicate the Common's shaken confidence. Jack Howe, claimed that he went in fear for his life. Many extreme High Fliers left their posts in the Commons to return to the country.[1] The sole retaliation was the appointment of a committee, to lay before the King an account of the "evil-disposed persons who raise tumult and sedition." Several days later, the five victims were released. To cap the little drama, a public banquet was given them at Mercer's Hall. Defoe proudly attended as an honoured guest, where he was seen by a rival Tory journalist who wrote:

Jove when he appears in an Assembly of the Gods,

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[1]Dottin, Daniel De Foe, 88.

> cannot have more homage paid to him. . .Next the Worthies was placed their Secretary of State the author of the Legion Letter; and one might have read the downfall of parliaments in his very countenance.[1]

The intimate relationship between William III and Defoe has long been known. But the strange events of the Kentish Petition and the Legion's Memorial suggests an even closer understanding between the King and the journalist. Unfortunately, the evidence is of an inferential nature, and must remain so until further documentation is supplied.

Professor J.R. Moore has attempted to explain why Defoe was given so heavy a sentence when he was arrested after publishing The Shortest Way with the Dissenters. Professor Moore's essay, Defoe in the Pillory, is rich in evidence showing how Defoe's contemporaries looked upon him as a rebel, and as an obnoxious troublemaker. The thesis of the essay explains that the heavy sentence imposed on Defoe was motivated by his judges' disires to revenge themselves on the scurrilous pamphleteer who had mocked and lampooned them, so long in prose and verse. In general, the article is of major importance in illuminating the radical element in Defoe's personality. But perhaps Professor Moore has attempted to explain too much on the basis of Defoe's biting satire and Leveller ideas.

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[1]Dottin, Daniel DeFoe, 88-89.

It has been pointed out how isolated William was in regard to the House of Commons and to foreign policy,[1] and, particularly, as Professor M.A. Thomson has suggested, how William attempted to overcome this difficulty by "extra-parliamentary means." An article by T.F. Newton attempts to prove that the heavy sentence given to Defoe was also due to his part in the Legion's Memorial affair and the resulting dissolution of parliament. Newton explains how irritated the Tories were when Parliament was dismissed, and that Harley was reported to have said "he would make the heads of those fly, who advised the dissolution."[2]; and he finds, in an unpublished letter of Nottingham's in which the latter wrote:

> I asked him (Defoe) when his advice about dissolving the Parliament was given, and he could not at first recollect but concluded that he verily believed 'twas before the King went into Holland.

This is sufficient evidence to suggest that the Tory leaders were still suspicious of Defoe's former influence with William and were determined to uncover the hidden strategy of Legion's Memorial and the dissolution of Parliament.[3]

In this sense, Defoe was William's most important "extra-parliamentary means" with which to bring pressure on a recalcitrant House of Commons.

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[1] See above Page 174.

[2] T.F. Newton, The Royal Road To The Pillory: New Light on Defoe, (Unpublished article in the possession of Henry Hutchins, Yale University).

[3] Ibid, 5.

Foreign Policy In Practice

The immediately preceding pages have dealt with the more theoretical formulations on foreign policy developed by Defoe, and his relationship with William. The following will examine Defoe's views in relation to a definite political situation.

It has been seen that, for Defoe, the most important safeguard protecting English liberty--and for that matter the freedom of Europe--lay in the strength and solidity of an alliance capable of maintaining a balance of power on the continent; or in other words a check on the exorbitant power of France. Ironically, it was the actions of one Protestant nation (Sweden); a Protestant minority (the Hungarians); and a member of the Confederacy (the Emperor) which threatened the very alliance standing for the preservation of European liberty. Defoe did not hesitate to expose and condemn what he considered to be the folly of a state's foreign policy, whether that state was a co-religionist or a member of the alliance.

> There are three great Wars in Europe which at this time harras it, with Fire and Blood. . .I mean the Swedes and the Muscovites, that of the Emperor of Germany and the Hungarians, and that of the French and the Confederates.[1]

Clearly, nothing must interfere with the Allied cause in the struggle with France but, in the North, the formidable Swedish

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[1] *Review*, October 19, 1708, Vol. V, Book XIII, 350.

fighting machine was neither fighting against France as a Protestant nation should, nor as an independent nation state endeavouring to maintain the balance of power on the continent.

The peculiarity of northern European politics had led Sweden, Denmark, Poland, the North German States, and Russia into an armed struggle for control of the Baltic. Defoe considered Swedish policy to be narrow and short sighted. Whatever gains the Swedes might make, those gains would be invalidated once the French succeeded in defeating the Confederate Alliance. He repeated to his co-religionists:

> It is true, that this is not a Religious War, but it is as true, that the Safety of the Protestant Religion in Europe depends upon the Success of this Confederacy, and therefore whoever he is that risques the Confederacy, risques the Protestant Interest.[1]

Still more to the point, he explained to the English public:

> I will not say the Swedes are Confederate with France in this, but I may say, he cannot serve the French Interest more; for if he is embroil'd with the Northern Princes, the Troops of those Princes must necessarily be recall'd out of the Confederate Service to defend their Neighbours.[2]

In the long view, Sweden jeopardized her own security and the Protestant faith by misunderstanding the nature of the struggle and disrupting the alliance which could mean the difference between French hegemony of Europe or national security and

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[1] Review, September 10, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XV, 276.

[2] Ibid, September 5, 1706, Vol. III, Book VII, 422.

independence.

Defoe's continuous criticism of Swedish foreign policy eventually provoked the Swedish Ambassador to call upon the English authorities "to correct this miserable scribbler."[1] Defoe's apology soon appeared in print:

> . . .I'll state the Case feeely and plainly. First, I make no Difficulty to say, if in my Observation, I have used too great a Plainness, if I have said any thing unjust, untrue, indecent or offensive in my Discourse of the King of Sweden--I'll make any Reparation that the said Envoy shall desire, by acknowledging it in publick asking Pardon for it, or the like--Because I really ment no affront.[2]

At the same time Defoe prophetically warned the Swedes of the danger of keeping the flames fanned in the Baltic and the East. Finally in August, 1709, the news reached London that Charles XII had met defeat at the hands of the Czar of Muscovy. For several weeks journalists in London spoke of little other than the unexpected shift of the balance of power in the Baltic. Defoe who was now in a position to shake his finger at the Swedes who had not thought wise to heed his arguments, expressed himself with the greatest moderation and consistency of principle:

> . . .I must observe by the way, it is no more the interest of Europe to let Sweden be oppress'd or overrun, or the Dominions of the Swedes in

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[1]Payne, Mr. Review, 22.

[2]Review, October 21, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 430.

> Germany be ravish'd from them, that it was before to let the Swedes invade the Empire--if then the Muscovites, or the Poles, would attempt to push their victory beyong a just Peace--and I must declare my self as much a Swede, as I am, now a Saxon. Balance is the word; the Safety of Europe depends on Peace, and all peace is founded upon Equalities and Proportions.[1]

The Alliance was threatened by internal discord in yet another area. The Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I, whose contribution to the A lliance against France was considered to be of extreme importance was distracted by the revolt of a well organized Protestant minority in Hungary, a province of the Empire. The activity of the Hungarian Protestants in their struggle against the Catholic Hapsburgs caused much discussion in the Protestant countries of Western Europe, particularly England. Whig circles, especially, greeted the Hungarian rebels with sympathy and praise. Did not these rebels profess a similar religion? Were they not attacking the citidel of Catholicism, which was still considered the bastion of obscurantism and repression? Small wonder that the Whig journalists of London greeted the Hungarian Protestants with such alacrity. And smaller wonder that they should have been shocked by Defoe's condemnation of the Hungarian rebels who, in his mind, served only to weaken the Emperor when every fibre of the Empire would have to be strained in order to check France.

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[1] <u>Review</u>, August 23, 1709, Vol. VI, Book XV, 241.

Defoe's handling of the problem in the Review is interesting. He was well aware of Whig opinion and as much as he disagreed he did not want to antagonize his readers. For several issues he wrote of the German brutality practised on the dissenting Protestants of Hungary. He clearly indicated his sympathy for the rebels, and then the tenor of his arguments changed. He introduced the European background and showed how the rebellion would eventually effect all Protestants of Europe if the power of the Emperor was sufficiently weakened:

> . . .which way soever the Emperor falls, what hands soever pull him down, 'tis French Power succeeds him: If the Hungarians depose the Imperial Power, they Crown the French Empire the same Moment. If then the Hungarians by Fighting support, assist and encrease the French Grandeur; shall we assist them because they are Protestants? God forbid.
>
> . . .but if the Protestants in Hungary be Mad Men, if they will make the Protestant Religion in Hungary clash with the Protestant Religion in all the rest of Europe, we must prefer the Major interest to the Minor.[1]

He could then ask:

> Why does the King of France assist the Hungarians? --I affirm this to be a just answer, He does it not in Love to the Protestant Religion, but to pull

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[1] Review, September 9, 1704, Vol. I, Book II, 229-230. Voltaire had also explained how Louis XIV was prepared to benefit by the disturbance on the flank of the Empire: "Louis XIV espéra avec beaucoup de vraisemblance que l'Allemagne, désolée par les Turcs et n'ayant contre eux qu'un chef dont la fuite augmentait la terreur commune, serait obligée de recourir à la protection de la France. Il avait une armée sur les frontières de l'Empire, prête à la défendre contre ces mêmes Turcs que ses précédentes negociations y avaient amenés: il pouvait ainsi devenir le protecteur de l'Empire, et faire son fils roi des Romains." Le Siecle de Louis XIV, (Bibliotheque de la Pleiade, 1957), 753.

> down the Protestant Religion. . .He knows if he conquers this Confederacy he overthrows at once the Protestant Interest and Europes Liberty--And he assists the Hungarians to weaken this Confederacy.[1]

Indignant as he was with the Hungarian rebels, he was swift to criticize the Emperor when Leopold began moves to wrench disputed territory from the hands of the Papal See. Again Defoe felt it his duty to advise the great powers as to the true objectives of the war. The Empire was having a difficult enough time holding its own in the Alliance, any further adventure would only lead to a dissipation of energy. Defoe questioned rhetorically "Is this a Time for the Emperor to pursue his private claims on the Fiefs and old Tenures of the Empire; to invade his Neighbour Princes, and form new Leagues against himself? Is this a time to open a Door to the French, and let them again into Italy?"[2]

Whig circles once again misunderstood Defoe's supposed protection of the Pope. Many in England were quite prepared to sit through and enjoy the performance of battle between the Catholic Hapsburgs and the Papacy. On this superficial level there was little chance of comprehending what Defoe was labouring for. He therefore set himself the task of illustrating the problem by a short dialogue. It is also a good example of how Defoe simplified matters of international relations for

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[1] Review, September 20, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 379.

[2] Ibid, October 16, 1708, Vol. V, Book XIII, 346-347.

for his audience. Mr. Madman is puzzled over the Review's insistence not to help the Emperor destroy the Pope:

Mr. Review . . .what is the Matter?

Madman Matter, you shall hear that with both your Ears; why you are turned Papist--

Review Or Mahometan, or anything, go on.

Madman No, no, nothing but Papist; and you are writing as hard as you can against the War in Italy, for Fear the Pope should be pull'd down.

Review For Fear he should not be pull'd down you mean I suppose?

Madman Not at all; I mean what I say, for fear the Emperor should pull down the Pope; you are for the Confederate refusing to assist him in his new Quarrel with the Pope--are not you a Papist now?--

. . . . . .

Review This mad Discourse of yours brings me back to where I ended in my last, viz. That pulling down the Pope, and pulling down popery, are two Things--I have given my Opinions about the Emperor's Quarrel with the Pope; all the world knows, the Emperor does not quarrel at Popery--It is not his Design to pull down the Pontificate; . . .if he slew him in battle, he would immediately set up another Ecclesiastical Idol in his Place. But the Quarrel at the Pope is , as he is Possessor of several Places, which they call Fiefs and Vassals to the Empire, temporally consider'd, detains these Governments; from and defends them against the Emperor; and in this Capacity it is the Emperor differs with his Holiness, and what's all this to Popery?

Madman You are all for Distinctions; but we will not take it that way, pulling down Pope, and pulling down Popery must be a Kin; it cannot be but pulling down the Power of the Pope will

some influence upon Popery--and let me but see the Pope come down, whom we call antichrist, we shall think Popery will follow.

Review — If there was no other Pope to be set up in his Room, somewhat might be; but you are all wrong, if this Pope were depos'd for his Partiality to France; as I think it were well enough if he were; yet he would immediately be succeeded by another, the State of Popery would be the same, and the deposing the Pope would have no other Signification as to pulling down Popery, than the Death of a Pope has, which terminates only in this, viz. The Assembling the Conclave to choose a new Pope--Who, when he is erected, is just the same Ecclesiastick old Gentleman as his Predecessor--

Madman — Well, but I would have 'em pull'd down for all than.

Review — Why so would I too; if you please, tho' not in the Way and Manner I foresee it is going about now, viz. To pull all the Princes of Italy upon his Head, and let in the French, which may make a new, a long and a doubtful War in Italy, and at last the Emperor may be disappointed, not able to carry on his Pretensions; or if he does, must call off his men from other Parts to pursue that Particular, to the manifest Loss of all the rest of the Confederacy.[1]

It is thought that Defoe who had worked so devotedly for the strengthening of the allied effort against France, eventually shifted his position in favour of France during the preparation for peace talks at Utrecht.[2] Defoe, once again working for a Tory ministry, exchanged one set of principles

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[1] Review, October 23, 1709, Vol. V, Book XIII, 357-358.

[2] B. Fitzgerald, Daniel Defoe, 166.

for another. The Tories who had become known as the peace party were merely using Defoe's verbal proficiency in order to bring about a sympathetic understanding on the part of the broad population who had been led so long by the Whig war party.

At a glance this seems to be the situation. But a greater consideration of Defoe's journalistic efforts immediately after Marlborough's victory over the French at Ramillies sheds a different light on the matter. In the moment of the allied triumph over the French, Defoe took a singular position and urged his readers not to lose sight of the grand objective. His restraint, objectivity and consistency of ideas expressed seven years earlier[1] is surprising:

> . . .our present buisness is to pull down tyranny, to pull down not the man but the Tyrant, not the King of France, as King Louis XIV but the King of France, as the general oppressor of Europe; if he is once reduced, if the Emperor, or any Emperor or King, nay, tho' he were a Protestant, proves likewise too great for his Neighbour, Oppresses, Invades and Encroaches upon other Peoples Right we will at any time join with this very King of France to pull down him.[2]

Instead of provoking his audience already infected with the war fever, he attempted to keep the temper of the nation on an even keel:

> . . .I cannot but smile, when I hear

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[1] See above Page 196-199.

[2] Review, August 19, 1707, Vol. IV, Book X, 323-324.

> our people pulling the French King Limb from Limb, how they fall a shareing this Bear-Skin, and every one will have a Piece.
>
> Nay, we have been cutting out all France among us, the Drapers will have Morlaix, because they want Canvas and Doulas; the honest Sailors desire Nants and Rochel because they love Punch and want Brandy. The Good Fellow will be content with nothing but Bourdeaux; for he can't be without his Claret; the Ladies must have Lyons and its Appendences, because they want Alamodes and Lustrings; the Beaus must have Montpelier for the Essences and Perfumes; and thus a piece of France won't serve us but we must have all; and very particular we are upon this head. (but). . .what it is we are doing; what do we fight for; what is the end of it all? The honest end is Peace, and the best Reward of victory is Peace; an honourable safe and lasting peace, which I believe every honest Man will join with me in a Petition for.[1]

And at the very moment when the appetite of the Confederacy was sharpened he again reiterated the basic thought of his views on foreign policy:

> We do not fight for Conquest, but for Peace; 'tis peace only can restore the Breaches War has made upon our Commerce; Peace only can make our Wealth flow like a high Spring Tyde.
>
> The End of this war is to reduce exorbitant Power to a due Pitch, to run it quite down, would be to erect some other Exorbitant in its Room, and so set up our selves as publick Enemies to Europe, in the room of that publick Enemy we pull down.
>
> Every power, which over ballances the rest, makes itself a nusance to its Neighbours. Europe being divided into a great variety of separate Governments and Constitutions; the safety of the whole consists in a due Distribution of Power, so shar'd to every Part or Branch of Government, that no one may be able to oppress and destroy the rest.[2]

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[1] Review, May 25, 1706, Vol. III, Book VII, 250-251.

[2] Ibid, June 1, 1706, Vol. III, Book VII, 262.

It should be borne in mind that these moderate ideas were expressed at the crest of the Confederate's victory. The political situation, however, continued to change. The France of Louis XIV after the battles of Oudenarde and Malplaquet began to suffer acutely the privations of nearly a quarter of a century of warfare. If the strains of war were visible in England they had become glaring in France. England and her allies had at last reached the difficult point of terminating the war. From a military standpoint, France was beaten but, in the Spanish Peninsula, the allies had failed miserably in their attempt to evict Louis' grandson, Philip of Anjou. In reality France had been cut down to size. Was the war to continue? Had Defoe insisted on its continuation, he would have contradicted his previous approach to the problem of foreign policy, expounded so consistently over the years. But he was well aware of the changed circumstances. With France sufficiently weakened, Defoe began to discuss the possibility of recognizing Philip as King of Spain. He detected, what he considered, unmistakable signs that even though Philip was French it would be highly unlikely that France and Spain would manage to cooperate indefinitely:

> Did not the Nobility of Spain sollicit King Philip to remove the French Men from his Privy Counsel? To remove all French Governours out of Towns? And to Employ none but Native Spaniards? . . .Did they not represent to King Philip the Necessity his Kingdom stood in of

> the English Trade, and procure a Liberty for English Ships to come into their Ports and carry off their Wool.[1]

This is what persuaded Defoe to write in favour of peace talks with the French. Once it had become clear that the French no longer constituted a threat to Europe the Allied failure in Spain was of little consequence. On the contrary, continued effort in the Spanish Peninsula would only result in additional bloodshed and misery.

The consideration of Defoe's complete writings reveal a uniformity of thought based on the concept of a balance of power. He never strayed from this fundamental view, and it alone is sufficient to explain what motivated Defoe in his daily life as a journalist and politician.

The death of Leopold's son, Joseph I (1705-1711) actually gave the Tories additional weight in their attempt to end the war. The death of the Emperor meant that his brother Charles, already the allies' candidate for the Spanish throne, would now become Holy Roman Emperor as well. Defoe did not hesitate to emphasize the significance of this event, which threatened to restore the power of the Hapsburgs to the former greatness witnessed under Charles V. But it can be questioned whether Defoe attached any serious consideration to this occurence beyond the purely propagandist value that it may have supplied in the arranging of peace at Utrecht.

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[1] *Review*, October 25, 1711, Vol. VIII, Book XX, 371.

CONCLUSION

As a political writer it is clear that Defoe has contributed little in originality to the field of political theory. His works bear the stamp of his time in general and that of his immediate background in particular. As a son of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, logic and reason are the guide signs of his thought. Because of his Dissenting background he was exposed to a rigorous religious education, and to the secular Whig ideas, upon both of which he leaned heavily throughout his life. From this point of view he falls into the Whig design of things; but the fit is an awkward one. The sympathetic feeling and affection which he felt for the lower classes sets him off sharply from the aristocratic Whig theoreticians of his period.

His real contribution stems from this set of circumstances. Because of his association with the lower and mercantile classes his journalism popularized established Whig views in a more liberal manner for the broad masses. It was Defoe who brought Sydney and Locke through pamphlet and newsheet to the people. It was in the weekly numbers of the Review that the people were instructed in their parliamentary liberties. Defoe was in a sense, a much greater eighteenth century Cobbett.

His relationship to the political parties is of great importance. It was here that Defoe revealed his penetrating insight into the political and social structure of England in the first two decades of the eighteenth century. Educated in Whig circles and identified as a Whig, he soon found the narrow structure of party suffocating for the broader interests of the nation. He did not hesitate to disassociate himself from party when he felt the interest of the nation threatened.

The most important aspect of his attitude to party was revealed in 1710 when the Tories triumphed at the polls. Still basically a Whig, he now discovered the immensity of social change which had robbed the parties of any inner meaning. On the basis of this (which he explained at great length in the Review) he was able to appeal to his Whig readers to remain loyal to a Tory government who, he claimed, would be forced to uphold the Revolutionary Settlement as any Whig government would do: social and economic changes affecting England had so reduced the differences between Whig and Tory.

Defoe's views on foreign policy will remain his crowning achievement. In his earlier years, immediately before the War of the Spanish Succession, Defoe had outlined the requirements of a sound foreign policy. These views were based on the realities of a specific period and were meant to answer the problems of a particular situation. Unlike other

idealist political philosophers, Defoe wrote for a particular nation state. However, he was not blind to the needs of greater Europe. And therefore, we find in his works perhaps the clearest enunciation of the doctrine of the balance of power on the continent. Had Defoe's critics seriously examined his writings on the balance of power, they would have avoided unnecessary questions pertaining to his intellectual honesty or consistency to principle. They would have discovered the answer as to why he so readily switched from the Whig to the Tory camp.

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