# POLITICAL POWER BEYOND THE STATE:

# PROBLEMATICS OF GOVERNMENT

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The state, wrote Nietzsche, is 'the coldest of all cold monsters...(it) lies in all languages of good and evil; and whatever its says, it lies - and whatever it has, it has stolen ... only there, where the state ceases, does the man who is not superfluous begin...'[1] As post-war 'welfare states' in the West and centralised 'party states' in the East have come under challenge, contemporary political debate has become suffused by images of the State as malign and potentially monstrous. Only beyond the State, it appears, can a life worthy of free human individuals begin. Criticising the excesses, inefficiencies and injustices of the extended State, alternatives have been posed in terms of the construction of a 'free market' and a 'civil society' in which a plurality of groups, organizations and individuals interact in liberty. This concern has been paralleled in social theory, where analysts have challenged liberal pluralist and economic determinist theories of power, and argued that the specific form of the State is of crucial importance, not only in understanding geo-political relations, but also in comprehending modern forms of exercise of power over national territories.[2]

But the political vocabulary structured by oppositions between state and civil society, public and private, government and market, coercion and consent, sovereignty and autonomy and the like, does not adequately characterise the diverse ways in which rule is exercised in advanced liberal democracies. Political power is exercised today through a profusion of shifting alliances between diverse authorities in projects to govern a multitude of facets of economic activity, social life and individual conduct. Power is not so much a matter of imposing constraints upon citizens as of 'making up' citizens capable of bearing a kind of regulated freedom. Personal autonomy is not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations.

In this paper we propose some ways of analyzing these mobile mechanisms of contemporary political power. Our analysis re-locates 'the State' within an investigation of problematics of government. It is more than ten years since Foucault suggested that the concepts that organized our thinking about power could not comprehend the exercise of power in modern societies. Two centuries after the political revolutions that overthrew the absolutist monarchies of Europe, Foucault argued that in the field of political thought we had not yet cut off the king's

head.[3] In his remarks on 'governmentality' Foucault sketches an alternative analytic of political power.[4] The term governmentality sought to draw attention to a certain way of thinking and acting embodied in all those attempts to know and govern the wealth, health and happiness of populations. Foucault argued that, since the eighteenth century, this way of reflecting upon power and seeking to render it operable had achieved pre-eminence over other forms of political power. It was linked to the proliferation of a whole range of apparatuses pertaining to government and a complex body of knowledges and 'know-how' about government, the means of its exercise and the nature of those over whom it was to be exercised. From this perspective on political power, Foucault suggested, one might avoid over-valuing the 'problem of the State', seeing it either as a 'monstre froid' confronting and dominating us, or as the essential and privileged fulfilment of a number of necessary social and economic functions. The state possessed neither the unity nor the functionality ascribed to it; it was a 'mythical abstraction' which has assumed a particular place within the field of government. For the present, perhaps, what is really important 'is not so much the State-domination of society, but the "governmentalization" of the State'.[5]

These schematic remarks form the starting point for the investigations of government proposed in this paper. We propose some elements of an 'analytic' of forms of government, and illustrate these through a preliminary investigation of 'liberalism', 'welfarism', and 'neo-liberalism'. The mentalities and machinations of government that we explore are not merely traces, signs, causes or effects of 'real' transformations in social relations. The terrain they constitute has a density and a significance of its own. Government is the historically constituted matrix within which are articulated all those dreams, schemes, strategies and manoeuvres of authorities that seek to shape the beliefs and conduct of others in desired directions by acting upon their will, their circumstances or their environment. It is in relation to this grid of government that specifically political forms of rule in the modern West define, delimit and relate themselves.

Central to the possibility of modern forms of government, we argue, are the associations formed between entities constituted as 'political' and the projects, plans and practices of those authorities - economic, legal, spiritual, medical, technical - who endeavour to administer the lives of

others in the light of conceptions of what is good, healthy, normal, virtuous, efficient or profitable. Knowledge is thus central to these activities of government and to the very formation of its objects, for government is a domain of cognition, calculation, experimentation and evaluation. And, we argue, government is intrinsically linked to the activities of expertise, whose role is not one of weaving an all-pervasive web of 'social control', but of enacting assorted attempts at the calculated administration of diverse aspects of conduct through countless, often competing, local tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement.[6]

Modes of government may be analyzed, first of all, in terms of their political rationalities, the changing discursive fields within which the exercise of power is conceptualised, the moral justifications for particular ways of exercising power by diverse authorities, notions of the appropriate forms, objects and limits of politics, and conceptions of the proper distribution of such tasks among secular, spiritual, military and familial sectors. But, we suggest, modes of government should also be analyzed in terms of their governmental technologies, the complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions. Through an analysis of the intricate inter-dependencies between political rationalities and governmental technologies, we can begin to understand the multiple and delicate networks that connect the lives of individuals, groups and organizations to the aspirations of authorities in the advanced liberal democracies of the present.

## 1. GOVERNMENT VERSUS THE STATE

Many have recognized that the philosophical and constitutional images of the sovereign state are misleading. To the extent that the modern state 'rules', it does so on the basis of an elaborate network of relations formed amongst the complex of institutions, organizations and apparatuses that make it up, and between state and non-state institutions.[7] Sociological histories of state formation have shown that, in Europe for many centuries, economic activity was regulated, order was maintained, laws promulgated and enforced, assistance provided for the sick and needy, morality inculcated, if at all, through practices that had little to do with the state. It was only in the eighteenth century that states began to be transformed from limited and circumscribed central apparatuses to embed themselves within an ensemble of institutions and procedures of rule over a national territory.[8]

Historical sociologists have drawn our attention to diverse mechanisms of state formation: the imposition of a national language and a level of literacy, a common coinage, the fusing of a territory into a single time-space system through innovations in transportation, communication and temporality, the unification of legal codes and authorities.[9] Key practices of rule were institutionalized within a central, more or less permanent body of offices and agencies, given a certain more or less explicit constitutional form, endowed with the capacity to raise funds in the form of taxes, and backed with the virtual monopoly of the legitimate use of force over a defined territory. This coincidence of a defined territory of rule and a project and apparatus for administering the lives and activities of those within that territory, it is suggested, warrants us to speak of the modern nation state as a centralised set of institutions and personnel wielding authoritative power over a nation.[10] Further, it has been argued that geo-political relations and military conflicts have provoked and facilitated the centralisation of domestic political power in the hands of a state apparatus. These considerations have led analysts to treat states as unified actors with considerable autonomy, ruling domestically and pursuing their interests upon the world stage by means of diplomacy and warfare.[11]

But we argue that such a perspective obscures the characteristics of modern forms of political power. Within the problematics of government, one can be nominalistic about the state: it has no essential necessity or functionality. Rather, the state can be seen as a specific way in which the problem of government is discursively codified, a way of dividing a 'political sphere', with its particular characteristics of rule, from other 'non-political spheres' to which it must be related, and a way in which certain technologies of government are given a temporary institutional durability and brought into particular kinds of relations with one another. Posed from this perspective, the question is no longer one of accounting for government in terms of 'the power of the State', but of ascertaining how and to what extent the state is articulated into the activity of government: what relations are established between political and other authorities; what funds, forces, persons, knowledge or legitimacy are utilised; and by means of what devices and techniques are these different tactics made operable.

Three differences between our approach and the new sociology of state formation are relevant here. The first concerns 'realism'. Historical sociologies of the state are realist in the sense that they seek to characterise the actual configurations of persons, organizations and events at particular historical periods and to classify the force relations that obtain between them, identify determinants and explain transformations. Our studies of government eschew sociological realism and its burdens of explanation and causation. We do not try to characterise how social life really was and why. We do not seek to penetrate the surfaces of what people said to discover what they meant, what their real motives or interests were. Rather, we attend to the ways in which authorities in the past have posed themselves these questions: what is our power; to what ends should it be exercised; what effects has it produced; how can we know what we need to know, and do what we need to do in order to govern?

Second, language. An analysis of government takes as central not so much amounts of revenue, size of the court, expenditure on arms, miles marched by an army per day, than the discursive field within which these problems, sites and forms of visibility are delineated and accorded significance. It is in this discursive field that 'the State' itself emerges as an historically

variable linguistic device for conceptualising and articulating rule. The significance we accord to discourse does not arise from a concern with 'ideology'. Language is not merely contemplative or justificatory, it is performative. An analysis of political discourse helps us elucidate not only the systems of thought through which authorities have posed and specified the problems for government, but also the systems of action though which they have sought to give effect to government.

Third, knowledge. Knowledge here does not simply mean 'ideas', but refers to the vast assemblage of persons, theories, projects, experiments and techniques that has become such a central component of government. Theories from philosophy to medicine. Schemes from town planning to social insurance. Techniques from double entry booking keeping to compulsory medical inspection of schoolchildren. Knowledgable persons from generals to architects and accountants. Our concern, that is to say, is with the 'know how' that has promised to make government possible.

Our analysis applies as much to geo-political issues as to those within any national territory. Inter 'national' relations are constituted in a military-diplomatic complex, through complex processes that empower particular agents and forces to speak and act in the name of a territory.[12] These establish the limits and coherence of the domains of political authority, demarcate the geographical and conceptual spaces of political rule, constitute certain authorities as able to speak for a population, and place them in particular 'external' configurations with other 'states' and internal relations with events in particular locales. A 'geo-political' field is established, embodying diplomacy, envoys, treaties, agreements, borders, customs and the like, at the same time as the writ of authorities is claimed over the subjects and activities composing a nation.

War, as a key aspect of such geo-political issues, is itself dependent upon certain practices of government: the elaboration of notions of national sovereignty over a territory unified by practices such as language or law; the development of administrative machineries of various types; and techniques for constituting persons as owing allegiance to a particular locus of identity and authority. Warfare and colonialism, as the exercise of rule from a centre over distant persons,

places and goods, involves assembling subjects into military forces, disciplining them, inculcating skills and solidarities, producing, distributing and maintaining equipment and material as well as inventing the intellectual technologies required for strategy and planning. Warfare, that is to say, requires and inspires the invention of new practices of government: in geo-political relations too, we suggest, the state should first of all be understood as a complex and mobile resultant of the discourses and techniques of rule.

## 2. POLITICAL RATIONALITIES AND THE ANALYSIS OF LIBERALISM

In the remainder of the paper we elaborate and illustrate some conceptual tools for an analysis of modern forms of government.[13] Let us begin by considering in more detail the notion of political rationality. Political discourse is a domain for the formulation and justification of idealised schemata for representing reality, analyzing it and rectifying it. Whilst it does not have the systematic and closed character of disciplined bodies of theoretical discourse it is, nonetheless, possible to discern regularities that we term political rationalities. First, political rationalities have a characteristically moral form. They elaborate upon the fitting powers and duties for authorities. They address the proper distribution of tasks and actions between authorities of different types - political, spiritual, military, pedagogic, familial. They consider the ideals or principles to which government should be directed - freedom, justice, equality, mutual responsibility, citizenship, common sense, economic efficiency, prosperity, growth, fairness, rationality and the like.

Second, political rationalities have what one might term an epistemological character. That is to say, they are articulated in relation to some conception of the nature of the objects governed - society, the nation, the population, the economy. In particular, they embody some account of the persons over whom government is to be exercised. As Paul Veyne has pointed out, these can be specified as members of a flock to be led, legal subjects with rights, children to be educated, a resource to be exploited, elements of a population to be managed.[14]

Third, political rationalities are articulated in a distinctive idiom. The language that constitutes political discourse is more than rhetoric.[15] It should be seen, rather, as a kind of

intellectual machinery or apparatus for rendering reality thinkable in such a way that it is amenable to political deliberations. It is here that a vocabulary of State has come to codify and contest the nature and limits of political power. Political rationalities, that is to say, are morally coloured, grounded upon knowledge, and made thinkable through language. We can illustrate these three points if we consider the question of 'liberalism'.

Liberalism is usually characterised as a political philosophy by the limits it places on the legitimate exercise of power by political authorities. During the second half of the eighteenth century the term 'civil society' ceased to designate a particular type of well ordered political association, and came to signify, instead, a natural realm of freedoms and activities outside the legitimate sphere of politics.[16] The scope of political authority was to be limited, and vigilance was to be exercised over it. Yet simultaneously government was to take as one of its obligations and legitimate tasks the fostering of the self-organizing capacities of civil society. Political rule was given the task of shaping and nurturing that very civil society that was to provide its counterweight and limit.

Liberalism, in this respect, marks the moment when the dystopian dream of a totally administered society was abandoned, and government was confronted with a domain that had its own naturalness, its own rules and processes, and its own internal forms of self-regulation.[17] As Graham Burchell has pointed out, liberalism disqualifies the exercise of governmental reason in the form of raison d'etat, in which a sovereign exercised his totalising will across a national space. Power is confronted, on the one hand, with subjects equipped with rights that must not be interdicted by government. On the other hand, government addresses a realm of processes that it cannot govern by the exercise of sovereign will because it lacks the requisite knowledge and capacities. The objects, instruments and tasks of government must be reformulated with reference to this domain of civil society with the aim of promoting its maximal functioning.

The constitutional and legal codification and delimitation of the powers of political authorities did not so much 'free' a private realm from arbitrary interferences by power, as constitute certain realms, such as those of market transactions, the family and the business

undertaking, as 'non-political', defining their form and limits. Liberal doctrines on the limits of power and the freedom of subjects under the law were thus accompanied by the working out of a range of new technologies of government, not having the form of direct control by authorities, that sought to administer these 'private' realms, and to programme and shape them in desired directions.

This does not mean that liberalism was an ideology, disguising a State annexation of freedom. The inauguration of liberal societies in Europe accords a vital role to a key characteristic of modern government: action at a distance.[18] Liberal mentalities of government do not conceive of the regulation of conduct as dependent only upon political actions: the imposition of law; the activities of state functionaries or publicly controlled bureaucracies; surveillance and discipline by an all seeing police. Liberal government identifies a domain outside 'politics', and seeks to manage it without destroying its existence and its autonomy. This is made possible through the activities and calculations of a proliferation of independent agents including philanthropists, doctors, hygienists, managers, planners, parents and social workers. And it is dependent upon the forging of alliances. This takes place on the one hand between political strategies and the activities of these authorities and, on the other, between these authorities and free citizens, in attempts to modulate events, decisions and actions in the economy, the family, the private firm, and the conduct of the individual person.

The elaboration of liberal doctrines of freedom went hand in hand with projects to make liberalism operable by producing the 'subjective' conditions under which its contractual notions of the mutual relations between citizen and society could work.[19] Those who could not carry their contractual obligations were now to appear 'anti-social', and to be confined under a new legitimacy. The scandalous and bizarre were to be placed under a revised medical mandate, in asylums that promised to cure and not merely to incarcerate. And law-breakers and malefactors were no longer to have the status of bandits or rebels, but were to become transgressors of norms motivated by defects of character amenable to understanding and rectification.

The invention of the disciplinary institutions of prison and asylum was accompanied by the promulgation of a variety of programmes by lawyers, doctors, philanthropists and other

experts, who claimed to know how to direct business activity, family life and personal morality onto the path of virtue. 'The State' was not the inspirer of these programmes of government, nor was it the necessary beneficiary. What one sees is not a uniform trend of 'State intervention' but rather the emergence at a multitude of sites in the social body, of health and disease, of crime and punishment, of poverty and pauperism, of madness and family life as problems requiring some measure of collective response, and in relation to which political authorities play a variety of different roles.[20]

The domain of politics is thus simultaneously distinguished from other spheres of rule, and inextricably bound into them. Political forces have sought to utilise, instrumentalise and mobilize techniques and agents other than those of 'the State' in order to govern 'at a distance'; other authorities have sought to govern economic, familial and social arrangements according to their own programmes and to mobilize political resources for their own ends.

## 3. PROGRAMMES OF GOVERNMENT

Government is a problematizing activity: it poses the obligations of rulers in terms of the problems they seek to address. The ideals of government are intrinsically linked to the problems around which it circulates, the failings it seeks to rectify, the ills it seeks to cure. Indeed, the history of government might well be written as a history of problematizations, in which politicians, intellectuals, philosophers, medics, military men, feminists and philanthropists have measured the real against the ideal and found it wanting. From the danger of de-population, the threats posed by pauperism or the forecasts of the decline of the race, through the problematization of urban unrest, industrial militancy, failures of productivity, to contemporary concerns with international competitiveness, the articulation of government has been bound to the constant identification of the difficulties and failures of government.

It is around these difficulties and failures that programmes of government have been elaborated. The programmatic is the realm of designs put forward by philosophers, political economists, physiocrats and philanthropists, government reports, committees of inquiry, White

Papers, proposals and counterproposals by organizations of business, labour, finance, charities and professionals, that seek to configure specific locales and relations in ways thought desirable. The relation between political rationalities and such programmes of government is not one of derivation or determination but of translation - both a movement from one space to another, and an expression of a particular concern in another modality. Thus in the early years of this century in Britain, the language of national efficiency served to articulate general political ideals concerning the ends to which government should be addressed, and provided a way of formulating a range of competing programmes and disputes from different political forces.[21] Similarly, programmes for administering and managing the enterprise in the United States in the inter-war period elaborated the basis of managerial authority in a way that was congruent with American ideals of personal freedom, initiative and democracy. A translatability was established between the ideals of American political culture and programmes for governing the newly emerged giant corporations with their professional managers.[22] Such translatability between the moralities, epistemologies and idioms of political power and the government of a specific problem space establishes a mutuality between what is desirable and what can be made possible through the calculated activities of political forces.[23]

Programmes, as Colin Gordon has pointed out, are not simply formulations of wishes or intentions.[24] First of all, programmes lay claim to a certain knowledge of the sphere or problem to be addressed - knowledges of the economy, or the nature of health, or the problem of poverty are essential elements in programmes that seek to exercise legitimate and calculated power over them. Governing a sphere requires that it can be represented, depicted in a way which both grasps its truths and re-presents it in a form in which it can enter the sphere of conscious political calculation. The theories of the social sciences, of economics, of sociology and of psychology, thus provide a kind of intellectual machinery for government, in the form of procedures for rendering the world thinkable, taming its intractable reality by subjecting it to the disciplined analyses of thought.

Theories and explanations thus play an essential part in reversing the relations of power between the aspiring ruler and that over which rule is to be exercised. For example, before one can seek to manage a domain such as an economy it is first necessary to conceptualise a set of processes and relations as an economy which is amenable to management.[25] In a very real sense, 'the economy' is brought into being by economic theories themselves, which define and individuate a set of characteristics, laws and processes designated economic rather than, say, political or natural. This enables 'the economy' to become something which politicians, academics, industrialists and others think can be governed and managed, evaluated and programmed, in order to increase wealth, profit and the like. Similarly sociology, as a set of techniques and investigations that reveal the nation as a set of aggregated statistics with their regular fluctuations, and as knowable processes with their laws and cycles has played a key role in the constitution of society and its diverse components and domains as a governable entity. Relations of reciprocity obtain between the social sciences and government. As government depends upon these sciences for its languages and calculations, so the social sciences thrive on the problems of government, the demand for solutions and the attraction of theories which have the plausibility of science and the promise of the rational disciplining and technologising of the social field.

Programmes presuppose that the real is programmable, that it is a domain subject to certain determinants, rules, norms and processes that can be acted upon and improved by authorities. They make the objects of government thinkable in such a way that their ills appear susceptible to diagnosis, prescription and cure by calculating and normalizing intervention.

## 4. TECHNOLOGIES OF GOVERNMENT

Government is a domain of strategies, techniques and procedures through which different forces seek to render programmes operable, and by means of which a multitude of connections are established between the aspirations of authorities and the activities of individuals and groups. These heterogeneous mechanisms we term technologies of government.[26] It is through technologies that political rationalities and the programmes of government that articulate them become capable of deployment. But this is not a matter of the 'implementation' of ideal schemes in the real, nor of the extension of control from the seat of power into the minutiae of existence. Rather, it is a question of the complex assemblage of diverse forces -legal, architectural, professional, administrative, financial, judgmental - such that aspects of the decisions and actions of individuals, groups, organizations and populations come to be understood and regulated in relation to authoritative criteria. We need to study the humble and mundane mechanisms by which authorities seek to instantiate government: techniques of notation, computation and calculation; procedures of examination and assessment; the invention of devices such as surveys and presentational forms such as tables; the standardisation of systems for training and the inculcation of habits; the inauguration of professional specialisms and vocabularies; building designs and architectural forms - the list is heterogeneous and in principle unlimited.

Bruno Latour's reflections on power are suggestive here. Rather than considering power as the explanation of the success of authorities in composing a network of forces, Latour proposes a view of power as an effect of such a composition.[27] A powerful actor, agent or institution is only one that, in the particular circumstances obtaining at a given moment, is able to successfully enrol and mobilise persons, procedures and artifacts in the pursuit of its goals. Powers are stabilised in lasting networks only to the extent that the mechanisms of enrolment are materialised in various more or less persistent forms - machines, architecture, inscriptions, school curricula, books, obligations, techniques for documenting and calculating and so forth. These stabilise networks partly because they act as potent resources in the local composition of forces. Thus architecture embodies certain relations between time, space, functions and persons - the

separation of eating and sleeping, for example, or the hierarchical and lateral relations of the enterprise - not only materializing programmatic aspirations but structuring the lives of those caught up in particular architectural regimes. Writing codifies customs and habits, normalising them, both transforming them into repeatable instructions as to how to conduct oneself, and establishing authoritative means of judgment. 'Power' is the outcome of the affiliation of persons, spaces, communications and inscriptions into a durable form

To speak of the 'power' of a Government, a Department of State, a local authority, a military commander or a manager in an enterprise is to substantialise that which arises from an assemblage of forces by which particular objectives and injunctions can shape the actions and calculations of others. Again, the notion of translation captures the process whereby this diversity is composed.[28] To the extent that actors have come to understand their situation according to a similar language and logic, to construe their goals and their fate as in some way inextricable, they are assembled into mobile and loosely affiliated networks. Shared interests are constructed in and through political discourses, persuasions, negotiations and bargains. Common modes of perception are formed, in which certain events and entities come to be visualized according to particular rhetorics of image or speech. Relations are established between the nature, character and causes of problems facing various individuals and groups - producers and shopkeepers, doctors and patients - such that the problems of one and those of another seem intrinsically linked in their basis and their solution.

These processes entail translation also in the literal sense of moving from one person, place or condition to another. Particular and local issues thus become tied to much larger ones. What starts out as a claim comes to be transformed into a matter of fact. The result of these and similar operations is that mobile and 'thixotropic' associations are established between a variety of agents, in which each seeks to enhance their powers by 'translating' the resources provided by the association so that they may function to their own advantage. Loose and flexible linkages are made between those who are separated spatially and temporally, and between events in spheres that remain formally distinct and autonomous. When each can translate the values of others into its

own terms, such that they provide norms and standards for their own ambitions, judgments and conduct, a network has been composed that enables rule 'at a distance'.

## 5. INSCRIPTION AND CALCULATION AS TECHNOLOGIES OF GOVERNMENT

In arguing against a 'state centred' conception of political power, we do not mean to suggest that government does not produce centres. But centres of government are multiple: it is not a question of the power of the centralised state, but of how, in relation to what mentalities and devices, by means of what intrigues, alliances and flows - is this locale or that able to act as a centre.

Consider, first of all, the notion of statistics. Eighteenth century European conceptions of government articulated a notion of statistics, or science of state, in which the operation of government was to be made possible by the accumulation and tabulation of facts about the domain to be governed. From this statistical project, through the requirements imposed upon firms to keep account books and make tax returns, through censuses and surveys, the investigations of victorian social reformers, the records kept by the newly formed police forces and the school inspectors, through the calculations of such things as gross national products, growth rates of different economies, rates of inflation and the money supply, government inspires and depends upon a huge labour of inscription which renders reality into a calculable form. Written reports, drawings, pictures, numbers, charts, graphs and statistics are some of the ways in which this is achieved.[29]

The 'representation' of that which is to be governed is an active, technical process. Government has inaugurated a huge labour of enquiry to transform events and phenomena into information: births, illnesses and deaths, marriages and divorces, levels of income and types of diet, forms of employment and want of employment. We can utilise Bruno Latour's notion of inscription devices to characterise these material conditions which enable thought to work upon an object.[30] By means of inscription, reality is made stable, mobile, comparable, combinable. It is rendered in a form in which it can be debated and diagnosed. Information in this sense is not the outcome of a neutral recording function. It is itself a way of acting upon the real, a way of devising

techniques for inscribing it in such a way as to make the domain in question susceptible to evaluation, calculation and intervention.

The inscription of reality in these mobile, combinable traces enables the formation of what we can call, following Latour, centres of calculation.[31] Government depends upon calculations in one place about how to affect things in another. Information - concerning types of goods, ages of persons, health, criminality, etc - must be transported and accumulated in locales - the manager's office, the war room, the case conference and so forth - so that it can be utilised in calculation. The accumulation of inscriptions in certain locales, by certain persons or groups, makes them powerful in the sense that it confers upon them the capacity to engage in certain calculations and to lay a claim to legitimacy for their plans and strategies because they are, in a real sense, in the know about that which they seek to govern. The inscriptions of the world which an individual or a group can compile, consult or control play a key role in the powers they can exercise over those whose role is to be entries in these charts.

Figures transform the domain to which government is applied. In enabling events to be aggregated across space and time, they reveal and construct norms and processes to which evaluations can be attached and upon which interventions can be targeted. The figures themselves are mechanisms that enable relations to be established between different phenomena, rendering 'the population', 'the economy', 'public opinion', 'the divorce rate' into thought as calculable entities with a solidity and a density that appears all their own.

The complex inter-dependencies between inscription, calculation and government in France in the second half of the seventeenth century illustrate these processes clearly. During the first two decades of the reign of Louis XIV, Colbert, Superintendent of Commerce and Controller of Finance, Superintendent of Buildings and Secretary of State for Marine, can index the formation of a novel programme of government through inscription.[32] This involved innovations in calculative technologies for private enterprise: legal regulation in the Ordinance of 1673; publication of numerous textbooks explaining and commenting on this Ordinance and providing general advice to merchants; the elaboration of rationales for understanding these innovations; and the

emergence of new pedagogic mechanisms for instructing merchants in the techniques of accounting. It also involved a significant strengthening and extension of the role of the intendants as all-purpose local administrators, and the construction of more systematic, regular and refined information flows from the provinces to the centre, frequently by means of large-scale enquiries.

The component parts of this technology of government were not all new, but when connected together they occupied a decisive role within a programme of government that elevated a desire to know the nation and its subjects in fine detail into an essential resource of political rule. Distance, delays arising as a result of lengthy travel and other factors such as establishing the local relays and networks upon which information and cooperation depended undoubtedly frustrated and disrupted this ideal machinery of 'government through inquiry'. Nevertheless the Colbert period illustrates the formation of a technology for governing a nation by exerting a kind of intellectual mastery over it. Establishing a network of conduits for the detailed and systematic flow of information from individual locales of production and trade to a centre helped constitute a single economic domain whose constituent elements could be known and regulated 'at a distance'.

From the invention of double entry book-keeping to the contemporary deployment of accounting techniques such as Discounted Cash Flow analyses, events in the internal realm of the 'private' enterprise have been opened up to government in this way.[33] Government here works by installing what one might term a calculative technology in the heart of the 'private' sphere, producing new ways of rendering economic activity into thought, conferring new visibilities upon the components of profit and loss, embedding new methods of calculation and hence linking private decisions and public objectives in a new way - through the medium of knowledge. Mechanisms such as this, as we have shown elsewhere, problematize the distinction between centrally planned and market economies: for example, the problems and techniques in the regulation of 'nationalised' enterprises in the UK following the Second World War were of a similar modality to those used to encourage efficiency and profitability in 'private' enterprises.[34]

Inscription can be itself a form of action at a distance. Installing a calculative technology in the enterprise, in the hospital, in the school or the family enjoins those within these locales to

work out 'where they are', calibrate themselves in relation to 'where they should be' and devise ways of getting from one state to the other. Making people write things down and count them - register births, report incomes, fill in censuses - is itself a kind of government of them, an incitement to individuals to construe their lives according to such norms. By such mechanisms, authorities can act upon, and enrol those distant from them in space and time in the pursuit of social, political or economic objectives without encroaching on their 'freedom' or 'autonomy' - indeed often precisely by offering to maximise it by turning blind habit into calculated freedom to choose. Such mechanisms, we argue later, have come to assume considerable importance in contemporary modes of government.

## 6. EXPERTISE AND GOVERNMENT

There are a number of versions of the process in which the personage of the expert, embodying neutrality, authority and skill in a wise figure, operating according to an ethical code 'beyond good and evil' has become so significant in our society.[35] In our argument the rise of expertise is linked to a transformation in the rationalities and technologies of government. Expertise emerged as a possible solution to a problem that confronted liberal mentalities of government. How might one reconcile the principle that the domain of the political must be restricted with the recognition of the vital political implications of formally private activities? The 'private' enterprise was to become a vital locale for the government of the economic life of the nation; the 'private' family was to be a resource for the government of social life. Each was a complex multivalent machine with internal relations which could be understood and administered and external consequences which could be identified and programmed. The inhabitants of these private domains - bosses, managers and workers; parents and children - were to be simultaneously the locus of private hopes, ambitions and disappointments, the source of varied types of social difficulties and the basis of all sorts of socially desirable objectives.

The vital links between socio-political objectives and the minutiae of daily existence in home and factory were to be established by expertise. Experts would enter into a kind of double alliance. On the one hand they would ally themselves with political authorities, focusing upon their problems and problematizing new issues, translating political concerns about economic productivity, innovation, industrial unrest, social stability, law and order, normality and pathology and so forth into the vocabulary of management, accounting, medicine, social science and psychology. On the other hand, they would seek to form alliances with individuals themselves, translating their daily worries and decisions over investment, child rearing, factory organization or diet into a language claiming the power of truth, and offering to teach them the techniques by which they might manage better, earn more, bring up healthier or happier children and much more besides.

Expertise nonetheless poses problems for political authority. Experts have the capacity to generate what we term enclosures: relatively bounded locales or types of judgment within which their power and authority is concentrated, intensified and defended.[36] Enclosures may be generated in governmental networks through the use of esoteric knowledge, technical skill, or established position as crucial resources which others cannot easily countermand or appropriate. Of course, such enclosures are only provisional and the claims of any particular expertise are always subject to contestation. But the example of the British National Health Service, which we discuss below, illustrates the ways in which doctors could deploy their expertise to translate the interests of civil servants and government ministers into their own. They thus managed to make their arguments and calculations the obligatory mode for the operation of the network as a whole, the lines of force flowing, as it were, from the operating theatre to the cabinet office and not vice versa.

The complex of actors, powers, institutions and bodies of knowledge that comprise expertise have come to play a crucial role in establishing the possibility and legitimacy of government. Experts hold out the hope that problems of regulation can remove themselves from the disputed terrain of politics and relocate onto the tranquil yet seductive territory of truth. By means of expertise, self regulatory techniques can be installed in citizens that will align their

personal choices with the ends of government.[37] The freedom and subjectivity of citizens can in such ways become an ally, and not a threat, to the orderly government of a polity and a society.

## 7. THE GOVERNMENTALIZATION OF THE STATE

The problematics of government offer a different perspective on the political phenomena conventionally addressed in terms of the State. The discursive, legislative, fiscal, organizational and other resources of the public powers have come to be linked in varying ways into networks of rule. Mobile divisions and relations have been established between political rule and other projects and techniques for the calculated adminstration of life. Diverse parts are played in technologies of rule by the political actors who hold elected office, make authoritative pronouncements as to policy and priorities, create legislation and get it enacted, calculate national budgets, raise taxes and adjust their levels and incidence, disburse benefits, give grants to industry and charities, command and direct bureaucratic staffs, set up regulatory bodies and organizations of all sorts, and, in certain cases, set in action the legitimate use of violence.

Such 'political' forces can only seek to operationalize <u>their</u> programmes of government by influencing, allying with or co-opting resources that they do not directly control - banks, financial institutions, enterprises, trade unions, professions, bureaucracies, families and individuals.[38] A 'centre' can only become such through its position within the complex of technologies, agents and agencies that make government possible. But once established as a centre, a particular locale can ensure that certain resources only flow through and around these technologies and networks, reaching particular agents rather than others, by means of a passage through 'the centre'. Financial and economic controls established by central government set key dimensions of the environment in which private enterprises and other economic actors must calculate. Money, raised in taxes or public borrowing, is disbursed though the network, to certain local centres, but the continued supply of financial resources is conditional upon the conviction that an alignment of interests exists, that the local authorities, firms and so on will remain more or less faithful allies. Hence the threat of withholding of funds can be a powerful inducement to other

actors to maintain themselves within the network, or an incentive for them to seek to convince the centre that their concerns and strategies are translatable and mutable.

The enactment of legislation is a powerful resource in the creation of centres, to the extent that law translates aspects of a governmental programme into mechanisms that establish, constrain, or empower certain agents or entities and set some of the key terms of their deliberations. Imposing a regime of licensure, for example, empowers certain bodies to regulate those who seek to act in a certain professional capacity, both legitimating and regulating at the same time. Embodying the principle of 'the best interests of the child' in law may not determine the decisions of social workers and the courts, but it sets one of the terms in which those decisions must be calculated and justified. Programmes and strategies formulated at the centre may lead to attempts to establish regulatory or negotiating bodies, and may lead to more or less autonomy being granted to other aspects of the bureaucratic web of government such as Departments of State or Local Authorities.

Yet entities and agents within governmental networks are not faithful relays, mere creatures of a controller situated in some central hub. They utilise and deploy whatever resources they have for their own purposes, and the extent to which they carry out the will of another is always conditional on the particular balance of force, energy and meaning at any time and at any point. Each actor, each locale, is the point of intersection between forces, and hence a point of potential resistance to any one way of thinking and acting, or a point of organization and promulgation of a different or oppositional programme. Entities may defect from a network, may refuse to be enroled, or may bend its operations at certain points beyond all recognition. Budget holders will refuse to release sufficient funds, or recipients of funds will divert them to other purposes. Experts and academics will seize upon the tactical possibilities open to them and seek to deflect them to their own advantage. And professional groups will bargain, bicker and contest on the basis of quite different claims and objectives instead of meshing smoothly and with complete malleability in the idealised schemes of a programmatic logic.

Government is a congenitally failing operation: the sublime image of a perfect regulatory machine is internal to the mind of the programmers. The world of programmes is heterogeneous, and rivalrous. Programmes complexify the real, so solutions for one programme tend to be the problems for another. Things, persons or events always appear to escape the knowledges that inform governmental programmes, to refuse to respond according to the programmatic logic that seeks to govern them. Technologies produce unexpected problems, are utilised for their own ends by those who are supposed to merely operate them, are hampered by under-funding, professional rivalries, and the impossibility of producing the technical conditions that would make them work - reliable statistics, efficient communication systems, clear lines of command, properly designed buildings, well framed regulations or whatever. Unplanned outcomes emerge from the intersection of one technology with another, or from the unexpected consequences of putting a technique to work. Contrariwise, techniques invented for one purpose may find their governmental role for another, and the unplanned conjunction of techniques and conditions arising from very different aspirations may allow something to work without or despite its explicit rationale. Whilst we inhabit a world of programmes, that world is not itself programmed. We do not live in a governed world so much as a world traversed by the 'will to govern', fuelled by the constant registration of 'failure', the discrepancy between ambition and outcome, and the constant injunction to do better next time.

## 8. WELFARE AND THE GOVERNMENTALIZATION OF THE STATE

Political commentators tend to agree that during the first half of the present century, many western societies became 'welfare states', in which the State tried to ensure high levels of employment, economic progress, social security, health and housing though the use of the tax system and investments, through state planning and intervention in the economy, and through the development of an extended and bureaucratically staffed apparatus for social adminstration. From our perspective, however, this is less the birth of a new form of state than a new mode of government of the economic, social and personal lives of citizens. This mode of government, that we term 'welfarism' is constituted by a forms political rationality embodying certain principles and

ideals and based upon a particular conception of the nature of society and its inhabitants. This welfarist rationality is linked to an array of mutually translatable programmes, technologies and devices ranging from tax regimes to social insurance, from management training to social casework, from employment exchanges to residential homes for the elderly.

We have discussed welfarism and the government of economic life elsewhere.[39] Let us here consider welfarism and 'social' government. 'Social' does not refer in this instance to a given repertoire of social issues, but to a terrain brought into existence by government itself - the location of certain problems, the repository of specific hopes and fears, the target of programmes and the space traced out by a particular administrative machinery.[40] The programmes of social government that proliferated in the nineteenth century involved complex alliances between private and professional agents - philanthropists, charitable organizations, medics, polemicists and others, and the state - formed around problems arising in a multitude of sites within the social body. From the latter half of the nineteenth century onwards, these programmes, and the schemes they gave rise to, were gradually linked up to the apparatus of the state. These connections were, no doubt, inspired by diverse aims and principles, but they appeared to offer the chance, or impose the obligation, for political authorities to calculate and calibrate social, economic and moral affairs and seek to govern them. Yet the state apparatus did not, could not, eliminate all other centres of power or decision, or reduce them to its creatures whether through the mechanisms of command and obedience or by subjecting everyone to perpetual surveillance and normalization. Welfarism is not so much a matter of the rise of an interventionist state as the assembling of diverse mechanisms and arguments through which political forces seek to secure social and economic objectives by linking up a plethora of networks with aspirations to know, programme and transform the social field.

## Governing the networks of welfare

The English example illustrates three key features of welfarism. The first concerns the relations between political rationalities and the formation of networks of government. As a political rationality, welfarism is structured by the wish to encourage national growth and well being through

the promotion of social responsibility and the mutuality of social risk. This rationality was articulated in a number of different ways. The Beveridge Report was framed in terms of a kind of contract between the State and its citizens, in which both parties had their needs and their duties.[41] The state would accept responsibility to attack the 'five giants of Want, Disease, Idleness, Ignorance and Squalor' through a nationalised health service, a commitment to full employment and a social insurance system which would prevent the social demoralization and other harmful effects of periods of want by redistributing income across the life cycle. In return, the citizen would respect his or her obligations to be thrifty, industrious, and socially responsible. The Labour Party, on the other hand, articulated this rationality in terms of the just and equal treatment for each and for all, to be realized by planned, rationalised and universal state dispensation of security, health, housing and education.[42]

The rationality of welfarism was programmatically elaborated in relation to a range of specific problematizations: the declining birthrate; delinquency and anti-social behaviour; the problem family; the social consequences of ill health and the advantages conferred by a healthy population; and the integration of citizens into the community. These were not novel problems, but in the post-war period they were to be problematized by a multitude of official and unofficial experts and, crucially, were to be governed in new ways. The key innovations of welfarism lay in the attempts to link the fiscal, calculative and bureaucratic capacities of the apparatus of the state to the government of social life. The social devices of the pre-war period consisted of a tangle of machinery for the surveillance and regulation of the social, familial and personal conduct of the problematic sectors of the population. The personnel, procedures, techniques and calculations that made up these devices were attached to specific locales and organizations: the courts, the reformatories, the schools and the clinics. Welfarism sought to articulate these varied elements into a network and to direct them in the light of centralised calculations as to resources, services and needs.

However, welfare was not a coherent mechanism that would enable the unfolding of a central plan. The networks were assembled from diverse and often antagonistic components, from

warring Whitehall departments to peripheral and ad hoc agencies.[43] This was no 'state apparatus', but a composition of fragile and mobile relationships and dependencies making diverse attempts to link the aspirations of authorities with the lives of individuals. Assembling and maintaining such networks entailed struggles, alliances and competitions between different groups for resources, recognition and power. The problem posed for the next thirty years, for those aspiring to form a 'centre' from which the welfare apparatus could be governed, was one of regulating those who claimed discretionary powers because of their professional or bureaucratic expertise.

The example of health illustrates these difficulties of welfarism as a technology of rule.[44] How was one to make administrable the multitude of hourly and daily individual decisions by physicians, consultants, general practitioners, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and others? Each of these agents claimed and practised their rights to make decisions not on the basis of an externally imposed plan, or according to criteria reaching them from elsewhere, but according to professional codes, training, habit, moral allegiances, and institutional demands. The problem was one of connecting them instead to the calculations and deliberations of other authorities.

Between the Ministry of Health and the practitioners of the cure during the 1950s, a complex administrative structure was assembled. In the hospital sector alone this comprised 14 Regional Hospital Boards, 36 Boards of Governance for Teaching Hospitals and some 380 Hospital Management Committees. To govern this system in a 'rational and effective' manner as envisaged in the 1944 White Paper posed a problem of information: even the most basic information about the number and distribution of doctors was lacking at the periphery let alone the centre. This 'lack' was to be the start of a massive attempt to transform the activities of healers into figures that would make medicine calculable. The initial form of problematization was financial for the new technology displaced earlier ways of relating medical care to money. A series of studies lamented the limited information possessed by the Ministry on the financial administration of hospitals, the absence of costing yardsticks to judge the relative efficiency or extravagance of administration of various hospitals, and hence the invidious alternatives of accepting the plans of

medical agents wholesale as submitted without amendment, or applying overall cuts in a more or less indiscriminate manner.[45]

Diverse programmes sought to transform the health apparatus into a calculable universe in which entities and activities would be mapped, enumerated, translated into information, transmitted to a centre, accumulated, compared, evaluated, programmed, and the duties of each actor and locale would be relayed back to them down the network in the form of norms, standards and constraints. The problems of calculability were to be raised again and again over the next thirty years, and in relation to differing political rationalities and programmes. But in the 1950s, Ministry of Health policy making was more or less limited to operating by exhortatory circular - an average of 120 a year throughout the 1950s - and political exhortation can be ignored. For the medical profession established the NHS as a medical enclosure. Medics drew on a profound optimism concerning the ability of medical science to alleviate illness and promote health, in a variety of tactics that succeeded both in shaping the 'policy agenda' concerning health and in placing certain issues out of bounds for non-professionals.[46] Further, medics came to dominate the administrative networks of health, forming a medico-administrative bloc that appeared resistant to all attempts to make it calculable in a non-medical vocabulary.

By the 1960s, the technological questions of how the machinery of health was to be governed were re-posed within a more general shift of governmental rationalities. The notion that efficiency and rationality could be achieved through mechanisms of planning crossed the boundaries of economic and social policy and the bounds of political party. The Plowden Report of 1961 called for the use of public expenditure control as a means to stable long-term planning, with greater emphasis on the 'wider application of mathematical techniques, statistics and accountancy'.[47] A range of new techniques were invented by which civil servants and administrators might calculate and hence control public expenditure: the Public Expenditure Survey Committee (PESC), the use of cost benefit analysis, of PPB (Planning, Programming, Budgeting) and PAR (Programme Analysis Review). And official documents like the Fulton Report, envisaged these as gaining their hold upon the machinery of government through their inculcation into a

professional corps of administrative experts, specialists both in techniques of management and those of numeracy.[48]

Management, mathematics and monetarisation were to tame the wild excesses of a governmental complex in danger of running out of control. The Ministry of Health set up its Advisory Committee for Management Efficiency in 1959 and expenditure on 'hospital efficiency studies' rose from £18,000 in 1963-4 to £250,000 in 1966-7. Health economists invented themselves and installed themselves in the Ministry of Health and outside it, articulating a new vocabulary for defining problems and programming solutions.[49] Yet for some fifteen years these new mechanisms for central planning according to rational criteria appeared destined to fail.

It was in the 1970s that the medico-administrative enclosure of health was to be breached. Politicians and planners began to speak of the insatiability of the demand for medical services and hence the need to impose some politically acceptable limits upon national provision. The very success of medics in promoting high-tech medicine had vastly increased the cost of treatment. Sociologists and demographers issued dire predictions about the consequences of the aging population and increases in life expectancy for demands on the health apparatus. Further, the medical monopoly over the internal working of the health apparatus began to fragment. General practitioners and consultants began to stake rival claims for dominance. New actors proliferated in the health networks - nurses, physios, occupational therapists - and began to organize themselves into 'professional' forces, claiming special skills based upon their own esoteric knowledge and training, demanding a say in the administration of health, contesting assumptions of the superiority of medical expertise. Ancillary workers became increasingly unionised and pressed for better wages. The conflicts between rational planning and expert powers became more evident. As the health apparatus threatened to become ungovernable, a new form of rational expertise, grounded in the discourse of health economics, began to provide resources for those who wished to challenge the prerogatives of doctors. New devices began to be developed for evaluating the costs and benefits of different treatments and decisions, rendering them amenable to non-clinical judgments made neither by doctors nor by local politicians, but by managers.[50]

Further, the health consumer was transformed, partly by developments in medical thought itself, from a passive patient, gratefully receiving the ministrations of the medics, to a person who was to be actively engaged in the administration of health if the treatment was to be effective and prevention assured. The patient was now to voice his or her experiences in the consulting room if diagnosis was to be accurate and remedies effective. The patient was also to be actively enroled in the government of health, educated and persuaded to exercise a continual informed scrutiny of the health consequences of diet, lifestyle and work. And patients, reciprocally, were to organize and represent themselves in the struggles over health. By 1979, 230 organizations for patients and disabled people could be listed in a directory, providing forums for sufferers of particular conditions and their relatives, pressing for increased resources for problems ranging from migraine to kidney transplants, demanding their say in decisions concerning everything from the place of birth to the management of death. Out of this concatenation of programmes, strategies and resistances, a new 'neo-liberal' mode of government of health was to take shape.

Welfarism and responsible citizenship

Welfarism embodies a particular conception of the relation between the citizen and the public powers. As the 'contractual' language of Beveridge's programme indicates, welfarism is a 'responsibilizing' mode of government. Social insurance, which Beveridge made the centrepiece of his report, will serve to illustrate this.[51] Insurance fundamentally transforms the mechanisms that bind the citizen into the social order. A certain measure of individual security is provided against loss or interruption of earnings through sickness, unemployment, injury, disablement, widowhood or retirement. Yet simultaneously the subjects of these dangers are constituted as the locus of social responsibility and located within a nexus of social risk.

Prior to insurance, perhaps the principal socially regulated relationship was between the employer and the employee. The technology of insurance not only entails the direct intervention of the state as third party into the contract of employment, it articulates this relation within a different but complementary contract between the insured individual and society, introducing a relation of

mutual obligation in which both parties have their rights and their duties. Programmes of insurance did not merely aspirate to the prevention of hardship and want. They also sought to reduce the social and political consequences of economic events such as unemployment by ensuring that, whether working or not, individuals were in effect employees of society. Within the political rationality of welfarism, insurance constituted individuals as citizens bound into a system of solidarity and mutual inter-dependency. Insurantial technology did not compose a mechanisms where premiums were adjusted to risk or contributions were accumulated in order to provide for future benefits. Rather, the vocabulary of insurance and the technique of contribution were chosen in the belief that this would constitute the insured citizen in a definite moral form: payment would qualify an individual to receive benefits, would draw the distinction between earned and unearned benefits, and teach the lessons of contractual obligation, thrift and responsibility.

Welfarism and the technicisation of politics

The system of social insurance embodied definite politico-ethical aspirations. However, it had the paradoxical effect of expelling certain issues and problems from the political to the technical domain. This illustrates a third key feature of welfarism: the role accorded to expertise. By incorporating expertise into a centrally directed network, welfarism facilitates the creation of domains in which political decisions are dominated by technical calculations.

In most European societies, sickness and insurance funds were developed by voluntary associations, trade unions, political parties and religious groups. They had an immediate 'political' form, in that they allowed for some participation by the insured in decisions over the administration of these benefits, provided a base for workers' organizations, served as a resource for the creation of collective identities and the mobilization of members for such issues as elections and strikes. Such issues can be 'de-politicized' in two ways: either by re-locating them as 'private' matters to be resolved by individual market transactions, or by transforming them into technical, professional or administrative matters to be resolved by the application of rational knowledge and professional expertise in relation to objective and apparently neutral criteria.[52]

Even such a perceptive commentator as T. H. Marshall was to write of social insurance, that 'This new sophistication was a scientific not a political phenomenon ... applying techniques, which were of universal validity, to problems that were an intrinsic part of modern industrial society'.[53] Yet as Jaques Donzelot suggests, one of the most important results of insurance is the de-dramatisation of social conflicts, through 'eliding the questions of assigning responsibility for the origin of "social evils" and shifting the issue to the different technical options regarding variations in different parameters required to "optimise" employment, wages, allowances etc.'[54] And, at the same time, insurance creates a form of passive solidarity amongst its recipients, de-emphasising both their active engagement in collective mechanisms of providing for hard times such as trade unions or friendly societies and their individual striving for self-protection through savings. Insurance is certainly a 'technical' option, but it is a technology that redraws the social domain and simultaneously readjusts the territory of the political on the one hand - struggles, contestations, repressions - and the economic on the other - wage labour, the role of the market, subsistence and poverty.

If the contemporary 'crisis' of welfare as a rationality of government arose, in part, out of the difficulties engendered by the technologies that sought to operationalise it, the possibility of supplanting welfare by a new rationality of government arose out of the proliferation of a range of other, more indirect means, for regulating the activities of private agents. This entailed the implantation of technologies of calculation and the development of various techniques for attaching actual or psychological rewards to certain decisions and making others financially or culturally less attractive. Government was to be vested in the entrepreneurial activities of producers of goods and suppliers of services, the expertise of managers equipped with new modes of calculation, the operation of a market that would align the activities of producers and providers with the choices of consumers, actively seeking to maximise their 'lifestyles' and their 'quality of life'.

## 9. FROM WELFARE TO NEO-LIBERALISM

Let us return to the contemporary political challenges to the extended state with which we began. For some thirty years following the publication of The Road to Serfdom neo-liberal hostility to the 'interventionist state' seemed eccentric to the main lines of political debate.[55] From the mid-seventies onwards, in Britain, the United States and elsewhere in Europe, neo-liberal analyses began to underpin the appeal of conservative political programmes and pronouncements. The political mentality of neo-liberalism breaks with welfarism at the level of moralities, explanations and vocabularies. Against the assumption that the ills of social and economic life are to be addressed by the activities of government, it warns against the arrogance of government overreach and overload. It counter-poses the inefficiencies of planned economies to the strength of the market in picking winners. It claims that Keynesian demand management sets in motion a vicious spiral of inflationary expectations and currency debasement. It suggests that big government is not only inefficient but malign: parties are pushed into making lavish promises in their competition for votes, fuelling rising expectations which can only be met by public borrowing on a grand scale.[56] Because 'the welfare state' depends on bureaucracy, it is subject to constant pressure from bureaucrats to expand their own empires, again fuelling an expensive and inefficient extension of the governmental machine. Because it cultivates the view that it is the role of the state to provide for the individual, the welfare state has a morally damaging effect upon citizens, producing 'a culture of dependency' based on expectations that government will do what in reality only individuals can.

Neo-liberalism reactivates liberal principles: scepticism over the capacities of political authorities to govern everything for the best; vigilance over the attempts of political authorities to seek to govern. Its language is familiar and needs little rehearsal. Markets are to replace planning as regulators of economic activity. Those aspects of government that welfare construed as political responsibilities are, as far as possible, to be transformed into commodified forms and regulated according to market principles. Economic entrepreneurship is to replace regulation, as active agents seeking to maximise their own advantage are both the legitimate locus of decisions about their own affairs and the most effective in calculating actions and outcomes. And more generally,

active entrepreneurship is to replace the passivity and dependency of responsible solidarity as individuals are encouraged to strive to optimise their own quality of life and that of their families.

Neo-liberalism re-codes the locus of the State in the discourse of politics. The State must be strong to defend the interests of the nation in the international sphere and must ensure order by providing a legal framework for social and economic life. But within this framework autonomous actors - commercial concerns, families, individuals - are to go freely about their business, making their own decisions and controlling their own destinies. Neo-liberal political rationalities weave these philosophical themes into an operative political discourse. A rhetoric of the nation, the family, the traditional greatness of Britain, the virtues of law and order, and the respect for tradition provides a translatability between neo-liberalism and traditional right wing values, and simultaneously opens a complex space for the elaboration of governmental programmes.

Whatever its rhetoric, within the problematics of government, neo-liberalism is not rendered intelligible by counterposing a non-interventionist to an interventionist state. Rather, it should be seen as a re-organization of political rationalities that brings them into a kind of alignment with contemporary technologies of government. The new political initiatives often take the form of an attempted 'autonomization' of entities from the state, or rather, an autonomization of the state from direct controls over, and responsibility for, the actions and calculations of businesses, welfare organizations and so forth. They entail the adoption by the centre of a range of devices which seek both to create a distance between the formal institutions of the state and other social actors, <u>and</u> to act upon them in a different manner.

One of the central mechanisms of neo-liberalism is the proliferation of strategies to create and sustain a 'market', to reshape the forms of economic exchange on the basis of contractual exchange. The privatization programmes of the new politics have formed perhaps the most visible strand of such strategies, and one most aligned with the political ideals of markets versus state. But in terms of economic regulation at least, a rigid distinction between nationalized and private enterprises is misleading. On the one hand, the degree of political direction over the

activities of nationalized companies was variable but small - perhaps the principal form that intervention took was the provision or refusal of investment capital. On the other hand, private sector enterprise is opened, in so many ways, to the action at a distance mechanisms that have proliferated in advanced liberal democracies, with the rise of managers as an intermediary between expert knowledge, economic policy and business decisions. Of course, 'market forces' intersect in different ways with investment decisions and the like when businesses are no longer formally owned by the state, as do the imperatives to profit. But we might consider that this reconstruction of the form of economic regulation is less a revolution against the real failures of central planning, than a rejection of the ideals of knowledge, power and the effectivity of planning that such rationalities embodied.

At the rhetorical and programmatic level, neo-liberalism also embodies a profound transformation in the mechanisms for governing social life. In place of collective provision and social solidarity the new rationality of government proposes notions of security provided through the private purchase of insurance schemes, health care purchased by individuals and provided by the health industry, housing offered through the private sector and efficiency secured through the discipline of competition within the market. The public provision of welfare and social security no longer appears as a vital part of a programme for political stability and social efficiency.

Monetarisation has played a key role in breaching the enclosures of expertise within the machinery of welfare. For example, when contemporary British hospitals are required to translate their therapeutic activities from operating theatres to laundry room into cash equivalents, a new form of visibility is conferred upon them, new relations established and new procedures of decision making made possible. As we have already argued, making people write things down, and the nature of the things people are made to write down, is itself a kind of government of them, urging them to think about and note certain aspects of their activities according to certain norms. Power flows to the centre or agent who determines the inscriptions, accumulates them, contemplates them in their aggregated form and hence can compare and evaluate the activities of others who are merely entries on the chart. Managers rather than consultants become the powerful actors in this

new network, and power flows from the cabinet office to the operating theatre via a multitude of calculative and managerial locales, rather than in the other direction. This is not an attempt to impose a power where previously none existed, but to transform the terms of calculation from medical to financial, and hence to shift the fulcrum of the health network. Far from autonomizing the health apparatus, these new modes of action at a distance increase the possibilities of governing it. Similarly, relocating aspects of welfare in the 'private' or 'voluntary' sector does not necessarily render them less governable. To be sure, different procedures of translation and alliance are entailed when 'political' institutions are 'de-centred' in networks of power. But the opposition between state and non-state is inadequate to characterise these transformations.

Neo-liberalism also entails a reorganization of programmes for the government of personal life. The language of the entrepreneurial individual, endowed with freedom and autonomy, has come to predominate over almost any other in evaluations of the ethical claims of political power and programmes of government. A sphere of freedom is to be (re-)established, where autonomous agents make their decisions, pursue their preferences and seek to maximise the quality of their lives. For neo-liberalism the political subject is less a social citizen with powers and obligations deriving from membership of a collective body, than an individual whose citizenship is active. This citizenship is to be manifested not in the receipt of public largesse, but in the energetic pursuit of personal fulfilment and the incessant calculations that are to enable this to be achieved.[57]

Neo-liberalism forges a kind of alignment between political rationalities and the technologies for the regulation of the self that took shape in Britain during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. No doubt this alignment is not the only one possible, nor the most desirable. Nonetheless, neo-liberal programmes for the reform of welfare drew support from their consonance with a range of other challenges to the mechanisms of social government that emerged during these same decades from civil libertarians, feminists, radicals, socialists, sociologists and others. These reorganized programmes of government utilise and instrumentalise the multitude of experts of management, of family life, of lifestyle who have proliferated at the points of intersection of socio-political aspirations and private desires for self-advancement. Through this loose

assemblage of agents, calculations, techniques, images and commodities, individuals can be governed through their freedom to choose.

## CONCLUSION

Much of the analysis above is preliminary, but its central point is a simple one. The language of political philosophy: state and civil society, freedom and constraint, sovereignty and democracy, public and private plays a key role in the organization of modern political power. However, it cannot provide the intellectual tools for analyzing the problematics of government in the present. Unless we adopt different ways of thinking about the exercise of political power, we will find contemporary forms of rule hard to understand. It will thus be rather difficult to make a proper judgment of the alternatives on offer.

**NOTES**

1. F. W. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, London, Penguin, 1969, p.75. Many people gave us detailed comments on an earlier and much longer draft which have helped us in preparing this version. We would like particularly to thank Graham Burchell, Stewart Clegg, Mitchell Dean, Mick Dillon, Michael Donnelly, David Garland, Tony Giddens, Colin Gordon, Anthony Hopwood, Alan Hunt, Ian Hunter, Thomas Osborne, Alessandro Pizzorno, Michael Power, Stuart Scheingold, Grahame Thompson, Jim Tomlinson and Robert van Krieken.

2. We have in mind recent non- or post-marxist writings on the 'problem of the State', represented best by Gianfranco Poggi, Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol, Anthony Giddens, Michael Mann and John A. Hall. For a cogent discussion see B. Jessop, State Theory, Cambridge, Polity, 1990.

3. M. Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction, London, Allen Lane, 1978, pp. 88-9. For an extended treatment of different ways of conceptualising political power see S. Clegg, Frameworks of Power, London, Sage, 1989.

4. M. Foucault, 'On governmentality', I&C, 1979, 6, pp. 5 - 21. Reprinted in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.), The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmental Rationality, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1991. See the other contributions to this volume for related analyses.

5. M. Foucault, 'On governmentality', I&C, 1979, p. 20.

6. Cf. S. Cohen, 'Thinking About Social Control', paper presented at Workshop on Controlling Social Life, European University Institute, Florence, May 30 - June 2, 1989.

7. See, for example, the discussion of the limitations of constitutional thought in I. Harden and N. Lewis, The Noble Lie: The British constitution and the rule of law, London, Hutchinson, 1986, and the theories of neo-corporatism developed in particular by Phillipe Schmitter, see P. C.

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11. I. Wallerstein, The Politics of the World Economy: The States, The Movements and the Civilizations, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984; Giddens, 1985, op. cit.; Mann, 1988, op. cit.

12. See M. Dillon, 'Modernity, Discourse and Deterrence', in Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. 2, 1989, pp. 90-104.

13. The current analysis builds upon our previous studies of such issues, see N. Rose The Psychological Complex: Psychology, Politics and Society 1869 - 1939, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985; N. Rose, Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self, London, Routledge, 1990; P. Miller and N. Rose, eds., The Power of Psychiatry, Cambridge, Polity, 1986;

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20. Cf. M. Foucault, 'The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', in C. Gordon, (ed.), Power/ Knowledge, Brighton, Harvester, 1980.

21. Rose, 1985, op. cit. Miller and O'Leary, 1987 op. cit.

22. Miller and O'Leary, 1989, op. cit.; also P. Miller and T. O'Leary, 'Making Accountancy Practical', Accounting, Organizations and Society Vol. 15, 1990, pp. 479-498.

23. See also Miller and Rose, 1988, op. cit; Rose, 1989, op. cit.

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