The rise and fall of political parties

Politics

While the question on whether or not they should be accepted as a legitimate means to express political disagreement is really up to the citizens. As long as the parties don't become too powerful then there shouldn't be a problem at all. If somebody wishes to express a disagreement and they don't agree with either of the current two parties then by all means let them start their own party. As long as the citizens agree with what you are saying it shouldn't really matter what political party you belong to or what political office. Political participation is influenced by many important factors, one of which is political parties.

The participation of citizens is a fundamental component of modern democracy. Politics and participation can be carried out in a variety of forms, including but not limited to voting, campaigning, and group activities such as lobbying for interest groups. In life it is important to develop an understanding of political parties. Political parties began in the United States and we now consider them an essential part of democracy. Parties serve five basic functions in a political system. First, they allow a method of communication between citizens and their government.

Through communication, citizens are informed of the processes of government and politics, and also receive information regarding political issues. Next, parties provide representation of the citizens to the government. Third, parties provide interest articulation, in which citizens can identify their feelings on particular issues that are important to them, but not necessarily the rest of the population. Fourth, political parties are the sole means of aggregating these issues into larger categories, which can then be expressed to the government in a logical and persuasive form.

Finally, political parties are the only sector of society in which political leaders are selected and recruited, to later be voted for or against by the public of that nation, or a body elected by them. These parties realize there are boundaries within which they must operate to insure the survival and preservation of democracy. Great Britain has a traditional modern parliamentary government that is dominated by two parties, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party.

The Labour Party prides itself on being a democratic socialist party, essentially meaning hat the party philosophy is to create a nation in which power, wealth, and opportunity are in the hands of the many and not the few (Labour Party). The Conservative Party is focused on liberal economic policies, as well as the preservation of traditional British cultural values and institutions (Conservative Party). This party supports a decentralized government in which the state plays a limited role in social welfare. Like Great Britain, Germany has a parliamentary government that is essentially dominated by two central parties, the Christian Democratic Union and the Social Democratic Party.

According to their platform, the Christian Democratic Union is in favor of a free democracy based on the rule of the law, a social market economy, the incorporation of the Federal Republic of Germany into the Western system of values and the Western alliance, the unity of the nation and the unification of Europe (Christian Democratic Union). The Social Democratic Party is focused on equality, specifically in employment and distribution of wealth. The party is extremely anti-nuclear and environmentally oriented, although the latter is a less essential part of the platform (Social Democratic Party).

Unlike Great Britain, both German parties favor involvement in the European Union, and support the integration of Germany into the European Community. When defining the subject of politics what usually springs to mind is government, politicians and their policies or more negatively the idea of corruption and dirty tricks. In order to make an attempt at a definition of politics a systematic approach is required. To begin with, a brief historical overview will be considered, to understand the origins of politics.

Following this, different core concepts, which are imperative to a definition of politics, will be discussed, in the hope to discover a true and fair interpretation of the word politics. The word politics comes from the Greek word polis, meaning the state or community as a whole. The concept of the polis was an ideal state and came from the writings of great political thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle. In his novel The Republic Plato describes the ideal state and the means to achieve it. The word politics originally has connotations in the ways in which to create the ideal society.

An ideal society is in practice a rather difficult aim and even an impossible aim to achieve. Politics implies measures which could and should, in the views of their devisor, be implemented in the hope to create a better society, than that which is already present. The very fact that Plato and Aristotle saw imperfections in the societies, in which they lived, prompted them to write their political philosophies. These philosophies provided the first written recognition of politics. Aristotle believed that man is a political animal, in another words; it lies deep within the instinct of man.

According to Aristotle politics was not a dreamt up concept, but rather an inherent feature of mankind. To begin with, the basest premise that underpins the notion of politics should be considered in order to arrive at a fair definition. Man is self-preserving by nature. He thinks and acts, whether that is as an individual or as a group who share interests, with foremost regard to his own interests. Self-perpetuation is the number one rule. He therefore possesses his own interests, ideas and preferences, which may differ to those of his contemporaries. With the view of man being self-preserving one would expect that conflict will occur.

What could be the cause of this conflict interest? The world has its limits; all material wealth within it is exhaustible. Who therefore, gets how large a share, of those resources, which are present on the earth in limited supply? If man were permitted to act on and pursue his own selfish interests, snatching that, which he desires, a society would quickly become under rule of violence. Politics is a way of combating the degradation of society into a violent and unstructured mess by reducing it to be governed by the primitive instincts of man in order to resolve conflict.

Politics may be defined a means to resolving conflict through various ways. Government branches out, and we designate who we want representing our community. Politics exists due to the broad spectrum of ideas and opinions within any society. To resolve conflicting opinions, a consensus must be agreed upon by all parties affected. Politics tries to act as a designated peacemaker taking separate feelings and coming to a conclusive decision about the predicament. The outcome will most probably require the yielding of at least one of the parties implicated in order to meet at a compromise.

Usually one would come to a yield not by choice, but by majority vote. Politics could therefore be defined as a power struggle between those in influential positions. Power can only be obtained by obtaining the support from as many groups and individuals as possible. This can be achieved by providing tempting solutions to conflicts that already exist in a society, whether this is in an honest or dishonest way. By appealing to members of a society with solutions to their problems and promises to act in their interests, a group or individual can gain support and ultimately authority over other groups and individuals.

Politics is in short a power struggle and the ultimate power is found in the Government. Thus, politics could be defined as the workings of government as a guarantor to a peaceful society. The government is run by the politicians; it is the politicians who form the ideas to hopefully settle conflict in the society they govern. However it seems that if politics are the working of government those societies and communities, which do not possess a government, are lacking politics. In every community and corporation where there is hierarchy politics must exist.

In a company for example, a boss makes decisions and resolves conflict. In a tribe, a leader makes decisions to keep internal conflicts to a minimum and ultimately ensures the survival of his tribe. Thus politics is present in every community and is used to manage workings and disagreements that may occur within place of social engagements. Politics occurs in all kinds of communities. Whether it be the sports club or the state government and is concerned with devising a method of organization and attempting to

implement that method of organization within that community over which it acts.

It is there to dictate the peace among the diversities by democracy. In the process of establishing the core concepts of this affair called politics, it is plain to see that a brief definition is virtually impossible. Politics is not simply an object or a single stranded idea. It is not a concise term but rather a complicated notion, which embraces premises, opinions, and qualities of human nature, actions and institutions. It seems to arise in those situations where humans live in coexistence whether that is by choice or otherwise.

Any attempt at a definition would be to confine and customize politics to suit one's own particular views. Nevertheless, in fitting with the title of this essay an attempt at a definition shall be made. Politics is the means to creating a more organized and peaceful society, by providing methods to resolve conflict that naturally occurs between men, by means of civil discussion and rational compromise. It thus stems the need for violence in tense situations and ultimately looks to avoid the degradation of a community into utter chaos.

Authority is the underlying feature of politics and ensures its enforceability. Power underpins its very existence; it is a prerequisite for politics exist. Without authority, politics simply is not feasible. The most visible and widely accepted example of politics is the workings of the governmental institutions. However, although at first glance one may not be aware of it, politics in its various forms is present wherever and whenever humans form a community. Aristotle once said, politics is an intrinsic feature of mankind.

The roots of National Socialism were peculiarly German, grounded for example, in the Prussian tradition of military authoritarianism and expansion, in the German romantic tradition of hostility to rationalism, liberalism and democracy. In various racist doctrines according to which the Nordic peoples, as so-called pure Aryans, were not only physically superior to other races, but were the carriers of a superior morality and culture. Also, in certain philosophical traditions, National Socialism idealized the state or exalted the superior individual and exempted such a person from conventional restraints.

The theorists and planners of National Socialism included General Karl Ernst Haushofer, a German geographer who exercised much influence in German affairs. The German editor and party leader Alfred Rosenberg formulated Nazi racial theories based on the work of the Anglo-German writer Houston Stewart Chamberlain. To the German financier Hjalmar Schacht fell the task of formulating and carrying out much of the economic and banking policies, and the German architect and party leader Albert Speer was a major figure in overseeing the economy just before the end of World War Two (1939 – 1945)'. Ware 1996)It appears that the immediate origins of National Socialism are found in the consequences of the German defeat in World War One (1914 – 1918). (Ware 1996).

The German defeat in World War One brought about the German people to react to the defeat of their nation with a growing sense of humiliation. Rather than being subdued, however, many Germans saw World War One as a kind of transformation, a rebirth of German culture. Under the terms of the Treaty

of Versailles, Germany was charged with sole responsibility for the war, stripped of its colonial empire and forced to pay heavy reparations.

France seriously disrupted German political and economic life consequently of the treaty, for example the seizure of the Saar Mines. The United States offered assistance to Germany by granting large loans and this temporarily helped Germany to recover its economy and to compensate the Allies. The National Socialist party originated in the German Worker's Party and was formed in Munich in 1919. At the time that Hitler joined in 1919, the German Worker's party had a nominal membership of about 25, only six of whom were active in its discussions and lecture activities. '

Shortly after joining, Hitler became a leader of the group. At the first mass meeting of the German Worker's Party, held in Munich on February 24, 1920, Hitler read the party program, which he had partly written; this consisted of 25 points comprising a mixture of exaggerated nationalistic demands, corrupt socialist ideas and racist and anti-Semitic doctrines. As the essential conditions for the realization of its aims, the party declared in point 25 of the program: " For modern society, a colossus with feet of clay, we shall create an unprecedented centralization which we will unite all powers in the hands of the government.

We shall create a hierarchical constitution, which will mechanically govern all movements of individuals. "' It seems that the National Socialist Party directed their speeches on what they were going to do with such strong confidence and that no one dared question how the Party was going to go about fulfilling these promises. It is obvious that the impact of political

parties can be attributed to a number of causes. However, based on the evidence previously presented, the primary source that impacts political participation through political parties is the parliamentary system of government present in both Great Britain and Germany.

The parliamentary governments encourage a political system in which two parties dominate the political arena. These two parties grow and strengthen until they amass the ability to perform the functions of political parties very successfully. Through their ability to communicate with the public, provide representation to the government, articulate and aggregate interests of citizens, and recruit future leaders and representatives, the political parties of Germany and Great Britain provide a successful environment in which the people of these nations may participate.