

# [Laski, term a meaning which is consistent](https://assignbuster.com/laski-term-a-meaning-which-is-consistent/)

Laski, too, accepts utility as the basis of rights, though he gave to the term a meaning which is consistent with the modified conditions of his times.

He holds that the test of a right is utility, and the utility of a right is its value to all the members of the State. The claims, he says, which the State must recognise “ are those which, in the light of history, involve disaster when they are unfulfilled.” Rights are not independent of society, but inherent in it. “ We have them for its protection as well as our own. Rights, therefore, are correlative with functions.” We have rights so that we may contribute to the common good. My rights are built upon my contribution to the well-being of society. “ I cannot have rights against the public welfare, for that, ultimately, is to give me rights against a welfare which is intimately and inseparably associated with my own.

” Rights, as such, are built upon their utility to the individual and the community. The Social Welfare Theory of Rights has much to commend. But one cannot say what social welfare actually means. Does it mean the greatest happiness of the greatest number, majority interest, or what is today understood to be the common good? In fact, much political wrong has been done during recent times to the individuality of man in the name of social good. The individuality of man and his rights have very often been sacrificed in order to extol social good in the name of social expediency. A social system which discounts individual personality and glorifies the common interest of society cannot continue for long. It is sure to provoke opposition from that section of society whose personality is crushed and rights frustrated.