



Social Stratification and Political Power

Author(s): Reinhard Bendix

Source: *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Jun., 1952), pp. 357-375

Published by: American Political Science Association

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1950834>

Accessed: 04/04/2010 08:13

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=apsa>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



American Political Science Association is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The American Political Science Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND POLITICAL POWER*

REINHARD BENDIX

University of California (Berkeley)

Contemporary studies of political power have often been based on the belief that the major determinants in the struggle for power may be ascertained by analyzing the social stratification of a society. This belief is supported by the following series of more or less tacit assumptions: The ideas and actions of men are conditioned by their social and economic position in society. When large number of individuals occupy a comparable social position, they may be expected to think and act alike. They are likely to share social and economic interests which are promoted—in competition or conflict with other social groups—through political organization and interest-representation. Hence, a study of politics should be concerned with the social composition of the members and leaders of different political organizations; this kind of knowledge will provide a clue to the power which such organizations can exert and to the political goals which their leaders are likely to pursue.

I wish to examine the relation between stratification and politics in four respects:

(1) How did Marx deal with the problem of social stratification and political power?

(2) What insight into the relation between stratification and politics can be gained from retrospective investigations?

(3) Does a knowledge of social stratification enable us to understand the development of totalitarian movements and their conquest of power?

(4) Does our understanding of these movements improve if this knowledge of stratification is supplemented by an analysis of the radical elite and of the underlying psychological predisposition of the members?

I. THE MARXIAN APPROACH

On the basis of his analysis of capitalism, Marx predicted a series of political events: that the bourgeoisie would resort to increasingly repressive laws in order to safeguard its economic position; that the workers would eventually create a class-conscious labor movement; and that the contradictions inherent in the capitalist economy would lead ultimately to a proletarian revolution. These political events were to occur toward the end of the capitalist era.

Marx based his predictions on a comprehensive theory of history. He believed that the relations among men in society result from the prevailing organization of the economy in each historical period. In each case the touchstone of this organization was the relation of the different classes to the ownership of the

* Parts of an earlier version of this paper were presented at the Symposium on Social Stratification and Politics at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in San Francisco on August 28, 1951. I wish to acknowledge my debt to Clark Kerr and Lloyd H. Fisher for their critical reading of an earlier draft.

means of production, and this led to the oppression of one class by another. The struggle which resulted led in each period from the initial progressiveness of the ruling class to a growing contradiction between the available forces of production and the willingness and the ability of the old ruling class to utilize them fully. In line with this general theory, Marx predicted that the class struggle of the capitalist system would lead to the proletarian revolution. But he did not imply that capitalism would *automatically* produce a proletariat which would fulfill its historic role.

Though Marx left his analysis of social class incomplete, it is possible to summarize his views on this subject. In his analysis of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Marx offered this definition of a social class, which he applied to the French peasants:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that divide their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes, and put them in hostile contrast to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local inter-connection among these small peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no unity, no national union and no political organization, they do not form a class.¹

Marx applied the same analysis, but somewhat more ambiguously, to the role of the industrial worker in a capitalist economy. Workers shared the fate of having nothing but their labor power to sell. This common fate put them in hostile contrast to the capitalist, partly because they were exploited by him, and partly because modern machine production reduced them to human fragments, not allowed to exercise their rational faculties. And yet this common condition of the industrial workers would not automatically result in the formation of a labor movement. Such a movement would result only if groups of workers throughout a country communicated with each other, if they developed nationwide interests and made them effective through a political organization.² Whether or not the hostile division between "millions of worker-families" and the capitalists would lead to a nationwide political movement was to Marx a question of practical politics.

Still, Marx believed that he could predict the outcome of this political struggle. He believed that an overwhelming majority of the people would come to share (or to sympathize with) the life-experience, and hence the ideas, of the industrial proletariat. To be sure, the working class in Marx' sense would emerge only after regional, local, ethnic, and many other antagonisms had disappeared. Only then could a politically organized labor movement develop; for it to be effective, such a political organization would have to represent a "national union" rather than just another interest group. Hence Marx identified the politically organized labor movements of the world with the masses of mankind.³ And believing that the development of capitalism necessitated a polarization of society into two classes, he minimized the importance both of the existing

¹ *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York, n.d.), p. 109.

² *The Communist Manifesto* (New York, 1932), pp. 17-19.

³ The philosophical significance of this identification is explored in Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (New York, 1941), pp. 287-295.

divisions among workers in capitalist society and of the ideas and political actions to which they gave rise.⁴

The history of the last hundred years since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 has taught us that these sweeping generalizations were mistaken. To be sure, a radical movement which obliterates local, regional, and even many national antagonisms is developing today, but it is *not* the labor movement of the industrialized countries as Marx envisaged it. It is rather an international protest movement against the countries of western civilization in which industrialization has bestowed major benefits on the working masses. All countries outside this civilization continue to struggle with the problem of transforming their peasant masses into an industrial work-force. The masses themselves are caught in the dilemma of not being able to survive either in cities that are not industrialized enough to absorb them or in villages that are too overcrowded and poor to yield them a subsistence. Confronted, in addition, with a steadily increasing availability of diverse commodities which they cannot buy, they experience an intensification of the poverty which they cannot escape. For these reasons, peasant uprisings, the organization of hitherto inert masses under communist leadership, and the effective transformation of discontent into a militant nationalist movement are likely to occur in the countries of comparative disadvantage with regard to industrialization. The ruling groups within each of these underdeveloped areas will strain every effort in order to transform a discontent which is often directed against them, into a unified nationalist movement which is directed instead against the "imperialists" of the West. Hence, the major determinants of the struggle for power in these areas cannot be ascertained by an analysis of their social stratification, but rather by emphasizing that class differences have come to be subordinated to the much more decisive conflict between the underdeveloped areas and the industrialized West.⁵

⁴ I should add that Marx made a keen analysis of the relation between social stratification and politics in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, especially with reference to the urban groups supporting the *coup d'état*. He also gave a completely misleading interpretation of the Paris Commune, which he identified as a model of the coming proletarian revolution. The contrast between these two discussions illustrates Marx's genius as well as his propagandistic dogmatism. Cf. the recent analysis of the Commune by Melvin Kransberg, *The Siege of Paris, 1870-1871* (Ithaca, 1950), esp. pp. 179-183, where the author shows convincingly that the social radicalism of the Parisian workers was in large part the result of a patriotism which had been intensely frustrated by the Prussian siege of the capital and by the indecision of the middle class and the authorities in the face of this threat.

⁵ A striking analysis of the background factors in India, Southeast Asia, and China is contained in J. D. Boeke, *The Interests of the Voiceless Far East* (Leyden, 1948). The conflict between Marxian class theory and the facts of social stratification has been analyzed with great acumen by David Mitrany in *Marx Against the Peasant* (Chapel Hill, 1951.) See especially the following summary comment of the author: "The startling fact is that Communism has only come to power where by all Marxist tenets it might have been least expected that it could. In every instance, from 1917 in Russia to 1949 in China, Communism has ridden to victory on the back of disaffected peasantries; in no instance has it come near to victory in industrialized 'proletarian' countries. So far it has always been a 'proletarian' revolution without a proletariat; a matter of Communist

The basic contentions of Marx do not fare better when we apply them to the actual development of capitalism. In the countries of advanced industrialization Marx's theory does not fit the situation because industrialization has been accompanied by an increasing peacefulness of industrial relations. Broadly speaking, labor movements have arisen primarily in the industrialized countries of the world, in which the working masses have begun to enjoy the rising standard of living that goes with industrialization. The result has actually been a growing identification of interests between capitalists and workers. This working harmony is often marred by intense suspicion and by ideological radicalism; and the struggle over the distribution of the national product certainly continues unabated. Nonetheless, where the economic interests of the nation are concerned, capitalists and workers suffer or benefit alike, and they have on the whole acted accordingly. Neither the polarization of classes nor an intensification of the class struggle has accompanied the development of capitalism;⁶ instead, the predictions of Marx have been reversed, or altered in their significance, to an extent that the theory behind them, attributing long-run political changes to the class struggle, must be rejected.

It is insufficient, however, to indicate the reasons why the Marxian theory should be discarded. The question before us is not primarily whether Marx's predictions were correct, but rather whether predictions of *major* political events based on an analysis of the economy and its corresponding class structure are feasible at all. We can, for example, describe the development of the class structure under capitalism more accurately than Marx did. And on this description we can base a generalized theory which is similar to his in the sense that it also shows the effects of changes in the technology and in the system of production on the occupational structure and the changing relations between the classes. But while this is possible, it is important to realize that it does not lead further for our purposes.

We have fairly accurate knowledge of the occupational trends which have accompanied the development of capitalism. Colin Clark has shown in considerable detail that, with the rise of industry, the proportion of people in agriculture declines along with an increase of the proportion of people employed in the "tertiary" branch of production (trade, transportation, communication; domestic, personal and professional service).⁷ It is possible to attribute to

management of peasant discontent. But while this shows that in the countries where this has happened the peasants were ripe for revolt, it does not show that they inclined to Communism. As regards eastern Europe at any rate, the evidence is all the other way" (pp. 205-206).

⁶ Cf. the papers on class conflict by T. H. Marshall, Lionel Robbins and Maurice Dobb in T. H. Marshall (ed.), *Class Conflict and Social Stratification* (London, 1938).

⁷ *The Conditions of Economic Progress* (2nd ed., London, 1950). The recent critique of Clark's work by P. T. Bauer and B. S. Yaney, "Economic Progress and Occupational Distribution," *Economic Journal*, Vol. 61, pp. 741-755 (Dec., 1951), contains some useful reservations concerning Clark's tripartite division of the occupational structure, but it does not invalidate Clark's contribution as the authors believe. A more striking critique of this work is contained in John Jewkes, "The Growth of World Industry," *Oxford Economic Papers*, Vol. 3, pp. 1-15 (Feb. 1951).

these occupational changes certain general political tendencies, such as the willingness of broad masses of people, especially in the "middle class," to give political support to an economic system in which their economic security and their personal self-respect are frequently threatened.⁸ The growing proportion of salaried people engaged in trade and professional service, as well as the organization of workers in trade unions, has also given a pervasive influence to certain middle-class standards of aspiration, which in turn have had an important influence on the changing role of the government in economic life. This occupational trend has thus helped to end the era of the *laissez-faire* doctrine and to foster the emergence of a doctrine of social rights (e.g., the right to a job, the demand for pensions, old-age insurance, health insurance).⁹ On the basis of the available evidence it is even possible to predict with some assurance that, as other countries industrialize, similar changes in the occupational structure and similar political trends are likely to occur. But the fact that industrial societies have tended to become increasingly middle class, and that certain political tendencies have accompanied this development, is a far cry from the assertion that changes in the organization of the capitalist economy and, therefore, in the class structure will determine the ultimate political outcome of the struggle between the classes.

By bringing Marxian theory in line with historic facts, however, we tend to lose sight of the major thesis which made that theory interesting. Marx studied the organization of production under capitalism because he believed that this enabled him to predict the hostile contrasts between the classes, as well as the broad development of parties or movements which would utilize these antagonisms in order to exercise power. Even if we now discard Marx' specific answers and dismiss altogether the possibility of a long-range prediction of political trends, this problem is still basic. It is basic in the sense that the antagonisms existing in a society *are* the source of *gradual* political change.

II. SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Because of its claim to predict the development of capitalist society, Marxism has long asserted the ability to distinguish between the present and the eventual class interest and political alignment of any social group. The *present* expression of interests by a social group has thus been judged in terms of its supposedly "real" interests in the future; this has meant that if the present interests of a group ran counter to the interests of the "progressive" or revolutionary labor movement, as Marxists appraise them, then the group would not be analyzed as such, but would be denounced as "petty bourgeois," reactionary, or what not. It is apparent that this distinction between "present" and "real" interests

⁸ In a recent study of public opinion, 76 per cent of the national sample indicated their belief that the good effects of big business outweighed the bad. Breakdowns of the sample revealed no significant differences between various occupational groups. See the report of the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, *Big Business from the Viewpoint of the Public* (Ann Arbor, 1951), p. 179.

⁹ The development from "civil rights" to "social rights" has been traced by T. H. Marshall in *Citizenship and Social Class* (Cambridge [Eng.], 1950), pp. 1-85.

depends largely on the possibility of predicting that there will be only two divisions of society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.¹⁰ In his preoccupation with long-run tendencies, Marx either ignored the appraisal of day-to-day politics or analyzed the shifting alliances between conflicting social groups only in order to discover the economic forces which—if properly understood—would reveal the decisive, rather than the ephemeral, determinants of the class struggle.

Yet if we abandon this attempt to predict the ultimate outcome of the class struggle, we should not also abandon the genuine insight which makes the Marxian theory attractive: that the many antagonisms created in a society, and especially the conflicts inherent in its economic structure, may, but need not, give rise to collective action and that it is the task of the analyst to discover the circumstances under which collective action does or does not arise. I believe that Marx forfeited his genuine insight into the indeterminacy of the relationship between class situation and class action by his prophetic fervor, which prompted him to forecast the capitalist development with a certainty often belied by his own historical sense.¹¹ Once we abandon this presumption of certainty, we must necessarily accept a wider range of possible developments than Marxian theory permits, even though we continue to recognize the fundamental importance of the economic structure for an understanding of social stratification and class conflict. However, we must also accept the corollary that our understanding of the relations between the economy, social stratification, and the struggle for power are necessarily retrospective.¹² We can summarize these conclusions as follows:

1. Marxism identifies major elements of the struggle for power.
2. We cannot predict the exercise of power from a knowledge of these ele-

¹⁰ Of course, the belief in this possibility of prediction has had major historic significance as an effective ideology, quite apart from any appraisal of its validity.

¹¹ These contradictions have been explored by Harold Rosenberg in "The Pathos of the Proletariat," *Kenyon Review*, Vol. 11, pp. 595-629 (1949).

¹² There is one interpretation of the relations between economic interests, social stratification and political power which is *not* retrospective. Through their analyses of "pressure groups," political scientists have made us well aware of the plethora of organizations whose economic and political interests are explicitly formulated and pressed upon legislatures and the general public with all available means. I suggest that in these cases the problem examined in this paper does not arise. *Once* the economy and its corresponding social structure have given rise to an articulation of interests and to an implementation of these interests through organizations, the problem has become one for political analysis proper. The question of the political sociologist is which of the existing antagonisms in society will give rise to organizations that participate in the struggle for power, and it is obviously answered once these organizations exist. The question which then remains for him is the pertinent one as to how stable any given articulation of interests (with their organizational implementation) is. It is, of course, precisely the fact that any present articulation of interests is unstable, and that the tendency to think and act alike among commonly situated men may in the future give rise to a new articulation of interests (and find expression in new organizational action), which is of major interest to the political sociologist. It was the merit of Marxian analysis, as I have suggested, to have focussed attention on this instability of the social structure.

ments *because* we cannot determine how, when, or whether the political factors can or will utilize these elements.

3. *Therefore*, we can understand the exercise of power only retrospectively; after the fact we know whether or not the elements (of the struggle for power) remained latent or were effectively used in producing change.

General theories of social stratification in industrial society do not throw much light on the forces that determine the exercise of power, because they do not grasp the indeterminate relationship between class situation and class action. This is probably one reason why in recent years most inquiries into the relation between stratification and politics have consisted of particular case studies, whose illumination of details has been obtained at the price of abandoning the developmental theories which have been discussed. The theory which seems to have governed these case studies holds that affiliation with, or membership in, a social group engenders a certain homogeneity of belief and action which *may* lead to collective political action. Thus studies of social stratification are undertaken in the belief that the interests which unite the members of a social group and simultaneously divide them from other groups, are to the exercise of power what fuel is to fire.

Another theory (and its relation to the first is by no means clear) holds that the existence of common interests will lead to collective action only when a particular organization and its leaders succeed in utilizing this potentiality for the political struggle. Studies governed by this theory have analyzed the social composition of the members and leaders of a given organization in the belief that such data provide a major explanation for its political success or failure. Restricted to historical reconstructions, these studies cannot predict whether the social and ideological homogeneity of a given group will lead to collective political action. Collective political action as the outcome of social homogeneity and effective political organization can be explained fully only in the light of subsequent events.¹³

It may be useful to cite some examples of retrospective studies, in order to illustrate the type of proposition which may be derived from them. Research has revealed that a significant proportion of the leaders of different socialist parties in Western Europe have come from a middle-class background, but that there are characteristic cultural and national differences among these groups of leaders. In Italy a significant number of the earlier socialist leaders were aristocrats or well-to-do bourgeois, who dedicated their lives and fortunes to the movement. Michels reports that 28 of the 33 parliamentary representatives of the Italian Social-Democratic party in 1903 were intellectuals of bourgeois or aristocratic origin. This compared with 13 of the 81, or 16 per cent, of intellectuals with a middle-class background among the parliamentary representa-

¹³ Yet, historical studies often imply a contrary view; they lend themselves to a retrospective determinism, which regards the outcome of all political action as predetermined because in looking back we can understand the reasons for this and no other outcome. The danger of *ex post facto* explanations is obviously that they make every political action appear as if no alternative actions had been possible.

tives of the German Social-Democratic party in the same year.¹⁴ Intellectuals, but especially Jewish intellectuals, have played an important role among the leaders of the socialist movements in Germany, Russia and other Eastern European countries. Intellectuals, but not Jews, have been of importance in the French socialist movement, and Irishmen, self-educated craftsmen as well as certain sectarian Tories, were among the significant leaders of the Chartist movement in England.¹⁵ Clearly it is possible to say that the leaders of the socialist movements have been primarily members of the middle class; this statement covers all of the cases mentioned, but it does not explain the significant differences between the socialist leaders of different countries. We might also say that those members of the middle class who are refused social recognition tend to identify themselves with labor's cause. But while this is a useful proposition to account for the role of the Jews and the Irish, it cannot adequately explain the Italian case, for example. Another important variable is the degree to which intellectuals have played a role in the socialist movements. They participated prominently in Germany, Italy, France, and Russia, but less prominently in England and least perhaps in the United States. A more detailed investigation might reveal a number of sociological factors which account for these differences in the social composition of socialist leaders in the various countries, though it is not safe to assume that a knowledge of such factors would be sufficient. At any rate, these examples may suffice to illustrate the type of retrospective proposition which a comparative study of leadership would seek to establish.

Other retrospective studies of the relation between social stratification and politics deal with the masses rather than their leaders. A case in point is Rudolf Heberle's analysis of party affiliations and their regional differences in the province of Schleswig-Holstein during the period of the Weimar Republic.¹⁶ In the areas of large landed estates the landowners belonged to the conservative parties, while their tenants, the farm laborers, along with the lower middle-class groups of the town and country, belonged to the parties of the Left. In the areas of small, independent farm holdings, however, a majority of the farmers belonged to democratic parties, which advocated a policy of free competition; neither the social democrats nor the communists could make much headway among these independent farmers. It should be noted, however, that in areas of small holdings and backward production methods the French Communists have been successful in their appeals to the peasants, where their German colleagues were not. Moreover, some of the communist slogans are strikingly

¹⁴ Robert Michels, "Proletariat und Bourgeoisie in der sozialistischen Bewegung Italiens," *Archiv fuer Sozialwissenschaft*, Vol. 21, pp. 379-380 (1905).

¹⁵ Cf. the comments on this question in M. Beer, *Fifty Years of International Socialism* (London, 1937), pp. 103-107. Also Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (Glencoe, 1949), pp. 235-267. The contemporary significance of this problem is clearly stated by Morris Watnick, "The Appeal of Communism to the People of Underdeveloped Areas," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 1, pp. 22-36 (March, 1952).

¹⁶ Rudolf Heberle, *From Democracy to Nazism* (Baton Rouge, 1945), esp. pp. 90-120.

similar to those used by the Nazis.¹⁷ It appears advisable, therefore, to consider this type of evidence on a comparative basis. The point is not that certain types of farmers in relatively industrialized countries are potential fascists or communists, but that they have a certain propensity to radicalization under conditions of acute distress. When such radicalization will eventuate and which way it will turn, the analyst of social stratification is not in a position to predict. His knowledge does enable him to estimate the relative chances for such a development, but only in the sense that certain types of farmers are more likely to be affected than others. Obviously, local conditions, historical antecedents, the acuteness of the crisis, and the intensity of the organizational drive on the part of a totalitarian movement will play a role and can be judged only in specific cases.

It may be useful to give another example of a political judgment which is based on knowledge of social stratification. It has often been observed that the absence of a political labor movement in the United States is the result of social mobility. Closer examination of this assertion indicates that it must be amplified in a number of respects. First, social mobility has been coexistent with striking differences in wealth and social status. Second, it has consisted of such different types of mobility as mobility between jobs, geographic mobility and high turnover in small-scale enterprises, as well as of the proverbial "rags to riches" mobility within the same or between different generations. Third, social mobility in America has occurred on top of a substratum of underprivileged ethnic and racial minorities, which have filled and continue to fill the jobs that rank lowest in terms of social and economic desirability.¹⁸ Social mobility in conjunction with this underprivileged substratum has brought about both the relative absence of class-consciousness and class-conscious political action, on the one hand, and the transmutation of class-consciousness (among the minority groups) into race-consciousness and race-conscious political action, on the other.

All of these examples illustrate the kind of proposition which may be derived from a study of the relation between social stratification and political action. Such studies are retrospective in the sense that they are plausible interpretations after the fact. They permit of tentative generalizations, but only in the sense that the recurrence of similar facts of social stratification would make the recurrence of similar political responses highly probable. That is to say, we would expect the leaders of radical political movements in industrialized societies to come in the first instance from the ranks of the middle class, and we would also expect that they would be prompted to join these movements because of their status as members of an ethnic minority or of the intelligentsia

¹⁷ Cf. Henry Ehrmann, "The French Peasant and Communism," *AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW*, Vol. 46, pp. 19-43 (March, 1952).

¹⁸ Though large-scale immigration has ceased since the 1920's, the migration of Negroes to the northern cities, as well as the more or less temporary seasonal immigration of Mexican and Puerto-Rican farm laborers, has played a similar role. A more detailed, though summary discussion of social mobility in the United States is contained in Reinhard Bendix and S. M. Lipset, "Power and the Elites in American Society," to be published.

(or of both). We would similarly expect large-scale farmers to be more frequently conservative, and small-scale independent farmers more frequently liberal or radical in their political orientation. Or again, we would expect a continued absence of political radicalism in American society as long as the labor force continues to be mobile and continues to be subdivided into ethnic or racial groups.

Although these generalizations are of limited scope, they are not negligible on that account. In particular, they go beyond the purely descriptive and historical. They call attention to certain abstract variables of the social structure which may have general significance: the discrepancy between high economic and low social status; the relative vulnerability of the marginal enterpriser to radical appeals in a capitalist society; the effectiveness with which social mobility provides a vent for grievances, especially when it occurs on top of a substratum of underprivileged minorities. A knowledge of these variables of the social structure is relevant to an understanding of the relations between stratification and power in many different historical contexts.

Generalized knowledge of such variables is applicable in retrospective studies as well as in the appraisal of the contemporary relations between stratification and the exercise of power. But since its usefulness is premised on the persistence of the given pattern of social stratification, its scope is limited to the analysis of social statics. However, the many antagonisms which have accompanied industrialization have at times been superseded—not by mass proletarianization, but by a momentary unity of revolutionary action organized by a totalitarian movement. It seems to me that the nature of this nationwide unity of interests among social groups which have traditionally been in conflict with one another, constitutes today one of the basic problems for the political sociologist. To be sure, the unification of interests among conflicting social groups is a temporary one. It is superseded by a coercive totalitarian levelling of all groups under the leadership of a successful movement, which then becomes the supreme arbiter over the three branches of government—formally retained—and over all private associations as well. It is also true that the same hostile divisions among social groups are sure to recur, in the event that the movement fails.¹⁹ But none of this alters the fact that the success or failure of totalitarian movements lies outside the frame of reference of the student of social stratification. This limitation is perhaps the most serious defect in the “social class” interpretation of political movements.²⁰

¹⁹ In postwar Germany, for example, in the field of industrial relations the trade unions and the employers' associations seem to have resumed where they had left off in 1933. Witness the request from the unions to the Military Government authorities to allow the reorganization of the employers, a request which was based presumably on the desire to have somebody with whom to bargain. It was obviously difficult for the German trade unionists to adopt another pattern of collective bargaining and benefit from the temporary absence of employers' organizations. Cf. Clark Kerr, “Collective Bargaining in Postwar Germany,” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 5, pp. 323–342 (April, 1952). In other respects, major changes in the German class structure *have* taken place. Some of these are described in Leopold von Wiese, “Soziale Sicherheit und Sozialer

III. SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND TOTALITARIAN MOVEMENTS

In this section I shall refer to the relation between stratification and politics in the countries of relatively advanced industrialization. For this reason I shall confine myself to the evidence on the rise of fascism, since so far communist movements have been successful only in predominantly agrarian countries. There is a resemblance between the rise of fascism and the rise of communism: both are made possible by the existence of a relatively small, tightly-knit, and well-disciplined organization and both depend for their success on the widespread support of large masses of people who flock to the movement suddenly during a period of acute crisis. The differences are, however, more striking, especially for a student of social stratification. In the countries of advanced industrialization we have a large middle class which initially resists the revolutionary attempts from the Right and the Left, only to join the fascist movement when it is about to attain power. In the predominantly agrarian countries, where the communist movement has been successful so far, no such middle class exists; hence success must necessarily depend upon the support of other social groups, especially the peasants.²¹

Propositions concerning the conquest of power by a totalitarian movement have suffered repeatedly from a failure to distinguish the several elements of a successful totalitarian movement. One important distinction should be made between the description of a movement before its conquest of power and afterwards. A second distinction should emphasize the difference between the nucleus of leaders, their immediate entourage (subleaders), the party members, and the supporting or acquiescent masses. And a third distinction probably should refer to the reasons for the increasing weakness of established institutions rather than to the reasons for the strength of the totalitarian threat. Any analysis of a totalitarian movement should leave no doubt as to which aspect of the problem it is concerned with.

For illustrative purposes, I shall discuss the mass-support of the Nazi movement prior to its conquest of power. To begin with, it is superficially plausible to suggest that fascist movements are of middle-class origin. Since the thesis is generally familiar, I merely add the point that it fits in well with the growing importance of the middle class in industrial society, discussed

Aufstieg als Probleme Unserer Zeit," *Soziale Welt*, Vol. 1, pp. 3-13 (April, 1950).

²⁰ We speak of movements as distinct from parties and interest organizations in order to designate their revolutionary, extra-legal characteristics.

²¹ What a successful communist revolution would be like in a country of advanced industrialization we are as yet unable to say. Although this statement is apparently contradicted by the case of Czechoslovakia, I would suggest that in this instance the population was so united in its opposition to the Germans that it momentarily greeted the Russians as liberators. The problems involved certainly illustrate the decided limitation of a study of political power which would base itself exclusively on an analysis of social stratification. While it is possible that peasant discontent is a major factor which explains communist success in agrarian countries, it is probable that a more or less disguised Russian intervention, rather than the internal social structure of the country, would account for such a development in an industrialized country.

above. According to this reasoning, fascism can be explained as a mass-response to the frustrations suffered by members of the middle class during a period of acute economic distress. The new as well as the old middle class experience a sudden loss of economic security and social status. This sudden loss makes them despair of regaining security and status through the traditional legal, political, and economic means, while the totalitarian movement inspires them with the hope that both may be regained by "direct action."²² Such a theory is certainly plausible in a broad sense; but it has a number of implications which need to be analyzed separately.

The middle-class origin theory refers to the large masses of people who rallied suddenly to the cause of the Nazi Party; but it does not refer to the leaders, the subleaders, or the regular party members—or at any rate it should not refer to them, if it seeks to explain the mass-support of the party rather than the behavior of its leaders and members. Furthermore, it is necessary to bear in mind the suddenness with which the Nazi Party changed from an unimportant splinter-group to that of the major contestant for power among the numerous political parties of Weimar Germany. In the elections of 1928 the Party obtained 810,127 votes and 12 seats in the Reichstag; in the elections of 1930 it secured 6,379,672 votes and 107 seats in the Reichstag. And in the following election, 1932, the Party again more than doubled its votes and seats (13,765,781 votes and 230 seats).²³

How are we to explain the suddenness with which large masses of people became identified with the Nazi Party? Apparently, people of middle-class origin were willing to support an attack on law and order and private property, though ordinarily they are strong supporters of the status quo. A glance at the election statistics during the crucial years reveals why a study of the fascist movement should not be based primarily on an analysis of social stratification. The first major success of the Nazis occurred during the period 1928–1930, when the total votes cast in their favor increased by 5,569,545, i.e., an eightfold increase in two years. During the same two-year period the Communist Party gained 1,325,367 votes. The combined increase in votes for the National Socialist and Communist parties constitutes a radicalization of the electorate by 6,894,912 votes. It occurred at a time when 2,444,990 persons decided to vote who had not voted in the previous election and when an additional 1,758,234 young people became eligible and voted for the first time.²⁴ The only

²² See for example, the theory of fascism as a populist, middle-class movement in D. J. Saposs, "The Role of the Middle Class in Social Development," in *Economic Essays in Honor of Wesley C. Mitchell* (New York, 1935), pp. 393–424. The same thesis is discussed, albeit with psychoanalytic adumbrations, by H. D. Lasswell, "The Psychology of Hitlerism as a Response of the Lower Middle Class to Continuing Insecurity," in his *The Analysis of Political Behavior* (London, 1949), pp. 235–245.

²³ All election statistics are based on Wilhelm Dittman, *Das Politische Deutschland vor Hitler* (Zurich, 1945).

²⁴ Arthur Dix estimates the number of newly eligible voters in 1930 as approximately 2.5 million, though he does not indicate his source. He also remarks that 1.5 million of the older voters died during 1928–1930, and that the loss of conservative votes may be attributed to this fact in part. My own figure of 1,758,234 new voters is derived by sub-

other parties which together gained over 1 million votes in 1930 as compared with 1928 were the small middle-class parties and the Catholic Center Party. All other parties lost votes, ranging from a loss of 270,000 by the Democratic Party to a loss of almost 2 million by the German Nationalist Party. The most plausible interpretation of this evidence is to suggest that the increase in Nazi votes resulted from a radicalization of members in the nationalist parties of the Right and from the sudden participation of about 4,200,000 nonvoters and young people.²⁵ No evidence on the social composition of previous nonvoters and of the newly eligible young people is available, but there is no reason to believe that they were all, or even predominantly, members of the middle class.²⁶ Political apathy occurs in all strata of a population, but it occurs less frequently among members of the middle class than among workers. It seems safest simply to offer the hypothesis that it was the radicalization of people who had not participated actively in party politics and who had been too young to vote which gave a major impetus to the rise of fascism.²⁷

The subsequent elections of 1932 *do* indicate the growing support of the Nazi Party among middle-class voters. The small middle-class parties polled only 1,126,991 votes in 1932, a drop of over 3,740,000 in two years. This, together with a further loss of the nationalist parties of 1.5 million votes and the addition of another 2 million previous nonvoters and newly eligible voters, gave the National-Socialists a gain of over 7,300,000 votes. And although in the second election of 1932 (November) the nonvoters increased again, it is interesting that in March, 1933, over 3.5 million previous nonvoters decided to participate, once more.

The importance of the newly eligible voters and of the politically apathetic

tracting the total number of eligible voters in 1928 from the corresponding figure for 1930. It is clear, however, that this is a minimal figure which would be increased if the number of voters who had died during this period could be deducted as Dix suggests. See Arthur Dix, *Die Deutschen Reichstagswahlen, 1870-1930, und die Wandlungen der Volksgliederung* (Tübingen, 1930), pp. 36.

²⁵ Presumably, the gain of the small middle-class parties and the Catholic Center accrued from both the Right and the Left, from those nationalists who feared the radicalism of the Nazis and the Communists and those liberals and socialists who wanted to bolster the middle-of-the-road parties during this crisis. The gain of the Communists probably resulted more from the increase of young voters than from a radicalization of liberals or socialists.

²⁶ That the new voters in 1930 were predominantly of middle-class origin has been suggested frequently, though no evidence is given to support this contention. See, for example, the article by Theodor Geiger, "Panik im Mittelstand," *Die Arbeit*, Vol. 7, esp. p. 648 (Oct., 1930). Evidence is available, however, which suggests that political participation increases with education and income. See Herbert Tingsten, *Political Behavior* (London, 1937), pp. 120-156, where studies from several countries are reviewed. Tingsten's conclusion is that "the analysis of the electoral participation of the different social classes has proved that as a rule the political interest grows with rising social standard" (*ibid.*, p. 230).

²⁷ It should be added that the German public was thoroughly political, since the addition of 4.2 million new voters increased the percentage of voters from 75.6 (in 1928) to 82 (in 1930). From 1930-1933 participation in the elections increased further from 82 to 88.7 per cent.

casts doubt on the conception of fascism as a middle-class movement. This is not to deny that the economic insecurity of middle-class groups was important for the conquest of power as a secondary response.²⁸ It is to assert rather that the radicalization of the electorate originated among the previous nonparticipants in party politics, who probably came from various social groups, and that the significant support of the totalitarian movement by members of the middle class and of other social groups occurred subsequently in the hope of relief from economic distress and in the desire to gain from backing the victorious movement.²⁹ Although the social composition of party members is not an index of the social composition of the electorate, it is significant that fascist parties drew their members from all strata of the population. In contrast to the socialist and communist parties, about 90 per cent of whose members were manual workers, the fascist parties were quite heterogeneous.

TABLE I
PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF NAZI AND FASCIST PARTY MEMBERS IN DIFFERENT
OCCUPATIONS, 1933 (GERMANY) AND 1921 (ITALY)³⁰

Nazi Party Members, 1933 (Germany)		Fascist Party Members, 1921 (Italy)	
Manual Workers	31.5	Small Traders and Artisans	9.8
White Collar	21.1	Industrialists	3.0
Self Employed	17.6	State Servants (including soldiers and civil servants)	5.1
Peasants	12.6	Salaried Employees	10.6
Officials	6.7	Teachers	1.2
Others	10.5	Students	14.0
		Merchant Marine	1.0
		Industrial Workers	16.5
		Agricultural Workers	26.0
		Landowners (including small proprietors and contractors)	12.8

²⁸ It is secondary in the sense that the mobilization of the apathetic and the young as voters and as party-activists comes first. For a detailed case study of one area, cf. Heberle, *op. cit.* (above n. 16), Ch. 3. Cf. also Charles P. Loomis and J. Allen Beagle, "The Spread of German Nazism in Rural Areas," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 11, pp. 724-734 (Dec., 1946). A striking literary portrayal of the rural development is contained in the novel by Hans Fallada, *Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben*.

²⁹ Heberle, pp. 84-89. The influx of nonparticipants in 1928-1930 coincided with the radicalization of the nationalists, many of whom were probably members of the middle class. But the big shift of votes away from the parties of the Right and Center occurred in 1932 rather than in 1930. If we add all the lost and gained votes for the 1930 and 1932 elections, we find that all the parties between the Nazis and the Communists lost 2,691,688 votes in 1930, but 6,132,692 votes in 1932. Yet the 1930 election had 4,203,224 new voters, while the 1932 election had 1,925,883 new voters. It is apparent that the major increase of Nazi votes came from the new voters in 1930, while the major change in the votes of people in the middle class (and other social groups) occurred in 1932.

³⁰ The figures for Germany are taken from H. H. Gerth, "The Nazi Party," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 45, p. 527 (Jan., 1940). The figures for Italy are taken from Her-

If the above figures are compared with those for the population as a whole, they show, it is true, a disproportionate number of party members from middle-class groups. But the point to note is that the active members of these radical movements came from many sections of the population, whose interests frequently conflicted under ordinary circumstances, not that there were many persons of middle-class background among them.

Fascism arose in Germany when a severe social and economic crisis blurred or obliterated the conflicting interests between different social groups coincident with, and partly because of, the sudden entry into political life of previous non-participants. These nonparticipants were stimulated by, and helped to spread, an all-or-nothing demand for the solution of the crisis. I would suggest that a temporary unification of interests between previously antagonistic groups occurred in many instances and that this probably added an impetus to the sudden participation of the politically apathetic. There was the temporary unity of interests among different social groups in small towns in their common antagonism against the economic power of the metropolis.³¹ There was the unity of the small farmers and of the petty bourgeoisie in the semi-rural towns, when depression and indebtedness drove them to the brink of economic disaster. There was the so-called intellectual proletariat, whose lack of regular employment led them to cooperation with other marginal groups in the task of organizing a fascist movement.³²

Neither the temporary unity between previously antagonistic groups nor the sudden entry into political life of a large number of nonvoters and young people can lead to a conquest of power without the existence of a well-organized political machine.³³ The size of the organization is not nearly so important as the

man Finer, *Mussolini's Italy* (London, 1935), p. 143. Earlier data on the social composition of the German Social-Democratic Party are contained in Robert Michels, "Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie," *Archiv fuer Sozialwissenschaft*, Vol. 23, esp. p. 509 (1906). Figures for the social composition of the German Communist Party are quoted in Ossip Flechtheim, *Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik* (Offenbach, 1948), p. 236.

³¹ An example of such unity has been discussed with reference to the American scene in S. M. Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, "Social Status and Social Structure," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 2, pp. 230-233 (Sept., 1951).

³² See the recent study by Daniel Lerner, *The Nazi Elite* (Stanford, 1951), in which the marginality of the Nazi leaders is analyzed in detail. Of course, the leaders of other mass movements have also been marginal, though perhaps in a different sense of the word. A comparative study of the leaders of mass movements would be very interesting. A first step in this direction is provided in Robert Michels, "Historisch-Kritische Untersuchungen zum politischen Verhalten der Intellektuellen," *Schmoller's Jahrbuch*, Vol. 57, pp. 29-56 (Dec., 1933). Michels concludes his study with the following analysis: "Education is power. Yet only a modicum of intellectual qualities belong to the social dynamics of a political exercise of power. Other factors like energy, faith in oneself, knowledge of men have a far greater impact on the conquest of power and on its retention for a period of time. The influence of the intelligentsia on the masses remains, therefore, on the surface. Only if this influence is buttressed by objective conditions is it likely to foster political movements which produce profound changes in the social structure" (*ibid.*, p. 56—my translation).

³³ The importance of these three factors for the rise of fascism was pointed out 21

discipline it can impose on its members. This discipline is crucial in a number of ways. It effectively severs the member from all personal and social ties, or successfully identifies these with the movement; and it continually tests his loyalty in the face of social ostracism by new demands for service and sacrifice. By these methods it creates a new community within the larger society, so that the "movement" is of necessity a center of allegiance which conflicts with all previous affiliations of the individual, including his identification with a social class, as well as with his adherence to generally accepted political and legal procedures.³⁴ It was the presence of such a paramilitary organization in the Germany of 1929-1930 which created a totalitarian mass-movement out of the sudden participation of newly eligible voters and previous nonvoters.³⁵

But the impetus to radicalization among the German masses arose in the first instance among those who were just entering political life. It is probably characteristic of many nonvoters to regard political participation as "useless," to believe that politics will only benefit the crooks anyway, and to profess a lack of concern with public affairs. Such people are likely to vote only under extreme provocation, and they are likely to support a party which proposes to clean the Augean stables and to establish an entirely new order. It is, therefore, conceivable that under certain conditions the survival of democratic institutions does not depend on a more widespread participation in politics, as is commonly assumed. It may depend rather on a persistent residue of political apathy which enables the nonparticipants to acquiesce in the democratic process and to ignore its many imperfections. This residue is especially important in countries, such as Germany was, where the majority of the voters are firmly committed to one party or another. As Herbert Tingsten has observed:

An exceptionally high voting frequency may indicate an intensification of political controversy which may involve a danger to the democratic system. The enormous election figures in Austria 1923-1930 and in Germany 1930-1933 were symptoms of a political

years ago, though the voluminous literature on this subject has largely ignored the first and second factor. I refer to the article by Carl Mierendorff, "Gesicht und Charakter der National-Sozialistischen Bewegung," *Die Gesellschaft*, pp. 489-504 (1930). The preceding analysis was written before I chanced upon this article, but I want to pay tribute to the insight of this courageous man, who clearly understood the danger long before events proved him to have been correct. Mierendorff helped to prepare the 1944 revolt against Hitler, but was killed in a bombing attack.

³⁴ These are the factors which distinguish, for example, communist from socialist parties: not the social composition of their members, which is largely working-class, nor the origin of their leaders, which is largely bourgeois, in both cases. Cf. the discussion in A. Rossi, *A Communist Party in Action* (New Haven, 1949), pp. 193-233.

³⁵ This transformation of the civilian into a "true believer" has been analyzed with great insight by Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York, 1951). The presence of an effective organization in the Germany of 1929 and the threat which it presented owing to the influx of new voters was already analyzed by Mierendorff, pp. 498-501. Corresponding analyses for Italy are contained in Ignazio Silone, *Der Faschismus* (Zurich, 1934), pp. 75-95; Robert Michels, *Sozialismus und Faschismus in Italien* (Munich, 1925), pp. 189-250, although these and other studies (such as Rossi's *The Rise of Italian Fascism*) still attempt to explain fascism in terms of social stratification.

tension heightened in the extreme, and foreshadowed the fall of the democratic regimes. Another circumstance is of importance. So long as electoral participation is "normal," the parties will in the main direct their energies to conquering the politically indifferent groups, but when practically all the electors are politically engaged, not only will the competition for the indifferent be intensified, but in addition the efforts to win over electors from the opposing camp will become predominant. . . . These points are of importance above all when the electoral masses are comparatively firmly attached to separate parties. In countries where a great number of electors do not feel bound to a certain party but to a great extent make their choice in each election according to their views on the particular election issues, a high degree of electoral participation cannot be judged in the same manner.³⁶

IV. ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF FASCISM

I have examined the mass-support of a fascist movement prior to its conquest of power in order to indicate why I believe that a knowledge of social stratification contributes little to an understanding of the success of such a movement. My objective was also to point up a particular configuration of conditions which must be taken into account in the analysis of totalitarian movements. Though the facts I have cited raise many important questions for further research, they are perhaps sufficient to indicate the weakness of analyses of totalitarianism which ignore them. I shall review three examples of such analyses.

Attempts have been made to account for the rise of totalitarianism by specifying the social composition of totalitarian movements before their conquest of power. The presumption of such studies is that the sociological make-up of totalitarian movements explains their successful conquest of power in the same way as, say, the lack of a working-class following might explain the weakness of the French socialists while the adherence of a large, class-conscious following would explain the strength of the Communists.³⁷ Yet this approach is adequate only so long as the revolutionary situation is not at hand. A totalitarian movement does not conquer a state because of the strength of its regular following. It conquers because some crisis situation adds to that following a significant portion of the electorate as well as of the politically indifferent public, whose previous political allegiance or indifference have been transformed rather suddenly by the cumulative pressure of adverse circumstances.

This transformation takes place under the leadership of social outcasts—many of them unemployed professionals of all sorts—whose general characteristics Marx had already pointed out in his comments on the Society of December 10.³⁸ But it should be remembered that these "bohemian" outcasts of the

³⁶ Tingsten, *op. cit.* (above, n. 26), pp. 225–226.

³⁷ See Henry W. Ehrmann, "The Decline of the Socialist party," and Val R. Lorwin, "The Struggle for Control of the French Trade-Union Movement, 1945–1949," in E. M. Earle (ed.), *Modern France* (Princeton, 1951), pp. 181–218.

³⁸ "On the pretext of founding a benevolent society, the lumpenproletariat of Paris had been organized into secret sections, each section being led by Bonapartist agents, with a Bonapartist general at the head of the whole. Alongside decayed roués with doubtful means of subsistence and of doubtful origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jail-birds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, lazzaroni, pickpockets, tricksters, gam-

bourgeoisie have accompanied the whole development of capitalist society since the beginning of the nineteenth century. They have responded to their outcast role in a variety of ways: from the original Bohemia of Paris in the 1830's to the Paris colony of American artists in the 1920's, from the individual terrorism of the social revolutionaries in Russia to the intellectual glorification of death and violence of the "armed intellectuals" (Heiden) in Germany after World War I.³⁹ An analysis of social stratification can merely reveal that all of them are outcasts. It cannot account for the historically significant differences between them.⁴⁰

I question also whether much light is shed on the conquest of power by a totalitarian movement when a study of its social composition is combined with a psychological analysis.⁴¹ Such an analysis runs along familiar lines. Totalitarian movements have had a special appeal to the lower middle class. Members of this class are typically authoritarian. They exaggerate their idealization of their own and their depreciation of alien groups; they have a punitive attitude towards outsiders. They are beset by a concealed hostility which is expressed in rigid adherence to conventional morals, in a basic distrust of others, in the anticipation of aggression from all quarters, and in a catastrophic conception of human life.⁴² I accept the soundness of this analysis. But the question here is whether the prevalence of authoritarian character traits can be cited as a major cause for the success of a totalitarian movement. I do not believe it can. First, the fallacy of retrospective determinism applies here also: we study a group whose support swept a totalitarian movement into power, we find that it is authoritarian, and we infer that the second fact caused the first (among many other factors, to be sure). But ethnocentric people were always authoritarian, long before they became supporters of a movement; indeed, some scholars have attempted to trace the historical development of this character-structure

blers, procurers, brothel-keepers, porters, literati, organ-grinders, rag-pickers, knife-grinders, tinkers, beggars, in short the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass thrown hither and thither, which the French term *La Boheme*" (Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, p. 65).

³⁹ See Robert Michels, "Zur Soziologie der Boheme und ihrer Zusammenhaenge mit dem geistigen Proletariat," *Jahrbuecher fuer Nationaloekonomie und Statistik*, Vol. 136, pp. 801-816 (June, 1932).

⁴⁰ A brilliant discussion of two of these groups is contained in Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951), pp. 92-120, with reference to the Anti-Dreyfusards, and pp. 320-326, with reference to the nihilist and nationalist German intellectuals of the post-World War I generation.

⁴¹ This is not to deny the great value of the excellent study by T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Nevitt Sanford, and D. Levinson, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York, 1950), but I question the assertion that people of authoritarian character are "potential fascists" (p. 1).

⁴² Dr. Else Brunswik has coined the phrase "intolerance of ambiguity," which indeed characterizes these people as few other single phrases do. For a brief delineation of this character structure, see Else Frenkel-Brunswik, "A Study of Prejudice in Children," *Human Relations*, Vol. 1, pp. 295-306 (1948), and A. H. Maslow, "The Authoritarian Character Structure," *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 18, pp. 401-411 (1943).

back to the time of the Reformation, in the case of Germany.⁴³ Second, a good case can be made for the contention that the authoritarian family was an important factor in resisting the totalitarian movement, because all families, including those of the authoritarian type, are threatened by the effort of such movements to set children against parents. Third, the psychological analysis seems to me to explain too much. The issue is not whether people of an authoritarian bent will support a totalitarian regime more wholeheartedly than others, once it is in power.⁴⁴ The question is rather whether, under trying circumstances, people of such character will jump on the band wagon, as well as despair, earlier than people of a more permissive disposition. I believe that we lack the necessary comparative evidence to answer this question properly.⁴⁵

It seems probable to me that the answer lies not in psychological analysis so much as in the study of cumulative political experience. Let me state this point by way of an analogy. Men of various personality types are sorely tried under great adversities. They are likely to meet them with patience and endurance only when their personal experience provides them with a backlog of success in the use of certain established methods, for such a backlog enables them to absorb the shock of repeated failure under trying conditions. It seems to me that such a backlog of success in the use of democratic institutions has been lacking wherever totalitarian movements have been successful. The study of social stratification, whether or not it is adumbrated by psychological analysis, is not the proper approach to an understanding of the role of cumulative political experience.

⁴³ See Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York, 1941) for the most comprehensive attempt in this respect.

⁴⁴ Though even this may be doubtful, since authoritarianism can take many forms. See, for example, the telling study of Cecil Jane, *Liberty and Despotism in Spanish America* (Oxford, 1929).

⁴⁵ A more detailed discussion of this psychological analysis is contained in the authors' "Compliant Behavior and Individual Personality," to be published in the *American Journal of Sociology*.