

SUBJECT: POLITICAL SCIENCE I

COURSE: BA LLB SEMESTER I

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MODULE: MODULE V, MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

POSITIVE LIBERALISM

By the close of 19th century, positive liberalism had flourished to the set back to the classical notion. Unrestricted freedom to the capitalism widened the gap between haves and haves-not. The evils brought by the capitalism such as labour, insecurity, exploitation etc paved the way for positive liberalism.

Jeremy Bentham and J.S. Mill realised the need of reconciliation between individual liberty and social liberty. They supported democracy and also accepted the increasing functions of the state in the broader interests and welfare of the society. J.S Mill had certain contracts like slavery, marriage, monopoly, working hours, etc. Modern states became welfare states. They provided not only law and order but a wide range of social services also. The primary purpose of the welfare state is to guide the citizens security and to help them if they lose their source of income. The state plays a positive role in removing large inequalities. It supported the direct state interference in three spheres of social life. They are ignorance, pauperism and use of intoxicants. The State should not merely confine to its activity to regulatory functions but to removal the external hindrances in the performance of good acts. G.D.H Cole says, "The welfare state is a society in which an assured minimum standard of living and opportunity become a possession of every citizen."

The State should have three main objects:

- (i) the State should ensure the well-being of the individuals
- (ii) It should bring about the well-being of the state in their associated capacity
- (iii) It should promote the civilisation of making.

FEATURES

- (i) Positive Liberalism believes that the rights are not natural and sacrosanct.
- (ii) It does not believe the notion that the state is a necessary evil
- (iii) It believes that state is a moral institution to promote the intellectual and moral faculties of the individual.
- (iv) It believes in humanism and secularism as the principal goals and objectives to promote harmony and peace.
- (v) It advocates regulation and control of economic life of the society to pave way for possible reforms.
- (vi) It also pleads for constitutional democratic and parliamentary system

(vii) It advocates some degree of public control in industrial matters.

(viii) It advocates the need of collective responsibility in education, children, etc.

MODERN CONCEPT OF LIBERALISM

After the second World War, a few more changes have taken place in the concept of Liberalism. It is now popularly known as the contemporary liberalism. It was advocated by Schumpeter, Robert Dahl, John Rawls, W. Kohen, etc. The classical liberalism revolved around the protection and preservation of the individual's right to life, liberty, property. It advocated the state interference for the welfare of the broad masses of mankind. These merged more or less completely into one during the 1920s and 1930s to form modern liberalism. Modern liberalism had mainly emphasised that the world should be saved from totalitarianism and promote justice, fairness and equality. They believe that the state is a federation of groups and a union of guilds. Modern liberalism lays greatest faith in the value of free expression of individual personality. It does not comprise as far as liberty and rational choice of human beings is concerned. Modern liberalism has assumed two forms in the narrow and general sense. In the narrow sense, it has come to mean a positive midway between conservatism and socialism and one that is favourable and against. In the general sense, it has come to be equated with democracy as opposed to totalitarianism. It implies institutions of government like the suffrage, representative, assemblies, legislature, etc. it is outcome of the drive of liberal and socialist ancestors for a world free of tyranny and exploitation.

Robert Dahl, treats democracy as a mechanism in maintaining equilibrium to secure the principle of distributive justice.

- (1) man is an absolute proprietor of his own capabilities. He has freed to use his inner faculties and owes nothing to the society.
- (2) The society is not marked by a kind relation of domination, dominated and subordinated.
- (3) The political society is a rational device as well as a mechanism in the form of an institution for securing the protection of property.

The theory of liberalism as is evident has undergone many changes from time to time. Prof. Andrew Hacker classified it into four kinds (i) Free market Liberalism (ii) Reformist Liberalism (iii) Utopian Liberalism (iv) Democratic Liberalism.

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