CALHOUN AND THE CONCEPT OF THE "REACTIONARY ENLIGHTENMENT": AN EXAMINATION OF THE DISCUSSION ON GOVERNMENT

VOLUME II

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Chapter Six: Calhoun's Propositions of Human Nature in the Disquisition and the Natural Origin of Government and Society

In the previous two chapters we have begun to examine the extent to which Calhoun's theoretical assumptions coincided with the general tenor of Enlightenment thought. We have noted Calhoun's intention to establish his political theory on empirical foundations, thus identifying it with a critical feature of the Enlightenment style, though at the same time we have said that within the context of Southern proslavery argumentation, Calhoun's empirical pretensions are neither unusual nor out of place given the ideological pattern of the sectional conflict. It has been tentatively suggested that the empirical method was forced onto the proslavery South as a result of the virtual monopoly which the anti-slavery forces held on moral rhetoric; that is, the liberal ethos which dominated American thought and values provided the antislavery crusaders with a ready-made moral framework within which they could attack the institution. Moreover, so deep-seated was the liberal ideology - even within the South itself - that any attempt to fabricate an alternative moral system with which to justify slavery was unlikely to appeal even to Southerners, much less to its committed Northern opponents. The most aggressive defenders of slavery, therefore fell back on the empirical method as a means of evolving political ideas which had the weight of philosophical realism behind them. Their appeal was not to axiomatic, "self-evident" truths, but to the cold, hard facts of observed experience.

Viewed in this light, Calhoun's empirical style coincides
precisely with the philosophical techniques of proslavery thought and in this respect it should not be considered remarkable. What is remarkable, rather, is that the empirical way of thinking which formerly gave so great a boost to the development of enlightened values about man and his place in the scheme of things, should prove so readily adaptable to the defence of diametrically opposite values. There is a paradox involved here, but it is not the most obvious one; it is not that the proslavery should have couched its glorification of slavery in empirical terms, but that the original European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century should have derived its ethical precepts from a supposedly value-free theory of knowledge. Strictly speaking, those defenders of slavery - like Calhoun and Fitzhugh - who appealed to things as they are, were on firmer philosophical grounds, or at least demonstrated a greater sense of theoretical consistency, than the British and French social philosophers of the Enlightenment. Montesquieu, for example, next to Rousseau the most distinguished of Enlightenment political thinkers, attempted an empirical study of government and society, but could never quite liberate himself from his intuitively-held moral preconceptions. Even Locke, considered the empiricist par excellence, when it came to the theory of political practice, relied on knowledge which was self-evident, not empirical. This inconsistency, which we alluded to earlier in passing, so far from detracting from the potency of the Enlightenment's perspective of social theory, remains a distinctive feature of it; its significance, therefore, does not depend so much on its theoretical rigour as on its appeal as moral rhetoric.
Yet moral rhetoric is precisely the thing that the proslavery school lacks most. If there is one immediately identifiable feature of the Enlightenment style and its liberal ethos, it is the emphasis on the rights and dignity of man as a citizen—rights, moreover, which are self-evident, not scientifically demonstrable. Proslavery assumptions collide head-on with this cardinal tenet of liberalism: if slavery is morally justifiable in principle, it must be so outside liberal frames of reference because the liberal framework upheld a category of human rights which each person possessed by virtue of his individuality, and which were inalienable. If the argument that some people are, or ought to be, slaves is used, it must be justified in terms other than liberal ones. The problem that Calhoun and the proslavery school faced was that the liberal ideology was so deeply entrenched in their own minds that any attempt to break its hold called for almost superhuman qualities. Any moral argument that they marshalled to defend slavery had to accomplish the double task of smashing through their own liberal preconceptions, and then overcoming those of their opponents; in practice this meant that there was little hope of them evolving a moral argument sufficiently strong to achieve both aspects. Fitzhugh, who nearly succeeded in the one, by the same token placed himself beyond the pale of the other: the more completely he liberated himself from the tenets of liberal discourse, the less chance he had of being understood, or even heard, by his northern opponents. Most Southerners, lacking the categorical lucidity of Fitzhugh, turned their attention to undermining the basis of liberal ideology; if they could not evolve a decent moral argument within the
theoretical limits of liberalism, and if at the same time they could not transcend its domination of their thought-patterns, subversion was the only alternative open to them, and this was most conveniently accomplished through its epistemological assumptions. If one attacks, or even questions, the self-evidence of liberal assumptions, one is immediately absolved from engaging in argument the more concrete and appealing elements of its creed. Thus, for example, an attack on the existence of a presocial state of nature, of no great intrinsic value in itself, has crucial implications for the logic of Natural Rights theory. Abolish the state of nature and there remains no logical grounds for believing that the basis of society is contractual, nor that it implies the mutuality of rights and obligations binding on both individuals and governments. By a careful pricking of certain strategic points in the liberal infrastructure, the proslavery writers hoped to undermine the moral certainty of antislavery rhetoric. But such theoretical subversion could only be truly effective if they could manage to provide an alternative mode of viewing politics — of constructing political and constitutional formulae from known facts rather than from a priori precepts. Fitzhugh's repeated emphasis of this point testifies to the importance of the empirical method in the proslavery strategy. 4

If Calhoun's empiricism coincides with the style of proslavery argumentation, his religious ideas stand out as being quite incongruent with those of the mainstream defenders of slavery. Calhoun's concept of God as a passive Providence whose existence is manifested primarily through the regularities of Nature, is reminiscent more of the ideas of Voltaire and
the Enlightenment than it is of the Evangelical South. Not even the "Hobbesian lucidity"\(^5\) of Fitzhugh's mind extended to an abandonment of the literal interpretation of Scripture; indeed, Fitzhugh was able to extend the argument for slavery to whites as well as to blacks from a literal reading of Genesis, which he maintained, "expressly authorised" the practice.\(^6\) Calhoun's religious inclinations, however, were directed more towards Unitarianism which suited the analytic cast of his mind far more than the fervent "enthusiasm" of fundamentalist-evangelicalism. Consequently, Calhoun emphasises those aspects of religion which could be described as "natural" and which did not conflict with the use of man's reason. The existence of God was an unchallengeable assumption which Calhoun derived from man's recognition of the harmony of Nature, what in Christian theology was called the argument from Design. But by the same token, if it was man's reason that led him to perceive the intricate harmony of the universe, it followed that God's Providence was knowable to man primarily through the rational faculty. The authority of the Bible, therefore, was never as comprehensive or all-embracing for Calhoun as it was for Southern Evangelicals, including Fitzhugh. The most important consequence of this for the style of Calhoun's discourse is that he abandons a full-blooded biblical defence of slavery, in favour of an abstract treatise on government which includes God only as a first cause, and as a means of casting the veneer of legitimacy over his empirically-derived assumptions.

In both the area of philosophical method and religious thought, therefore, Calhoun displays tendencies which are
normally associated with the style of the Enlightenment, though as we have said, the empiricism which characterised his methodological approach was shared by other proslavery ideologists. It appears, then, that in these two areas at least, Calhoun's intellectual apparatus was shaped by assumptions which originally derived from the Enlightenment style. Yet if the notion of the "Reactionary Enlightenment" is to be a useful concept in explaining Calhoun's political theory, the Enlightenment features of it ought not to be stressed at the expense of the reactionary ones. In this chapter, therefore, we shall be examining Calhoun's ideas concerning human nature with a view to demonstrating that they contain premises which are implicitly inimical to the value-system of the Enlightenment. Moreover, taking account specifically of the theoretical postulates contained in the Disquisition, we shall suggest that the proslavery connotations which have been imputed to the theory are, in fact, more pervasive than have generally been thought. This might sound like another paradox, for few scholars will know the Disquisition as anything other than a proslavery text, despite Calhoun's omission of any mention of either race or slavery. The reason for this, which we touched on briefly in chapter one, is that scholarly opinion has tended to approach the Disquisition in the full knowledge that in his political career Calhoun stood forth as the slaveholder's champion; from this realisation, it has been only a short step to claiming that the Disquisition itself is simply another string to Calhoun's proslavery bow. In this chapter, I shall not seek to disagree with that conclusion, only to show precisely how Calhoun's fundamental assumptions and prem-
ises can be construed as a defence of slavery and as an attempt to enshrine the principle of inequality as the basis of political organisation. In order to demonstrate this claim it is necessary to examine closely Calhoun's views of human nature which are presented at the beginning of the *Disquisition* as two interconnected propositions. Although Calhoun evidently felt that both premises were intrinsic to his explanation of the origin of government and society, I shall argue that only one of them is really essential. I shall further argue that the superfluous one was added in order to provide a coherent rationalisation of political obligation which does not rely on Natural Rights because the existence of Natural Rights would be difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with slavery.

If the argument of this chapter is a valid one, it provides the crucial connection which links Calhoun's reactionary premises with his Enlightened ones, and thus gives the concept of the "Reactionary Enlightenment" some vitality as an explanation of his political ideas. I do not mean to suggest, however, that Calhoun's theory of human nature (if it can be called a theory) is wholly reactionary and bears no resemblance to Enlightenment concepts; on the contrary, in his attempt to be scientific, Calhoun brings to the discussion of human nature a sense of systematisation which is entirely consistent with the Enlightenment spirit. What is important to grasp is that Calhoun is using the same method as the philosophers, but with the intention of defending different values. Peter Gay has made the point that the political theory of the Enlightenment can at best be considered pseudo-scientific in
the sense that it enlisted the techniques of science in the cause of human freedom, thereby converting it from a scientific enterprise into an ideological one. In other words, the distinctiveness of the Enlightenment's scientific methodology was equalled by its attachment to the values of liberty and equality which, strictly speaking, it ought not to have had. In the Disquisition, we find no absolute commitment to the political ideals of liberty and equality, and although Calhoun has a considerable respect for the former, the idea of a "levelling" type of equality was totally abhorrent to him; indeed, in his theory of human nature we find not only a frank acknowledgement of the inequality of condition which existed naturally between individuals, but also the elevation of that observation into an imperative of social dynamics. Because inequalities exist — in wealth, in intelligence, in application and so on (the differential characteristics may be listed endlessly) — Calhoun assumes that they are intentionally built into man's nature by a benign deity. The real secret of constructing political institutions is to faithfully reproduce the orderly differentiations of Nature, and not force them to conform to a priori blueprints. Not even individual liberty, the most treasured of Calhoun's political values, was considered an absolute, inviolable right: in February 1847, he told the Senate:

It is proposed, from a vague, indefinite, erroneous and most dangerous conception of private individual liberty, to override this great common liberty which the people have of framing their own constitution! Sir, the right of framing self-government on the part of individuals is not near so easily to be established by any course of reasoning,
as the right of a community or a
state to self-government. And yet,
Sir, there are men of such delicate
feelings on the subject of liberty —
men who cannot possibly bear what
they call slavery in one section of
the country... — that they are ready
to strike down the higher right of
a community to govern themselves,
in order to maintain the absolute
right of individuals, in every
possible condition to govern them-
selves! 8

Similarly, in the Disquisition, Calhoun elaborates a relativistic conception of liberty: individuals should be permitted to enjoy that amount of liberty which is consistent with the security and good order of the state, for "to extend liberty beyond the limits assigned would be to weaken the government and to render it incompetent to fulfill its primary end—the protection of society against dangers, internal and external." 9

The avoidance of anarchy was the one absolute political value which Calhoun adhered to above all others — even to the extent of curtailing private liberty. Moreover, it was the government which was entrusted with the task of apportioning the appropriate amount of liberty, a procedure which no thoroughgoing liberal of the seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth century would have acquiesced readily in. In his political values, then, Calhoun reminds us more of an absolutist like Thomas Hobbes — especially in his fear of anarchy — than he does of even the moderate libertarians of the Enlightenment.

The comparison of Calhoun with Hobbes is not as pretentious as it may seem at first; indeed, it is a fruitful one and we shall return to it later in the chapter, but what I want to stress at this point is that however much the form of Calhoun's
ideas of human nature resembles the style of the Enlightenment, it is important to grasp fully the values they are intended to portray. Calhoun, as we shall see, is quite systematic in reducing man's political nature to two essential propositions, and such systematisation typifies the Enlightenment approach, but this does not necessarily mean that his theory of human nature, and the political theory he derives from it, is enlightened. Indeed, the thrust of the argument in this chapter is precisely that Calhoun adopts a rigorously systematic and scientific procedure, only to defend values which are un-enlightened and reactionary. Curiously, when we come to compare Calhoun with the Enlightenment in this respect, we find that he makes exactly the same mistake it does, only in reverse; where the Enlightenment attempts to enlist a supposedly neutral methodology in order to support values which are predominantly liberal, Calhoun uses it to defend reactionary ones.

"'Tis evident", wrote David Hume in the introduction to his Treatise of Human Nature in 1739, "that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another." Even mathematics, natural science and religion "are in some measure dependent on the science of MAN"; how much more so, therefore, was the science of government "whose connexion with human nature is more close and intimate"? Hume's emphasis on the centrality of human nature in understanding political motivation may seem a commonplace assertion to twentieth-century ways of

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thinking, but it is well to bear in mind that as a science the study of human nature is a comparatively recent development, and dates from the period of the Enlightenment. This is not to say, of course, that the importance of human nature was not recognised by political theorists and philosophers of earlier times; but what it does mean (and this is Hume's point too) is that human nature ought to be studied rigorously and systematically, using the "experimental method of reasoning". The whole thrust of Hume's Treatise was to establish that "the only solid foundation we can give to this science [of man] must be laid on experience and observation." Abstract postulations about the "essence" of man such as we find in Plato's division of the human soul into the three separate parts of reason, spirit and the appetites, were too haphazard and ethereal to warrant the title "scientific". Hume proposed to place the study of human nature on a truly sound scientific basis by making "careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations." In short, Hume was attempting to apply the inductive method of natural science to the area of moral philosophy.

Of course, Hume brought with him from the scientific world-view certain assumptions which were to affect the way in which human nature was studied. The most important of these was the belief that there existed a principle, or set of principles, which explained human behaviour and which were, moreover, universally applicable. The mechanistic outlook of Newtonian physics assumed that there was a necessary connexion in the relation of cause and effect (which, ironically, Hume
undertook to refute; nothing could be more natural, therefore, than that members of the same species should display similar, if not identical responses in given situations. Hume, again ironically, wrote in a well-known passage, that it was "universally acknowledged that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men, in all nations and ages, and that human nature remains still the same, in its principles and operations. The same motives always produce the same actions." Indeed, "Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature." 

The uniformity or universality of human nature which Hume adopted both as an historical as well as a philosophical position, was a popular assumption of the Enlightenment writers. Indeed, there are strong traces of the idea that ultimately all men were motivated by the same element in their nature in the writings of Thomas Hobbes; "... for the similitude of the thoughts and passions of one man," he wrote in the Leviathan, "to the thoughts and passions of another, whosoever looketh into himself, and considereth what he doth, when he doth think, opine, reason, hope, fear etc, and upon what grounds; he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and passions of all other men on like occasions...." In America, Thomas Jefferson restated the Humean position that "human nature is the same on every side of the Atlantic, and will be alike influenced by the same causes." The view was widespread, then, that human nature operated according to constant principles, which were discoverable by careful observ-
The problem was that people who assumed that human nature was an unalterable and constant principle, also assumed that they knew what that principle was, and here differences of opinion arose. The Enlightenment itself contained an inner tension between optimistic and pessimistic views of human nature which are often difficult to unravel. Even Helvetius and Rousseau, two extreme environmentalists, began from diametrically opposite premises about the essence of man's nature: Rousseau's idea that man was a "noble savage" who had been corrupted by the injustice of existing social arrangements, shocked many contemporaries who were more deeply imbued with a sense of original sin. If Helvetius seems, at times, to believe in the limitless possibilities of education, at other times his pessimism leads him to see man as no better than wild beasts.

American representatives of the Enlightenment also reflected this divergency of opinion. Some, like the conservative John Adams and Alexander Hamilton, were sceptical of man's capacity for altruistic feeling, sceptical even of his capacity to control his passions. In 1813, long after the Revolution, Adams wrote:

Inequality of Mind and Body are so established by God Almighty in his Constitution of Human Nature that no art or policy can ever plain them down to a level.... Human reason and human conscience though I believe there are such things, are not a match for human passions, human Imaginations, and human Enthusiasm

Hamilton was even more forthright in his judgement: "Take mankind in general", he wrote, "they are vicious.... One great
error is that we suppose mankind more honest than they are. Men will pursue their interest. It is as easy to change human nature as to oppose the strong current of selfish passions." Against these dogmatically pessimistic views of man, the observations of Jefferson and Madison seem positively optimistic. Jefferson's frantically curious mind led him to make extensive observations of man and his environment which continued throughout his life; his view of man was therefore more sophisticated and complex than the single-proposition explanations offered by Adams and Hamilton. He believed that man comprised a bundle of impulses and traits, some of which, like intelligence, were innate, but which were subsequently influenced by the external factor of environment. Jefferson believed along with the Scottish Common Sense school that all human beings possessed an innate moral sense which God had made "so much a part of our constitution as that no errors of reasoning or of speculation might lead us astray from its observance in practice." Although Jefferson affirmed the plasticity of human nature in giving due weight to environmental as well as innate factors, he nevertheless believed man could be classified into a few, irreducible types. Surprisingly, it was Madison, not Jefferson, who sensed the amazing complexity of the task and who realised, too, how little was actually known about man's nature. Writing in the Federalist (No. 37), he wrote: "The faculties of the mind itself have never yet been distinguished and defined, with satisfactory precision, by all the efforts of the most acute and metaphysical philosophers. Sense, perception, judgement, desire, volition, memory, imagination, are found to be separated by such delicate
shades and minute gradations that their boundaries have eluded the most subtle investigations, and remain a pregnant source of ingenious disquisition and controversy." Madison's uncertainty inhibited him from outlining a systematic theory of human nature, though from the scattered remarks in the Federalist alone, it is clear that his attitude was deeply ambivalent: he could, at one point, speak of "the cardinal and essential virtues" of human nature, and at another of government being "the greatest of all reflections on human nature".

Madison's ambiguous view of human nature reflects accurately a duality which runs through the Enlightenment as a whole. Though there were individual thinkers who believed in the ultimate perfectability of man as a moral being, these were few and far between. Condorcet's celebrated comment at the beginning of the Esquisse, that Nature "has set no limit to the perfection of the human faculties", was essentially atypical. More typical was the view taken by the American Founding Fathers, that though man, as an individual being, could not be trusted to act in any way other than a self-interested one, it was possible through careful and intelligent planning of social institutions to mitigate the worst excesses of his nature. "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition", declared Madison, and this idea was at the heart of American constitutional notions of balance; if man himself could not improve or change his nature, then a knowledge of that nature could at least suggest ways in which man's worst impulses might be restrained. The Founding Fathers, to quote Richard Hofstadter, "did not believe in man, but they did believe in
the power of a good political constitution to control him."\textsuperscript{33}

All this presupposed, however, that a complete knowledge of man's psychology was possible, or even that one existed, and this takes us back to the original point about the Enlightenment's assumption of the principle of uniformity. If the unity and harmony of Nature was assumed, it ought to be possible to determine scientifically what the essence of man was by the patient observation and collection of data. The empirical method, therefore, seemed peculiarly appropriate to the construction of scientific theories of politics. Hobbes had, in fact, attempted to develop a scientific explanation of human actions and motivations which he had presented in such a way as to preclude the possibility of moral inference, but it could not properly be called empirical theory because it relied too heavily on plausible, but unproveable, hypotheses.\textsuperscript{34} Truly empirical theories of politics - like the pleasure-pain principle of the Utilitarians - elevated man's passions above the status of reason, and hence stripped human actions of their intrinsic moral content. Both Hobbesian and utilitarian conceptions of human nature tended to downgrade the element of moral responsibility which men have over their actions, and in this respect both are, to a degree, deterministic. More often than not, however, concepts of human nature have incorporated certain empirical premises with a moral postulate (as in the case of Locke), and these may be said to have enduring validity precisely because they do not ignore one aspect at the expense of the other.

Whichever way human nature is characterised - whether as an empirical postulate or as a moral prescription - a number
of points are clear. In the first place, theories of politics need some conception of human nature if they are to accomplish the task of providing causal explanations of political behaviour, one of the functions of political theory laid down by Andrew Hacker. Unless they are content to be entirely divorced from reality, political theories must be based on plausible accounts of how individual human beings interact with one another, both singly and in groups. Whether human nature is known through scientific observation or through divine revelation, it must be accounted for in some way before a theory can proceed to lay down ethical injunctions. A second point, which flows from the first, is that once a theory of human nature is suggested, it does not necessarily determine the outcome of the political theory, particularly if the latter is openly ethical rather than scientific. In other words, it is rare that a political theory can be deduced solely from its initial concept of human nature, the reason being that accounts of human nature do not always imply the teleology of the political theory as a whole. For the same reason, a particular concept of human nature will rarely lead inexorably to a single, unavoidable conclusion.

I have spent some time explaining the importance of ideas of human nature for political theories, and also of how some movements in the history of ideas have tended to view the nature of man. In the light of these observations, we may now examine Calhoun's ideas of human nature, though we are at once confronted with a problem. Calhoun's reliance - or at least partial reliance - on a concept of innate sociability as the origin of society makes it difficult to disengage his premises of human nature from the remainder of the theory, and even if
we do so, I admit there is the possibility of shaking the foundations of the theory. On the other hand, it is only by taking his postulates of human nature and rearranging them that we are able to expose fully Calhoun's motives for writing the theory in the first place.

In the first paragraph of the Disquisition, Calhoun assumes that the existence of government is firmly embedded in the nature of man: "In order to have a clear and just conception of the nature and object of government, it is indispensable to understand correctly what that constitution or law of our nature is in which government originates, or to express it more fully and accurately—that law without which government would not and with which it must necessarily exist." As if to emphasise the inductive means of discovering this fundamental "law" of political motivation, Calhoun employs a metaphor drawn from the realm of natural science. One immediately important point to grasp about his view of human nature is that it does not pretend to give a complete, all-embracing explanation of human behaviour in the same way that Locke or Hobbes does. That is, Calhoun has no prior psychological or epistemological system (which is comparable to Hobbes' scientific materialism or to Locke's theory of sense-perception) with which to explain all kinds of human actions. Calhoun is concerned specifically with man as a political animal, and consequently his treatment of human nature is limited to this sphere. In this respect, Calhoun has been criticised for reducing political motivation to too few factors, and modern social psychology would tend to reinforce this criticism. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that other texts, often regarded as classics of
political theory, have similarly reduced human nature to the conjunction of one or two fundamental motivating principles; the opening words of Bentham's *Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780) is a case in point: "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure." It would be unfair, therefore, to single out Calhoun for special criticism as a reductionist in the light of the conventions of political theory writing of his time.

Calhoun assumes "as an incontestable fact that man is so constituted as to be a social being. His inclinations and wants, physical and moral, irresistibly impel him to associate with his kind; and he has, accordingly, never been found, in any age or country, in any state other than the social." This first statement, which we may call Calhoun's first proposition of human nature, raises a number of interesting points. In the first place, to what extent is this a statement of innate sociability? On the surface it seems that Calhoun is categorically asserting that man's desire to have companionship with his fellows derives from an instinct which is a part of each individual's nature. But when we consider a striking similarity in Locke's *Second Treatise*, doubts are raised as to Calhoun's exact meaning. Locke, who is not regarded as a proponent of innate sociability, maintained that: "God having made man such a creature, that in his own judgement it was not good for him to be alone, put him under strong obligations of necessity, convenience and inclination to drive him into society, as well as fitted him with understanding and language to continue and enjoy it." Now, from these two statements
there seems little disagreement between the two theorists. Locke's "... strong obligations of necessity, convenience and inclination to drive him into society" seems perfectly compatible with Calhoun's "... irresistibly impel him to associate with his kind." But the essential difference lies in the latter part of the Calhoun quotation: "... and he has, accordingly, never been found in any age or country in any state other than the social." It is Locke's assertion, and Calhoun's denial of the existence of a presocial state of nature which makes the gulf between the two significant in terms of theory.

The empirical side of Locke demanded the original existence of a state of nature in which men lived as disassociated individuals. It was not, as Hobbes had postulated, a state of war in which individuals were in perpetual competition with each other, and "the life of man[was] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short", but it was certainly inconvenient. The lack of a "common superior" (which was available once men had decided to organise themselves into a community) meant that each individual held a power in himself to redress offences against himself and others. In order to make property (which included life and liberty) more secure, men could by means of a contractual device surrender certain of the powers they naturally held in the state of nature and thereby translate themselves into a body politic. The powers they surrendered were collectively put at the disposal of the community as a whole to be exercised by a controlling agency which, in return, would protect their property from encroachment by others. The social state could only be created by the freely-
given consent of each individual; thus men were given the choice of entering society or remaining in the state of nature. Locke makes this choice quite explicit: those who do not consent to enter into society "are left as they were in the liberty of the state of nature." This, then, is the crucial point of difference between Locke and Calhoun: whereas Locke allows man the choice (admittedly, a loaded one) of entering society, Calhoun does not; in Locke man may go into society, in Calhoun he must if he is to survive.

The point has been made by Lockean scholars that although the nuances of Locke's language seem to suggest that man has a free choice of entering society or of remaining in the liberty of the state of nature, in point of fact this hardly constitutes a choice at all, especially in view of Locke's subsequent remarks about tacit consent. To this assertion the only adequate reply is to say that Locke has put himself under a logical obligation to allow men the choice of joining society, even if this amounts to no choice in reality, for he has based the whole of his theory on the moral autonomy of individuals. If men are under compulsion to enter society, what becomes of their natural right to liberty? If individuals are morally autonomous, they must presumably have the freedom to choose not to avail themselves of the protection of society otherwise they are not really free at all. Locke must therefore allow them this choice if he is to be consistent, though he does attempt to influence their decision; but here again, the "strong obligations" he puts them under to join society cannot be moral obligations, only maxims of prudence or instinctive propensities, since moral obligations can only be binding on autonomous individuals who have previously consented to be
bound. Consent, therefore, creates moral obligation and if this notion is consigned to the realm of fiction, I cannot see why the obligation it creates should not similarly be regarded as fictitious. The significance of Calhoun's rejection of a social condition which is based on consent is thus apparent: by making man's consociability a function of innate instinct, rather than voluntary consent, Calhoun immediately achieves one of his main objectives — to dispense with the troublesome concepts of the social contract and natural rights in the formation and purpose of society.

Innate sociability, however, cannot stand alone as an explanation of the necessity for government, only of the origin of society. Indeed, there can be no necessary logical connection between them unless another postulate is introduced. To establish this connection, Calhoun interposes his second proposition of human nature: "... while man is created for the social state and is accordingly formed as to feel what affects others as well as what affects himself, he is, at the same time, so constituted as to feel more intensely what affects directly than what affects him indirectly through others, or, to express it differently, he is so constituted that his direct or individual feelings are stronger than his sympathetic or social feelings." We noted in the chapter on Calhoun's philosophical method how he was at pains to disclaim any idea of imputing moral stricture to man's "individual affections" by deliberately avoiding the word "selfish." He thus presents this facet of man's nature as a morally neutral postulate: man's self-interest is not a matter of choice, but is purely instinctive to his nature; he (man) cannot be held responsible
for something over which he has no control. Of course, this point - whether man actually has a moral choice - is not in the least relevant to the essence of Calhoun's argument: man's "individual affections", whether they are instinctive or voluntarily calculated, would in any case lead to a state of conflict amongst men. There would be a "tendency to a universal state of conflict between individual and individual, accompanied by the connected passions of suspicion, jealousy, anger and revenge—followed by insolence, fraud and cruelty...."51 So, although Calhoun denies that there has ever existed a state of nature, in point of fact he seems to be describing exactly that. Furthermore, the condition Calhoun describes at this point in the Discoursion, looks much more like Hobbes' state of nature than it does Locke's — that is a state of perpetual war. What Calhoun's second proposition of human nature actually amounts to is a statement of "the great law of self-preservation which pervades all that feels from man down to the lowest and most insignificant reptile or insect."52

Calhoun's two propositions of human nature now become clear to us. In the first place, man is an inherently social being who cannot exist without association with his fellows — for the purposes of procreation, mutual protection and personal satisfaction. But even so, his nature is such that he has a higher regard for the things which affect him directly. In other words, Calhoun is saying that man has a capacity for altruism when it does not conflict with his own self-interest; and in the things which concern him directly, he has no alternative but to objectively follow a course of action which his reason tells him is in his own best interest. In this important
sense, Calhoun's ideas link up with those of David Hume. Like Hume, Calhoun elevates man's passions to be the principal motivating force in human nature; reason, when it comes into play at all, is designed to serve the passions by prescribing the most effective course of action by which an individual's desires might be gratified. Calhoun allows for the fact that reason is not an infallible faculty, for there may be occasions when acting on faulty information, reason might prescribe a course of action which does not, in fact, lead to a gratification of the appetites. Such is only to be expected from creatures who possess only limited understanding.

Calhoun's attitude towards human nature is marginally more optimistic than Hobbes' description of it which made no provision for man's altruism except insofar as it was a function of self-interest. Yet, in utilising these propositions, Calhoun is unique in that he draws his ideas from two separate and, in some senses, contradictory intellectual traditions. The concept of innate sociability had originated in Greek political thought; Aristotle, in particular, maintained that society was the natural condition of mankind and government was a natural activity, and no artificial device like a social contract was needed to bring either into being. Aristotle's political ideas remained important through the Middle Ages, where they became blended with the Christian theology of Thomas Aquinas. It was only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the advent of individualist theorists who drew their inspiration from the Reformation and the rise of capitalism, that these ideas were systematically challenged. Social contract theorists like Hobbes and Locke strongly dissented from the notion that man
was inherently social, and looked elsewhere for a rational basis which would explain the necessity of government. Hobbes more than any other theorist, found it in the egoistic nature of man.\textsuperscript{56}

For all Calhoun's ingenuity in attempting to combine the two commonplace doctrines, they still do not sit easily together. We may legitimately inquire as to why Calhoun found it necessary to incorporate into his theory two so essentially opposite dogmas — particularly when one of them (individual self-interest) would have served adequately as the basis of the theory on its own. Clearly, it is possible, with some reconstruction, to eliminate the innate sociability proposition and still be left with a viable theory of government. This enterprise becomes even more compelling when we consider that Calhoun is anxious to establish that self-interest is the critical factor in political motivation, the "proximate" rather than the "remote" cause of government.\textsuperscript{57} So why, then, did Calhoun make man's sociability a function of innate instinct?

Calhoun presents his premises as two separate facets of human nature; they are, by and large, disconnected, the one coming into play only on occasion. But if we were to rearrange these propositions and to hypothesise that man's social behaviour can be seen as a function of his self-interested nature, we can effectively eliminate innate sociability as a fundamental premise. Man's sociability, no longer innate, becomes simply one facet of his self-interest and we are then left with an almost Hobbesian description of the state of nature: each individual is impelled to act in accordance with
his natural instinct for self-preservation. One of his predominant fears is for his future security - he must obtain a source of food and shelter which is sufficient to last his lifetime. He sees about him other individuals with the same instincts, fears and desires. Fear impels him to associate with them so that he might gain ascendancy over them or placate them with alliances, thus preempting the possibility of them attacking him and depriving him of his livelihood. In Hobbes' conception of human nature, man is immeasurably aided in this enterprise by the possession of reason which he employs in devising ingenious means of accomplishing these ends.58

Now, in this scenario we have retained Calhoun's second proposition - man's natural self-interest - and we have subordinated the first so that it becomes a function of it. Man's sociability is now instinctive only insofar as it is a consequence of his self-interest. So, we are left with all the original elements of Calhoun's postulations (in a rearranged order) with the single exception of one - we have no adequate explanation of the origin of society. And here we come to the crux of Calhoun's theory of human nature. Had Calhoun placed his premises in the same juxtaposition as we have done, he too would have had to account for the origin of society on a basis other than inherent sociability. What courses would have been open to him? The obvious one would have been to adopt the logical apparatus of the social contract writers by allowing the existence of a state of nature and acknowledging the legitimacy of the social contract as a philosophical device. But had Calhoun admitted the validity of the social contract, he would have been forced to admit, too, the prior existence of
the state of nature, and hence, most important, the existence of Natural Rights. And if Calhoun had conceded the existence of Natural Rights, he could not coherently have exempted black slaves from those rights unless he had maintained that in some sense they were not fully human. But Calhoun makes no attempt to argue the inherent racial inferiority of blacks (although we know that, like Jefferson, he assumed it) in the same way as the proslavery ethnologists did. Having chosen to take his stand in terms of abstract political theory, Calhoun has only one possible way out, and that is to find an acceptable alternative premise on which to base his explanation of the origin of society. By elevating man's sociability into an innate instinct and incorporating it as a basic feature of human nature, Calhoun was extricating himself from a potential pitfall. In liberal political thought and discourse, the justification of human slavery could never rest on the basis of Natural Rights, and it was left to Fitzhugh to make explicit what Calhoun had merely assumed when he wrote: "We saw at once that the true vindication of slavery must be founded on his [Aristotle's] theory of man's social nature, as opposed to Locke's theory of the social contract...."59

In the light of these observations, Calhoun's account of the origin of government and society are entirely understandable, if not convincing. He goes back to the original premises of human nature which had characterised American political theory and eradicates the possibility of Natural Rights being imputed to them. His denial of the existence of the state of nature and the social contract are not important in themselves, for their real significance is as the logical
and traditional concomitants of Natural Rights theory which was the ultimate target of his attacks. In this sense, the Disquisition may be seen as an attempt to take on and refute the intellectual apparatus of Lockean theory; Calhoun is thus addressing Locke in much the same way as scholars used to think that Locke was addressing Hobbes. But much more than mere intellectual quibbling is involved here, for the logical infrastructure of Lockeanism supported deeply-held political values which were embodied in the theory of Natural Rights. Calhoun is actually attacking these values through its logical apparatus, and this is a perfectly legitimate procedure. But the question remains as to what values Calhoun wishes to erect in place of Natural Rights. I have suggested in this chapter that Calhoun's attack on Natural Rights was motivated by his desire to avoid basing his political theory on premises which might imply a criticism of slavery, and in this sense his concept of human nature gives his theory its reactionary stamp. But it does not spell out an alternative set of political values; indeed, it is difficult to see that his rearrangement of propositions concerning the origin of government and society accomplishes very much more than a destruction of Natural Rights. In the following two chapters, we shall be exploring this aspect of Calhoun's theory in greater detail. In the first, I shall argue that in place of the traditional liberal teleology of Natural Rights, Calhoun substitutes a much more vague notion of "progress"; in the second, we shall attempt to discover what precisely Calhoun meant when he talked of "progress".
Chapter Seven: Order and Progress—The Teleology of the Disquisition

It is useful at this stage to remind ourselves that the purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which Calhoun's Disquisition can properly be said to belong to the "Reactionary Enlightenment". This artificial and paradoxical category is designed to convey the notion that Calhoun's political thought embodies the ideas of two separate and supposedly contradictory styles of thinking. In chapters four and five we dealt with Calhoun's philosophical method and his religious views, both of which, we concluded, exhibited significant similarities to the style established by the eighteenth century Enlightenment: his commitment to an empirical methodology, for example, along with an openly deistic conception of the divine, conforms more nearly to the intellectual tradition of the Enlightenment than to any other single set of interconnected ideas. In both these areas, however, we may be said to have been dealing with the stylistic apparatus of Calhoun's philosophical discourse, rather than with the value-system inherent in it. Whilst this is more obviously true of Calhoun's philosophical method, we are not unjustified, I think, in claiming it for his religious thought too, for there is no great evidence to suggest that Calhoun was interested in religion except insofar as it had some bearing on politics. And even if Calhoun were deeply interested in religious ideas, the Disquisition displays no teleological concern with furthering God's Kingdom on earth, nor even with the personal aspect of individual salvation, but rather
with providing a sanction for the status quo. We do not find, therefore, in Calhoun's religious thought any explicit formulation of a political value-system, and in this sense we are justified in regarding it as no more than a part of his intellectual apparatus.¹

In the previous chapter we have examined Calhoun's ideas of human nature as the source of government and society and we have concluded that whilst it has the appearance of rigorous scientific investigation, it actually manages to reduce man's nature to the interplay of two seemingly contradictory factors - man's innate sociability and his basic self-centredness. Two interesting points emerge from this. In the first place, Calhoun ought not to receive undue criticism for reducing human nature to too few factors since the conventions of political theorising established during the Enlightenment were precisely in this direction, and continued to be so throughout the nineteenth century. What ought to be emphasised, rather, is Calhoun's ingenuity in attempting to combine two so fundamentally opposite characteristics of man and making them not only the basis of his theory of political motivation, but also the origin of government and society. Taken separately, neither facet of man's nature postulated by Calhoun is original: the innate sociability of man was a well-established proposition, tracing its descent from classical antiquity by means of the Aristotelian tradition.² Human selfishness, on the other hand, was equally firmly lodged as an eternal truth of Christian theology. What was original in Calhoun's formulation was the peculiar juxtaposition in which the two ideas were placed.³ We also maintained in the previous chapter that whilst these ideas
are not logically irreconcilable, they are unconvincing as an explanation of the origin of society and its institutions, and we attempted to rearrange the propositions in such a way as to accord with the mainstream liberal-individualist tradition in order to expose Calhoun's motives for placing them in so unusual a relation to one another. The resulting speculation was that Calhoun was attempting to avoid basing his theory on principles which were hostile to a defence of slavery.

The second interesting point to emerge from Calhoun's ideas of human nature is that they imply certain definite values which are not readily apparent from the discussions of his philosophical method and religious thought. The values implied, moreover, so far from embodying the political ideals and aspirations of the Enlightenment, appear to run directly contrary to them by advocating the principle of slavery, or at least allowing that conclusion to be logically drawn. This is, I think, the inescapable conclusion of Calhoun's rejection of Natural Rights theory. It is not inconceivable that Calhoun might have rejected Natural Rights on the same perfectly honest grounds that David Hume did, namely that its theoretical elements were "fallacious and sophistical"; but where Hume is willing to tolerate the ethical consequences of the moral fictions he destroys, Calhoun is not. Calhoun's quite cold-blooded attack on the state of nature and the social contract in the Disquisition ends with the entirely consistent assertion that: "As, then, there never was such a state as the so-called state of nature, and never can be, it follows that men, instead of being born in it, are born in the social and political state
and of course, instead of being born free and equal, are born subject, not only to parental authority, but to the laws and institutions of the country where born and under whose protection they draw their first breath. So, in a curious way, it is Calhoun who is being consistent, and more rigidly empirical, than Hume by refusing to derive his theory from anything other than observable data.

If I seem to have been labouring this point excessively, it is only because I regard it as crucial in understanding Calhoun's political values, and, incidentally, in understanding his position in relation to the American liberal tradition. For ultimately, what Calhoun's denial of the existence of a state of nature amounts to is an outright rejection of the values which the American Revolution and, in its more conservative form, the Constitution are supposed to stand for. Measured against the prevailing conventions of American political theory, Calhoun appears as the first thinker to undermine systematically the political value-system established during the revolutionary generation. (I emphasise "systematically" because, of course, Calhoun was not the first to challenge these values, only the first to do so in synthetic political theory. And this, furthermore, is precisely the reason why it is misleading to lump Calhoun with men like John Taylor of Caroline, St. George Tucker and William Rawle under the general umbrella term, the "States' Rights school", for to do so is to confine Calhoun's relevance to the area of constitutional theory and to miss the broader significance of his critique of liberal-individualist values. Indeed, compared with what Calhoun was doing, Taylor et al. may be said to have been
haggling over the minutiae of constitutional theory, for in no important respect did any of them seriously challenge the values of Natural Rights philosophy. Taylor, especially, the so-called "philosopher of Jeffersonian democracy", is perhaps the authentic exponent of classic American individualism in that he presented the full array of theoretical devices associated with Natural Rights theory: a presocial state of nature, in which individuals were morally and actually autonomous; a freely-arrived at social compact by which society was created and by which the powers of the government were carefully circumscribed; the inalienability of certain Natural Rights, which continued to remain superior to the claims of either government or of society. All this is classic liberal political theory—what Louis Hartz calls the "Lockean ethos—and it is this framework that Calhoun is seeking to undermine.

We suggested in our discussion of Calhoun's ideas of human nature that his refutation of Natural Rights theory resulted from his desire to defend the institution of slavery on which Southern society was thought to be based. But if this interpretation is true, it does not necessarily imply that Calhoun was deliberately defending black slavery, for nowhere in the Disquisition does he attempt to make out a case for the racial inferiority of negroes. This curious omission, which we commented on earlier in our discussion of Calhoun's relation to the proslavery school of ethnologists and biblicists, has led some commentators to conclude that Calhoun was attempting to do far more than simply defend racial slavery. In 1943, Richard N. Current published a paper entitled "John C. Calhoun, Philosopher of Reaction" in which he argued that Calhoun's
real significance is not as a racial supremacist, but as a social elitist. "The central theme of Southern history", Current maintained, "has remained the same but this theme is not what the older school of Southern historians said it was - the maintenance of white supremacy. It is the maintenance of the supremacy of some white men, and as a means to this end the fiction of a general white supremacy has been extremely useful." Current's argument, later taken up by Richard Hofstadter, was that the key to understanding Calhoun's political philosophy was the concept of the class struggle. Calhoun was said to have "anticipated the later 'scientific' approach of Freidrich Engels and Karl Marx" in his recognition that the wealth created by an exploited labour force was unevenly distributed throughout society. Moreover, Calhoun predicted that in a free enterprise, \textit{laissez faire} economy, society would eventually be divided into two antagonistic classes, capitalists and "operatives" (or in Marxist terminology, proletarians). But it was as an unashamed defender of the capitalist enterpreneurs - as the "Marx of the Master Class" in Hofstadter's vivid phrase - that Calhoun's real values begin to show: he was not so much interested in maintaining the racial supremacy of Southern whites as he was in urging a truly national alliance between Northern industrial capitalists and Southern planters against the rise of proletarians of either section and of whatever complexion.

Current and Hofstadter have developed a persuasive argument which compels our attention by the impressive marshalling of documentary evidence. But where exactly does it leave us with regard to the validity of the concept of the
"Reactionary Enlightenment" as it applies to Calhoun's thought? If we grant the persuasiveness of the Current-Hofstadter argument, we have to admit at the same time that it in no way affects the validity of the "Reactionary Enlightenment" concept, except perhaps to strengthen it. Their argument would, in fact, maintain that Calhoun is not reactionary merely in the sense of being a racial supremacist, but in the much wider sense of being a social elitist. Their argument, therefore, actually extends the scope of Calhoun's reaction.

Whether we accept the argument put forward by Current and Hofstadter or whether we maintain the traditional interpretation of Calhoun as a Southern racist, it is still true that we cannot be said to have fully explored his political value-system. All that we have really said so far is that in destroying the theoretical mainstay of Natural Rights theory, it is reasonable to suppose that Calhoun was intending to attack the values it was designed to uphold. Now, if we say that Calhoun was a racist, pure and simple, and that the Disquisition was intended to defend racial slavery, we have to admit that it goes much further than it either need have done, or ought to have done; for, compared with the elaborate arguments of scientific racism prepared by ethnologists like Josiah Nott and George R. Glidden, as a racially-motivated document the Disquisition is profoundly unconvincing. More than that, it is quite simply mistaken in that it extends the argument over too wide an area; when Calhoun destroys the basis of Natural Rights as the expression of the moral relation between individuals and the state, he does so not only for negroes but for whites too, and this conclusion is inescapable given the fact
that Calhoun includes no argument in the text to distinguish between the races. If the text was intended to defend slavery, we must conclude along with John Greenleaf Whittier, that Calhoun was the "advocate of human slavery UPON PRINCIPLE — slavery not of the black man alone, but of the working man everywhere, of whatever complexion."¹²

All this, of course, gives added weight to the Current-Hofstadter argument that Calhoun is better considered as the theorist of a social, rather than a racial, elite. Having said that, however, we have still not come to grips with the underlying political values that Calhoun was most anxious to defend, for we must presume that, whether as a racial supremacist or as a social elitist, he did possess some ultimate values which determined his view of the political process. It is possible to argue that Calhoun was simply a reactionary, as it were, by conviction, that he was an opponent of any kind of institutional change on principle, and that as such his theory is non-teleological in the sense that it lacks a substantive, purposive ideal.¹³ But to argue this is both unsatisfying and unsatisfactory: unsatisfying because it portrays Calhoun as a superficial and, ultimately, sterile thinker and unsatisfactory because it disregards evidence that the Disquisition argues precisely that there should be institutional change in the form of the concurrent majority, and that it has a quite definite sense of teleology. I use the phrase "sense of teleology" advisedly because, although I think that the Disquisition does point to a substantive ideal, it is not one which is precisely defined, and I am not at all sure Calhoun would have been able to give it precise definition had he been called
upon to do so. Nevertheless, I propose to argue throughout this chapter and the next that the political values Calhoun was seeking to defend are only discernible and properly understood with reference to this ultimate ideal (however imprecisely drawn) which, I shall maintain, is the notion of "progress". If there is a single, purposive teleology in the Disquisition which takes the place of the Natural Rights that Calhoun has attacked, it is this idea of progress.

Now, it may well be that the advice of Sidney Pollard given in another context applies in the case of Calhoun's idea of progress. Pollard has maintained that the "underlying assumptions of an age, the things commonly taken for granted to the extent that no one will bother to write them down, are not only among the most significant, but also among the most difficult to grasp by minds brought up in the thraldom of different assumptions." Calhoun's repeated appeal to "progress" as the justification for his political theory, coupled with his failure to specify the senses in which he uses the term, makes clarification of the concept a major part of our task. How this is achieved exactly takes us back to the methodological procedure proposed by Quentin Skinner which we discussed in chapter one. Skinner, it will be recalled, maintained that it was possible to determine the meaning of a political text (or indeed any other kind of text) by referring to the context in which it was written. This is not to say that the context ought to be treated as "the determinant of what is said. It needs rather to be treated as the ultimate framework for helping to decide what conventionally recognizable meanings, in a society of that kind, it might in principle
have been possible for someone to have intended to communicate. 16 Precisely the same procedure is applicable in the case of ideas which are in common usage at a particular place, at a particular moment in history. Once, therefore, we have established that the teleology of the Disquisition is in terms of the idea of progress, it will be necessary to examine what conceivable meanings Calhoun might have imputed to the word when he used it, by examining the range of conventional meanings it had in early nineteenth century America. By doing this, it ought to be possible to establish more precisely what Calhoun intended to communicate to the audience of his day. This secondary task is reserved for the next chapter.

Determining the content of Calhoun's idea of progress and demonstrating how he substitutes it for Natural Rights as the teleology of the text does not altogether complete our task, for we will still not have considered how it relates to the concept of the "Reactionary Enlightenment". This aspect is made particularly interesting by the fact that the idea of progress is commonly thought to be the peculiar product of the eighteenth century Enlightenment, especially in its French version. 17 By comparing Calhoun's notion of progress with the classic statements of American and European authors, it should be possible to uncover the essential values that Calhoun was intending to advocate in the text.

The theory of Natural Rights, which throughout the eighteenth century provided the typical standard of judgement for liberal theories of politics, upheld a set of ideals which emphasised the moral completeness of the individual in relation
to the society of which he was a part. The liberal, or Lockeant ethos proclaimed that the moral status of the individual superseded that of the apparatus of government and society which was itself designed to serve man and not to be served by him. Liberal schemes of government, therefore, were teleological in the sense that the value of the institutions they proposed was measured in terms of their ability to secure certain prescribed purposes. In eighteenth century liberal theory the purposes of government were severely reduced to the preservation and protection of individual Natural Rights which were considered absolute and unabridgeable. Society itself, along with its collective agent the government, was tolerated only because of the convenience it afforded individuals in the enjoyment of their Natural Rights. The inviolability of these Rights, which in Locke were expressed as "Life, Liberty and Property", was reiterated in the slogans of both the American and French Revolutions: Article II of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens (1789) declared that "The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are Liberty, Property, Security, and Resistance of Oppression." Similarly, the American Declaration of Independence (1776) proclaimed that the primary function of government was to "secure" the rights to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" and "That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organising its
powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness." 21

There was, then, a clear substantive ideal in liberal theory which involved the protection of individual Natural Rights. Of course, how these rights were known was ultimately a matter of self-evidence, and this has led some historians of ideas to question the extent to which theorists like Locke, and the revolutionary propagandists, intended the knowability of Natural Rights to be universal. 22 In technical philosophical terms, the appeal to self-evidence may be said to be "deontological" in the sense that the ethical standard it prescribes is self-substantiating, and it neither needs, nor is susceptible of, derivation from any supposedly more fundamental moral truths. Deontology is said to stand in opposition to teleology because it considers the intrinsic rightness or wrongness of particular actions without reference to the consequences of those actions. Teleology, on the other hand, evaluates the rightness or wrongness of actions by considering the ends to which they are directed, so that the consequences produced by an action determines whether the action was good or bad. 23 Given these philosophical definitions, we are left in a quandary as to whether we should regard Liberal political theory as teleological or deontological. On the surface, the appeal to self-evident Natural Rights would seem to suggest that it is firmly deontological, that the rights to "life, liberty and property" are eternal truths which need no further substantiation. Yet, even if the ultimate values of liberalism are deontological, the schemes of government designed to achieve those values are necessarily teleological because they are concerned
with the mechanical arrangements best adapted to secure those prescribed ends. Thus, in Locke, for example, the separation of power into legislative, executive and judicial spheres was specifically intended as a safeguard against the potential abuse of concentrated power, and hence would make it more difficult for any single branch of government to undermine the original purposes of society, which were supremely the protection of Natural Rights.\(^{24}\)

There is, however, a more fundamental problem involved in the definition of the phrase "protection of Natural Rights"; having said that the political liberalism of the late eighteenth century embodied a substantive ideal in its attachment to the concept of Natural Rights, it is still true that the precise functions assigned to government by society are neither clearly stated nor clearly discernible. In terms of theory, the problem is present in Locke's ambiguous use of the word "property", which he variously defines in the narrow sense of meaning material possessions or in the extended sense of including life and liberty along with estates.\(^{25}\) If, as Locke maintains, the "great and chief end... of Mens uniting into Commonwealths, and putting themselves under Government, is the Preservation of their Property",\(^ {26}\) precisely what kind of function is entailed on government? Does Locke mean to imply that government should act merely as an economic and political policeman, limiting its activities to correcting obvious iniquities as they arise, in which case the governmental function should be construed as being basically laissez faire? Or does he have in mind a much more positive and energetic attitude for government in which its function is actively to encourage conditions which
would enable individuals to enjoy more fully their Natural Rights? Furthermore, is the protection of Natural Rights (that is, the preservation of life, liberty and property) to be considered the minimum or maximum permissible function of government? In other words, does Locke conceive the protection of Natural Rights by the government to be the minimum activity necessary to the realisation of the development of the individual personality (in which case Natural Rights forms the starting-point of human development in political terms) or does he view such protection as the absolute and ultimate end of political association in itself? On the basis of the Second Treatise, it would seem that the latter interpretation was intended, that Locke believed that the function of government was to protect Natural Rights and to go no further, simply because there would be no need to; if the individual's Natural Rights were guaranteed, government need have no further concern with the development of personality because the conditions under which this would best be realised were, in fact, already in existence. This may be inferred from what Locke says in the Second Treatise, though the absence of any explicit statement on his part continues to make the point an arguable one.27

This ambiguity in Lockean theory concerning the real meaning of the ultimate purpose of political association and the true function of government is carried forward into the American political tradition by means of its most revered rhetorical document, the Declaration of Independence. 28 Arguing from the final version of the Declaration, Daniel Boorstin has maintained that Jefferson and his compatriots
substituted an "indefinitely enumerable" list of rights "for a systematic theory of government". Boorstin's argument rests on the phrase in the Declaration which holds that governments are instituted among men to "secure" the "rights" to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that "the Jeffersonian natural 'rights' philosophy was... a declaration of the inability or unwillingness... to face the need for defining explicitly the moral ends to be served by government." The thrust of Boorstin's argument is that the rights enumerated in the Declaration constitute vague generalities which do nothing more than to impose restrictions on the community (through the government), without prescribing a purposive direction in which the community should move. Rights, he argues moreover, have a negative implication in the sense that they prescribe what the community cannot do without laying down corresponding duties on the individuals which compose it. Boorstin's conclusion is that the type of society envisaged by the Declaration of Independence would necessarily be an atomistic and directionless one, thus revealing the "unsystematic and inarticulate character of Jeffersonian political theory."30

Boorstin's disparaging interpretation of the Declaration is brilliantly refuted by Morton White. White argues that the seemingly minor and innocuous changes made between Jefferson's Rough Draft and the final version published by the Continental Congress were not simply alterations in style, but betokened a crucial shift in philosophical emphasis.31 According to White, the original phraseology of the Rough Draft indicated that Jefferson envisaged a very positive and
active role for government which involved more than merely restraining obvious obstacles to the enjoyment of individual natural rights. White's argument is ingenious and compelling; in the Rough Draft, he argues, Jefferson maintains that among the "inherent and inalienable" rights to which all men are entitled by virtue of their equal creation by God, are the rights to "the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness". It is the purpose of government, Jefferson continues, to "secure these ends". White points out that in the final version of the document, the word "ends" in this phrase is substituted by the word "rights", thus altering substantially the meaning of the verb "to secure". In Jefferson's original formulation, the verb "to secure" is best construed as meaning "to attain" the explicitly stated ends of government, which manifestly are the preservation of life, the preservation of liberty and the pursuit of happiness. From this White concludes that Jefferson envisaged the purpose of government as being to actively assist men in the realisation of these moral ends. But in the final version, the substitution of the word "rights" for "ends" makes it tautological to construe the verb "to secure" as meaning "to attain" because, as White puts it, "... once we speak of rights as secured by government, and especially of rights with which men have already been endowed by their Creator, it is manifestly pointless to use the verb "secure" to mean attain since government need not be instituted to attain what people already have." From this, the conclusion is reached that between Jefferson's Rough Draft and the final version of the Declaration, certain philosophical changes were made which had the effect of diluting
"the purpose of government to the point where it ceases to be an *abettor* of men in the active attainment of the three Burlamaquian ends proposed by God and becomes only a *protector* of certain rights."33

The distinction between these positive and negative conceptions of the role of government is not unimportant because it reveals a tension in liberal political theory which has persisted into the twentieth-century.34 The difficulty moreover, is a tactical rather than a strategic one: if, as John H. Hallowell has maintained, the "essential postulate of integral liberalism is the absolute value and dignity of human personality",35 the most effective means of achieving that goal is still a matter of debate. If government is conceived as an instrument to **encourage** the fulfillment of individual personality, this implies investing it with a degree of discretionary power sufficient to meet changing economic and social circumstances. But at the same time, the historic concern of liberalism has been to deny government the kind of uncontrollable power which, however benignly intended, may potentially be converted to destroy the rights and liberties of its citizens. The liberal dilemma, therefore, is having to decide between allowing government a degree of latitude in the scope of its jurisdiction, thereby running the risk of potential tyranny, and holding it strictly to a set of clearly-stated and severely circumscribed purposes beyond which it may not legitimately tread. Traditionally, liberals have tended towards the latter course of regarding government with great suspicion as a distasteful, though necessary, evil, tolerated only because its absence entailed disorder and confusion, an even greater
evil. It is this tendency which is revealed in the shift of philosophical emphasis from Jefferson's Rough Draft of the Declaration to the final version approved by the Continental Congress - it signified a refusal to countenance the kind of government which Americans, by that very act, were about to cast off. Historical circumstances conspired with ideological propaganda to produce a popular revulsion against arbitrary and unrestrained power of which George III was supposedly the example par excellence.

The consequences of these philosophical alterations to Jefferson's original draft were crucially influential in establishing the negative construction of the role of government as the authoritative interpretation of Natural Rights theory in America. Government was conceived as the protector of individual natural rights, rather than as the abettor of the individual in the attainment of certain ends proposed for him by God. Little more than a decade later this view of government was given added authority by the Philadelphia Convention's insistence on a constitutional system which embodied checks and balances and the fragmentation of political power; although, as Arthur O. Lovejoy has pointed out, the "ablest members of the Constitutional Convention were well aware that their task --unlike that of the Continental Congress in 1776--was not to lay down abstract principles of political philosophy", the very fact that they were dealing with the practical exigencies of constitution-making underscored and reflected the general philosophical principles under which they were operating. The careful enumeration of powers granted to each branch of government, itself seemed to imply that there was a strict limit to
the collective jurisdiction of government beyond which it was not legitimate to encroach. The point, however, was not made so explicitly that all arguments were avoided: during Washing-
ton's first term as President the issue of whether the Constit-
ution was to be construed broadly or narrowly was raised over the matter of the establishment of a Bank of the United States. Although in this instance the Hamiltonian doctrine of implied powers carried the day, the issue was to recur with increasing intensity throughout the antebellum period and beyond.\textsuperscript{37}

The principal point I am trying to stress in all this is that whatever the philosophical beliefs of private individ-
uals concerning the proper role of government—I am thinking chiefly of Jefferson—the official orthodoxy of the American Revolution was to construe government as being a reactive agency, responding to events in the social and economic arena rather than initiating beneficial, though unneccessary, legislation.\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Lassiez faire}, therefore, became the prevalent political, as well as economic, doctrine of the United States. Two important and related implications flow from this fact. In the first place, the intensely individualistic outlook of liberal ideol-
ogy was reaffirmed in the sense that the performance of govern-
ment was measured in terms of its effectiveness in protecting individual rights, rather than in encouraging individuals in the exercise of those rights. This may seem paradoxical, but is not really because it indicated the unwillingness of either the revolutionaries or the Founding Fathers to invest govern-
ment with sufficient power which might, at some future date, be used to enslave the citizens. They preferred to accept the minimum guarantee of protection of Natural Rights, rather than
active encouragement, precisely because they mistrusted the nature of power and were sceptical of man's capacity to resist its temptations. However benign the uses to which it was to be put, power was by its very nature cumulative and, eventually, aggressive. "Power naturally grows", maintained John Adams, "because human passions are insatiable. But that power alone can grow which already is too great; that which is unchecked; that which has no equal power to control it." Even Jefferson, whom we have suggested above originally envisaged a more energetic role for government, later declared that "experience hath shewn, that even under the best forms [of government] those entrusted with power have, in time, and by slow operations perverted it into tyranny...."

The second implication, which arises from the first, is that society was regarded as a collection of individuals, rather than as a corporate personality which generated its own kind of Rousseanian "general will". The status of the individual, and the protection of his rights, was therefore elevated above the general good of the community so that if the Natural Rights of an individual were infringed by the action of the government, it was insufficient to claim that the greater good which accrued to the community as a whole was justification for the action. In this sense Natural Rights theory provided both an absolute standard of conduct and a clearly-defined set of goals towards which liberal types of government were orientated.

I have spent some time explaining the importance of Natural Rights theory for the ideology of the American Revolution because without such an explanation it is difficult to appreciate the gulf which separates the theoretical assumptions...
of Calhoun from those of the mainstream American political tradition. I do not mean to imply, of course, that a rigid adherence to the theory of Natural Rights persisted in American thought into the nineteenth century, for one of the main qualities of the theory was its peculiar relevance in explaining the moral relations between individuals and the state at a particular moment in time. Subsequently, when Americans had adapted to their new circumstances and no longer agonised over the legitimacy of the state, Natural Rights lost much of its potency as a justificatory formula, though its strategic position in the formation of revolutionary ideology guaranteed it a high rhetorical status in American political culture. Moreover, the legacy of Natural Rights was apparent in the concrete institutional arrangements devised during the revolutionary era; the reconstruction of state constitutions caused by the collapse of the colonial governments reflected, to a greater or lesser extent, a continuing faith in the Whig conception of politics and power. Although Governors were considered as the trustees of the sovereign power of the people, a whole range of institutional procedures was erected to ensure that they did not stray beyond their legitimate sphere. In the 1770s, the separation of powers—later so much a feature of the Federal Constitution of 1787—meant essentially guarding the judicial and legislative departments from the encroachment of the executive, which itself was severely circumscribed in its power of appointment, tenure and election. The ethos of Natural Rights theory, therefore, if not the theory itself, tended to survive the revolutionary generation in the form of the constitutional apparatus which originally gave expression to
If, under Natural Rights theory, the raison d'être of government was the protection (however that was construed) of individual rights, the same purpose is not ascribed to government in Calhoun's Disquisition. His explicit rejection of Natural Rights—that is, rights which inhere in each individual, which antedate and are not alienated by the formation of society—must mean that the purpose he ascribes to government and society cannot logically be defined in terms of the protection of such rights. It follows, therefore, that for Calhoun government and society must exist for some other purpose. But immediately we are confronted by an anomaly, for having abolished Natural Rights (the protection of which government was designed to guarantee), we find Calhoun displaying a profound reverence for liberty, a quality which in America had traditionally been accorded the status of a Natural Right. What, then, are we to make of Calhoun's attachment to liberty and where does it stand in his scale of political values? The answer to this question should give us the vital clue in understanding the values which Calhoun reveres above all others and in terms of which he judges the efficacy of political systems.

It is clear that Calhoun's high regard for liberty coupled with his reluctance to elevate it to a position of an absolute, inalienable Natural Right suggests that he did not consider it to be an end of government in itself, but as an instrument for achieving something even more valuable. There is an early hint on the first page of the Disquisition as to what Calhoun regards as the ultimate purpose of government and society, when he maintains that the social state is the only
condition in which man can "attain to a full development of his moral and intellectual faculties or raise himself, in the scale of being, much above the level of the brute creation." It appears, therefore, that Calhoun considers the "development of... moral and intellectual faculties" to be the primary purpose of society and this view is reinforced when one considers similar statements about the "perfection of his [man's] faculties" which recur sporadically throughout the text. This, then, is the germ of Calhoun's notion of progress and it leads to a more explicit formulation of the respective purposes of society and government. Although government and society are intimately connected, Calhoun places a higher value on the existence of society: "It is", he says, "the first in the order of things and in the dignity of its object; that of society being primary—to preserve and perfect our race—and that of government secondary and subordinate—to preserve and perfect society."  

We have already alluded in Chapter Five to the distinction which Calhoun makes between the purpose of government and the purpose of society. There, we concluded that although the purposes he assigns to each appear on the surface to be very different, in practice they differ hardly at all. What the difference actually amounts to is a division of function between government and society, which comprehends a unified over-all purpose; the purpose of government and society, therefore do not stand in antagonistic relation to one another, but on the contrary, are intended to be complementary. At this stage of the argument, however, it is appropriate to draw attention to certain implications which arise from Calhoun's
distinction because it helps explain some of the peculiar emphases Calhoun attaches to subsequent elements in the theory.

In the first place, although Calhoun considers the purpose of society to be "first in the order of things and in the dignity of its object",—that is, the preservation and perfection of the race—he is not at all explicit about what this entails. Indeed, he has far more to say about what the purpose of government is, even though by his own admission he considers it to be "secondary and subordinate". Of the two purposes he assigns to society, the preservation of the race is the more straightforward in the sense that it involves the personal security of the individuals who comprise the community. (Frankly, I do not think Calhoun's choice of the word "race" in this context was intended to imply any overtly racist connotation; it refers simply to the individuals who are included within the jurisdiction of the government.50) The maintenance of internal civil order and external security would have been regarded by even the most extreme libertarians as perfectly legitimate functions of society and of its agent the government, and would thus fall within the limits of liberal theory. The perfection of the race is, however, another matter, for it presumes that the community has a much more active responsibility in promoting the physical and moral well-being of the individuals who compose it. We have already discussed above how the alterations to Jefferson's Rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence were designed to repudiate such an interpretation of governmental power, and intended to hold government to the performance of certain specified funct-
ions. Here, however, it appears that Calhoun is prepared to allow the community a greater degree of latitude in the scope of its power than traditional liberal theory would tolerate.

But precisely how does society perform the functions of preservation and perfection that Calhoun ascribes to it? Society, as such, is an inactive force in the sense that it is nothing more than the community of individuals; it cannot itself do anything, except provide a congenial and convivial environment for its members, unless it has first established communal institutions of state which act as its instruments. Societies are inert until they create the means of acting through which the collective sense of the community may be expressed. In classical liberal theory, the purposes of government and society are necessarily identical because government cannot exist except to express and fulfil the will of the community. There exists, therefore, a unity of purpose between government and society. Calhoun, however, makes a distinction between the purposes of society and the purposes of government, and although the distinction itself amounts substantively to very little in practice, the very fact that he attempts a distinction at all causes him conceptual problems. For once he has decided to distinguish between government and society and their respective purposes, he cannot avoid admitting that society, taken on its own and divorced from government, doesn't actually do very much at all. This is why Calhoun, even though he regards society as "first in the order of things and in the dignity of its object", is not more specific about the ways in which society accomplishes its purposes; society can only perform its actions through the
agency of government and if the purposes of the two are separated it becomes difficult to describe precisely how society operates to fulfil its functions.

What, then, does all this amount to? Actually, taken in isolation, not very much, except that it highlights Calhoun's ambivalent view of the relation between society and government: at one point he is able to speak of them as being "intimately connected with and dependent on each other", but in his subsequent treatment of them he tends to abstract them from each other. This confusion may well be seen as the result of making the origin of government independent of the origin of society. In Lockean theory, government comes into being at the same time as civil society, and its existence is intended to facilitate the purposes of society. Calhoun, however, finds the impulse to form society and the impulse to form government in two separate facets of man's nature. He, therefore, loses the intimate and complementary connection which liberal theory establishes between the two institutions; for Calhoun, the creation of government and society is not the result of the deliberate and rational consideration of individuals about how best to secure their rights, but a function of innate (and therefore non-rational) instinct implanted in each individual by God. Furthermore, the original connection which Calhoun envisages between society and government is initially a negative one: government arises in order to restrain the conflict between men which occurs as a result of the predominance of their "individual" feelings. It is only subsequently that Calhoun ascribes to it a more positive role in preserving and perfecting society.
Viewed in this light it becomes understandable that Calhoun should have given a more detailed exposition of the purposes of government, as opposed to the purposes of society, and the means by which they are achieved. But does it therefore follow that in making a distinction of this nature he is committing a logical error? Strictly speaking, the answer is no; the distinction appears to be not so much faulty on logical grounds, as unnecessary. The question thus arises as to what Calhoun could possibly have intended to convey by making so unnecessary a distinction. It is, of course, possible that this conceptual muddle was entirely unintentional, in which case we have to presume that Calhoun did not fully realise the implications of what he was doing. If that, indeed, were the case then this facet of Calhoun's theory would be no more than an interesting, though inessential, curiosity. There is, however, one crucial consequence of Calhoun's distinction which leads us to suspect that it was inserted deliberately and for a specific reason.

When we examine more closely the purpose Calhoun assigns to government, we find that it is not to preserve and perfect the race (which is the purpose of society), but "to preserve and perfect society" itself. Calhoun therefore, as we have said, separates the purposes of government and society and comprehends them on different levels. The important consequence of this distinction is that it enables Calhoun to postulate the purpose of government in terms of service to the collectivity rather than to the individuals who comprise that collectivity. Calhoun is thus able to say that government exists to preserve and perfect the community at large, even at the...
expense of intruding upon the rights of certain individuals or groups within the community. As far as governments are concerned, then, their main purpose is to ensure the protection and survival of the community, even if it means taking unpalatable action against individuals; the good of the whole is at all times superior to the good of the parts. So, the distinction which we labelled above as being "unnecessary" actually unravels itself out into a subtle though vital shift of emphasis from the individualism of traditional American (Lockean) theory towards a form of collectivism it hardly knows.

I do not think this is too fanciful or exotic an interpretation of the juxtaposition of Calhoun's teleological assumptions. Nor do I think that Calhoun was unaware that such an implication should be drawn from the distinction he makes between the purposes of government and the purposes of society. Already, in speeches to the Senate, he had hinted at this anti-individualistic attitude; in February 1847 he maintained that "a vague, indefinite, erroneous, and most dangerous conception of private individual liberty" ought not "to override this great common liberty". The community possessed a higher right which took precedence over "the absolute right of individuals". Again, less than a year later, his attitude was summed up when he maintained that "With me the liberty of the country is all in all. If this be preserved, everything will be preserved, but if lost, all will be lost." The efficacy of statecraft was to be measured, therefore, in terms of the benefits which accrued to the community, and not to the separate individuals which made it up.
The superiority of the rights of the community over the rights of individuals was a further reflection of Calhoun's political and philosophical realism. He perceived that individual rights had to be exercised within the context of the community if they were to stand any chance of being realistically guaranteed. What was the good of individuals claiming abstract rights which had no means of being backed up by the force of the community? Might did not create right, to be sure, but rights unguarded by might were precarious indeed; even Rousseau, author of that maxim, had to concede that "social order is a sacred right which is the basis of all other rights."57 The community, for Calhoun as for Rousseau, provided a settled and secure environment within which individual rights could be safely enjoyed; without it there would be a state of social and political flux in which nothing, least of all individual rights, could be certainly guaranteed. The preeminent purpose of government, therefore, was to ensure that the community was protected from external attack and internal convulsions. "If it fail in either, maintained Calhoun, "it would fail in the primary end of government and would not deserve the name."58

Maintaining the physical security of the state was the most important function of government in Calhoun's formulation, but it was not the only one. Just as society was charged with supervising the perfection of the individuals within its jurisdiction, so government was assigned the task of perfecting society itself. On this point—the perfection of society by government—Calhoun was more forthcoming for the reasons suggested above, but the same problem arises
as with the perfection of individuals by society: what is the precise mechanism whereby government brings about the improvement of the community and what kind of improvement does Calhoun envisage anyway?

On this first point—the mechanism of social progress—Calhoun uncharacteristically misstated the function of government. His claim that the secondary object of good government was "to perfect society" implied that government had a direct and active responsibility to ensure the progressive improvement of the community. But in what ways could it accomplish that? Government could not "create" progress, so to speak, out of nothing and impose it on society from above; it had to operate through some kind of mechanism. It is at this point that Calhoun imprecisely defines the function of government, for having charged it with the task of perfecting society, he then goes on to show how actually it does nothing more than harness the natural energy of individuals within society. The progressive impulse—Calhoun calls it the "mainspring" to improvement—does not lie in government after all, but is embedded in the nature of man; its status is therefore the same as the innate instincts which impel men to associate with each other in the social state.

The mainspring to progress, according to Calhoun, is the competitive spirit which motivates each individual, the "desire of individuals to better their condition." Calhoun assumes that this desire is a universal characteristic of man, and properly harnessed, can be used as a motor of social progress. He assumes, moreover, that the progress of a community is the by-product of individual effort, that is, it
results from the individuals of a community actively pursuing their own interests unhindered by government or any other agency. Now, for this kind of progress to occur, a variety of preconditions are required. In the first place, the individuals of the community must be free to follow their chosen pursuits: liberty is thus "indispensable" because it "leaves each [individual] free to pursue the course he may deem best to promote his interest and happiness...." Calhoun, therefore, conceives liberty not as the Natural Rights theorists did as an end of government in itself, but as an instrument for, and a necessary precondition of, attaining social progress. Calhoun thus elevates the progress of the community above the protection of individual liberty as the purpose of political association.

There is further evidence of Calhoun's readiness to sublimate the protection of liberty as an ultimate political value in the second precondition he lays down for the encouragement of social progress. As well as being free to pursue their interests to the best of their ability, individuals must also know that what they achieve through their efforts will be secure for their own enjoyment. Security is therefore equally indispensable because it "gives assurance to each that he shall not be deprived of the fruits of his exertions to better his condition." It follows, then, that the liberty Calhoun allows individuals is by no means absolute, for it is delimited by the necessity of maintaining a stable social order in which the enjoyment of property can be maximised. This guarantee is essential in Calhoun's scheme because without it individuals would be less disposed to engage in the competitive enterprise,
and the motor of social progress would thus be weakened.

Calhoun's theory of progress is founded on the principle of human inequality because the competitive spirit in man can only work if natural inequalities of condition are maintained. He went out of his way in the Disquisition to refute the "opinion that liberty and equality are so intimately united that liberty cannot be perfect without perfect equality."

Equality of citizens before the law, he conceded, but "to go further and make equality of condition essential to liberty would be to destroy both liberty and progress." "The reason is that inequality of condition, while it is a necessary consequence of liberty, is at the same time indispensable to progress", because, "... as individuals differ greatly from each other in intelligence, sagacity, energy, perseverance, skill, habits of industry and economy, physical power, position and opportunity—the necessary effect of leaving all free to exert themselves to better their condition must be a corresponding inequality between those who may possess these qualities and advantages in a high degree and those who may be deficient in them." Calhoun considered the possibility of attempting, through the agency of government, to diffuse a spirit of equality throughout the community, by either restricting the range of "exertions" open to individuals who possessed the qualities he listed above or by depriving them of the fruits of their labour. He rejected such a course, however, on the grounds that the first instance would be destructive of liberty and the second destructive of progress. Calhoun concluded that "It is, indeed this inequality of condition between the front and rear ranks, in the march of progress, which gives so strong an
impulse to the former to maintain their position, and to the latter to press forward into their files. This gives to progress its greatest impulse. To force the front rank back to the rear or attempt to push forward the rear into line with the front, by the interposition of government, would put an end to the impulse and effectually arrest the march of progress." 64

But if Calhoun makes the "mainspring to progress" a function of innate instinct—that is, the desire of individuals to better their condition—how can he claim that it is the purpose of government to perfect society? The answer to this lies in the delicate balance Calhoun establishes between the quantum of liberty he allows individuals on the one hand, and the quantum of security necessary to preserve social order on the other. The function of government in this respect is to create the optimum conditions under which social progress may be realised by establishing the correct equilibrium between liberty and security. Even though the raw materials, so to speak, out of which progress may be fashioned are innate in each individual, they have to be channelled correctly in order to produce the maximum benefit to the community as a whole. Government exists, therefore, not simply to monopolise the coercive apparatus of the state, but also to act as the mechanism which sets the relative balance between liberty and authority out of which social progress may be distilled. This function, moreover, is a continuing one because Calhoun envisaged the scale of liberty and authority in a dynamic relation: the proportions of each were relative to the changing circumstances of the community, even though the criteria which determined these
proportions remained constant.

Calhoun laid great emphasis on the balance of liberty and power and on the formula by which they were held in perfect equilibrium. The point was that an excess of either quality was likely to lead to a degeneration of society. If the community enjoyed too great a degree of liberty, the government was weakened to the extent that it was rendered "incompetent to fulfill its primary end—the protection of society against dangers, internal and external. The effect of this would be insecurity; and of insecurity, to weaken the impulse of individuals to better their condition and thereby retard progress and improvement." Similarly, an excess of governmental power would lead to the contraction of the sphere of liberty enjoyed by the citizens, and thus reduce the range of "exertions" they could engage in. In either instance, it was society as a whole that suffered and it was this that Calhoun was most anxious to avoid. The formula that he developed to circumvent this possibility has the symmetry of a mathematical equation: to power "there must ever be allotted, under all circumstances, a sphere sufficiently large to protect the community against danger from without and violence and anarchy within. The residuum belongs to liberty. More cannot be safely or rightly allotted to it." Calhoun's ultimate political values are very nearly in sight, for as the quotation above reveals, he leans heavily towards power rather than liberty. This is confirmed just a page later in the Disquisition when he maintains that "Liberty, indeed, though among the greatest of blessings, is not so great as that of protection, inasmuch as the end of the
former is the progress and improvement of the race, whilst that of the latter is its preservation and perpetuation. And hence, when the two come into conflict, liberty must, and ever ought to yield to protection, as the existence of the race is of greater moment than its improvement."\textsuperscript{67} Calhoun was prepared to tolerate an excess of power rather than liberty because ultimately the security of the state was of paramount importance; indeed, it was a necessary precondition to social progress. An excess of power at least maintained the survival of the state, even if it were under a despotic government, but an excess of liberty "would lead to anarchy .... the greatest of all curses."\textsuperscript{68}

Calhoun's formula for maintaining the proper balance of liberty and authority required that the proportions of each be adjusted periodically to conform to the changing circumstances of the community, but the criteria according to which they were adjusted remained constant. Calhoun recognised that communities at different stages of social development would vary the proportions and would "assign to them \textsuperscript{[}liberty and power\textsuperscript{]} different limits."\textsuperscript{69} He was therefore acknowledging that there existed a kind of cultural relativism which determined for different communities at different stages of development the proper mixture of liberty and authority. The precise factors which affected the equation he divided into two categories, physical and moral. Amongst the physical factors he cited as an example communities which had "open and exposed frontiers surrounded by powerful and hostile neighbours";\textsuperscript{70} such societies necessarily required a greater degree of power and a corresponding contraction of liberty.
Important as physical factors were, Calhoun considered moral factors to be "by far the most influential". These concerned the intrinsic qualities of the citizens of a particular society—the degrees of intelligence, patriotism and virtue that they possessed and their experience and proficiency in the art of self-government.

But the overriding question in all this remained: who was to decide in the last resort what the relative proportions of liberty and power should be? It could not be left to the government for the obvious reason that it would be acting as judge in its own cause, and the temptation to accumulate to itself increasing quantities of power would be irresistible. Calhoun wrote that "If there be a political proposition universally true—one which springs directly from the nature of man, and is independent of circumstances—it is that irresponsible power is inconsistent with liberty, and must corrupt those who exercise it." Calhoun's proposed solution was entirely consistent with his collectivist outlook: the community as a whole was charged with the responsibility of assigning the relative proportions of liberty and power, and of guarding the communal liberty against unnecessary encroachments by the government. The proper balance was achieved by constructing a government which by its own interior structure would automatically collect the sense of the community by consulting not only numbers, but also interests. This is Calhoun's celebrated principle of the concurrent majority, and in the final chapter we shall be examining it in greater detail.

In this chapter I have sought to draw attention to a number of important elements of Calhoun's political theory.
which are not immediately apparent on the surface. Most important is the anti-individualistic implication of his teleology, which scholars have until recently failed spectacularly to grasp and which puts Calhoun beyond the pale of mainstream political thought in this period of American history.\textsuperscript{74} Individual rights, for Calhoun, were always predicated upon the order and progress of the community as a whole and against the highest good of the state appeals to abstract individual rights had little valid claim. Related to his collectivist outlook is the second major point I want to draw attention to, that is Calhoun's emphasis on the coercive function of government. In classical liberal theory, the usual formulation that government should possess only that amount of power which was consistent with the liberty of the citizens and necessary for the maintenance of public order. The emphasis of the \textit{Disquisition}, however, is precisely the reverse: Calhoun is only prepared to tolerate that amount of liberty which is consistent with the ultimate security of society. Indeed, Calhoun finds the relation between power and liberty to be basically complementary in a way in which neither the American revolutionaries nor the Founding Fathers could. "The more perfectly a government combines power and liberty", he wrote, "--that is, the greater its power and the more enlarged and secure the liberty of individuals--the more perfectly it fulfills the ends for which government is ordained."\textsuperscript{75}

Finally, I have attempted to show that Calhoun abandons Natural Rights theory as the explanation and justification of the existence of government and its purposes. In its place he substitutes the less precisely defined concept of social prog-
ress which arises from the creative tension caused by the balancing of liberty and power. Government, embodying the principle of the concurrent majority, is charged with the task of perfecting, as well as protecting, society. But so far we have not investigated what Calhoun meant by the perfection of society, and so in the following and penultimate chapter we shall make an attempt to clarify the possible senses in which Calhoun conceived the notion of social progress.
Although we have established in the previous chapter that Calhoun conceived the purpose of society and the state in a different light to the Natural Rights theorists—that is, in terms of social progress—it is still not clear what precisely he meant when he used the term. (Actually, Calhoun employed a number of different terms interchangeably in the text when referring to the general concept of progress; we have already noted that the secondary function he assigns to government is to "perfect" society, and elsewhere in the work he speaks of the "development" or "improvement" of man's faculties.) What Calhoun had in mind when he spoke in these terms is nowhere fully spelled out in the text, and this makes a proper understanding of his idea of progress a more difficult, though essential, task. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that the idea of progress, as all writers on the subject are generally agreed, is a nebulous one which is, and historically has been, capable of a variety of (often conflicting) meanings. When one speaks of "progress", one cannot point, as one can with (say) "liberalism", to a reasonably tight-knit set of coherent propositions to which all individuals who believe in progress subscribe. The idea has been used in a strict sense by the philosophically-minded to describe a particular theoretical orientation towards the process of history, in which the succession of natural events is seen as unfolding towards an ultimate teleological goal. This version of the idea is, however, a specialised one, and
it is more common in popular usage for progress to denote nothing more than the vague feeling that what the future holds will, in some unspecified and mysterious sense, be an improvement on the past and present. The idea of progress, therefore, embraces not only a wide divergence in meaning, but is also comprehended at different levels of sophistication.

All this suggests that to establish with precision the meaning of Calhoun's notion of progress, a specialised methodological procedure is required. It will be recalled that in chapter one we discussed in some detail the formulae proposed by Quentin Skinner for understanding the meaning of ideas contained in the texts of a past age, and concluded that the proper procedure was to treat the context "as an ultimate framework for helping to decide what conventionally recognizable meanings, in a society of that kind, it might in principle have been possible for someone to have intended to communicate." This procedure is particularly applicable in the case of an idea which has a variety of meanings upon which there is little common agreement. The first step, therefore, in determining what Calhoun could conceivably have meant by the idea of progress is to establish the range of possible meanings which were current in America at the time he was writing. I do not mean to suggest that we should make a comprehensive study of the various ways in which progress was defined in the first part of nineteenth century America, for that would be beyond the scope of this dissertation, and in any case, Arthur Eckirch has already provided just such an excellent survey. What I am saying is that the Disquisition
should be used as a guide to Calhoun's thinking on the subject of progress, and where the meaning of the text is not altogether clear, this should be clarified by evaluating it within the context of contemporary usage. This, incidentally, is the one instance where Calhoun's other utterances (his political speeches and personal correspondence, for example) may legitimately be consulted without violating the methodological maxim laid down in the first chapter concerning the autonomy of the text: providing that the special status of the text is recalled and that we study such sources only with the intention of clarifying an obscure point in the text, and not of "reconstructing" a unified doctrine out of the scattered references contained in unrelated papers, then this is an acceptable, indeed fruitful, procedure.  

In order to make this task more manageable and to provide a point of reference, it is necessary to propose a preliminary definition of the idea of progress against which we can measure the version held by Calhoun. This is, however, not as easy as it first appears, for, as we have suggested above, it is easier to describe what people have, at various times and within various cultures, believed progress to be than it is to define the idea itself. Any definition of progress needs to be sufficiently broad to encompass all the multifarious facets of the idea, but not so broad as to be meaningless; thus, a definition which emphasises the meliorative vision of the future at the expense of a post hoc justification of the past can only be partially successful. Sidney Pollard has suggested that the component elements of progress include "the assumption that a pattern of change
exists in the history of mankind, that this pattern is known, that it consists of irreversible changes in one general direction only, and that this direction is towards improvement from 'a less to a more desirable state of affairs'. Put plainly, the idea of progress implies the belief that things have been improving in the past and that they will continue to improve in the future. This is the definition which we shall be using in our examination of Calhoun's notion of progress.

We shall proceed, therefore, by resolving this definition into its four constituent parts and examining the Disquisition's idea of progress under these heads: (a) the scope of progress, that is, the areas in which progress is commonly thought to have taken place; (b) the scale of values which determines that progress is "desirable"; (c) the scientific ethos brought to bear on the perspective of history and finally (d) the faith in the continuing progress of the future.

(a) "Things..."

Although there is widespread support for the belief that some kind of progress has taken place in the past, there is little common agreement about the areas in which it has been effected. Sidney Pollard has made a useful conceptual division of the scope of progress by postulating four broad categories (each one narrower than the last) in which progress is thought to have taken place. (These categories are based on what he presumes to be the number of people who have historically believed in the various kinds of progress.) In the first and largest category are those who believe that an advancement has been made, and will continue to be made, in the realm of
knowledge, particularly in the natural sciences. The dissemination of knowledge, scientific or otherwise, is thought by many to be of itself a mark of progress and civilisation, though it is probably true to say that the majority value it for the material benefits it affords. In this respect, scientific research which leads subsequently to technological development has an obvious advantage in ushering in progress because it is concerned with the more efficient management of natural resources, which in turn creates wealth for a particular group in society which when diffused throughout the community provides a "better" material standard of living. In this sense, the advance in knowledge is not regarded as an end in itself but as the means of achieving a more desirable economic circumstance. Economic progress is understandably the most potent form of the idea because it touches each individual in the most direct of ways. There is amongst some people the strong belief that if a sufficiently high standard of economic progress is achieved, other forms of progress—particularly in the arts—will follow naturally. 12

There is little doubt from reading the Disquisition that Calhoun conceived the idea of progress in the sense of economic betterment. By making the competitive impulse inherent in man the "mainspring" to progress, he was giving the idea an unmistakably acquisitive stamp. Indeed, Calhoun himself perceptively noted in 1817 that one of the peculiar characteristics of Americans was their economic materialism: "Our countrymen", he said, "with many admirable qualities, are, in my opinion, greatly distinguished by the love of acquisition— I will not call it avarice—and the love of honorable distinct—
I object to neither of these traits. They both grow necessarily out of the character of our country and institutions." Moreover, the political equation he was most keen to establish, that is the balance between liberty and authority, is a further reflection of the economic cast of his thinking. For progress to occur, according to Calhoun, man must be sufficiently free to engage in pursuits which are best calculated to gratify his desires; these desires originate in the natural inequality of mankind which a benign Providence has ordained for the good of the whole. Being unequal in condition, by which Calhoun means wealth, status, skill and intelligence, and possessing a competitive spirit, man is equipped with the motivation to engage in competitive enterprise with his fellows in order to better his own condition. Those who have the requisite qualities in a high degree are motivated to maintain their position against the competing efforts of others because the rewards they earn are worthwhile and gratifying. It is therefore essential for a successful political system to guarantee a measure of security for the rewards which men have earned through their own exertions. Liberty and security are thus complementary in Calhoun's scheme of politics, and the purpose of government is to assess the balance of the two qualities which is most likely to be of benefit to the community as a whole. The progress of society is not, nor can it ever be, independent of the progress of the individuals who compose it because it results from the harnessing of the energies of its citizens. Social progress is thus ultimately a by-product of the pursuit of individual self-interest.  

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The whole tenor of the Disquisition bears this imprint of economic—or, as I have said, acquisitive—progress. The desire to acquire material possessions is presumed to be the most potent motivating force and Calhoun makes his theory of government dependent upon it. At one point in the text, Calhoun equates wealth with intelligence, and poverty with ignorance and this may be seen as a reflection of the natural inequality of humankind;¹⁶ those who are endowed by God with a greater degree of intelligence are better able to perceive where their interests lie and how best to pursue those interests, while the less intelligent are unable to do much more than react to the initiative of the intelligent. It was therefore logical for Calhoun to deduce that the intelligent would become the wealthier portions of the community—always provided of course, that they coupled their intelligence with industry. This did not absolve them, however, from displaying a sense of social responsibility—a sense of noblesse oblige—towards those who were less well equipped to compete against them; Calhoun specifically states that a government founded on the principle of concurrence would produce an identity of interest between the rich and the poor which would have the highest good of the community in mind by enabling the poor to come under the leadership and protection of the wealthy.¹⁷ This is a curiously jarring note to come up in the middle of a theory which is founded on the ruthlessly competitive impulse of man, for if the wealthy have a responsibility to protect the poor, and assuming that they discharge this duty, would this not lessen the incentive of the poor to improve their own condition? And if that is the case, would it not mean that the
natural inequality of condition which exists between men—and which is the motor of progress—is mitigated to the extent that the progress of the community is arrested?

Indeed, it would seem that by allowing men to have "sympathetic or social" feelings as well as "individual and direct" (self-interested) feelings, Calhoun is incorporating into the theory a means whereby the delicate interplay of human desires and impulses which produces social progress may be frustrated. How may this be explained?

Once again, we must revert to Calhoun's collectivist outlook for an explanation of the duties the wealthy owe the poor. Calhoun, as we have said in the previous chapter, is preeminently concerned with the good of the community as a whole and not simply with one or two leading interest groups within it. The most important priority of the state is the physical protection of its citizens, whether from external aggression by citizens of another state or from anarchic elements within its own boundaries. In both cases, the governmental apparatus needs to possess sufficient coercive power to be able to repel foreign invaders and to maintain public order. In the first instance—foreign attack—there is little that government can do beforehand to forestall aggression other than develop contingency plans for military preparedness. In the second instance, however, pure coercive power is not sufficient to guarantee the smooth running of society against the determined attacks of anarchic elements, or if it is sufficient it proves too much of a drain on the resources of the community. It is therefore not in the interests of the wealthier portions of the community to carry the exploitation
of the poor to the extent that the fabric of society is threatened. Calhoun recognises that potential conflict within society, which is not channelled into peaceful processes of resolution, is likely to defeat both the ends which society is originally intended to achieve— that is, the preservation of its citizens and the progress of the community as a whole. And as society progresses, the antagonisms which exist between the wealthy and poor are accentuated: "For as the community becomes populous, wealthy, refined, and highly civilized, the difference between the rich and poor will become more strongly marked, and the number of the ignorant and dependent greater in proportion to the rest of the community. With the increase of this difference, the tendency to conflict between them will become stronger; and as the poor and dependent become more numerous in proportion, there will be in governments of the numerical majority no want of leaders among the wealthy and ambitious to excite and direct them in their efforts to obtain the control."¹⁸

The interests of the community—and, incidentally, of the wealthy—are best served if the poor are not pushed to the extremes of poverty, that is, to the extent that they no longer perceive any benefits to be gained from maintaining the community. If such social disintegration were to occur, no group would benefit (least of all the wealthy) and no individual would be able to claim the personal protection of society. A sense of noblesse oblige on the part of the wealthy is thus the most painless way of forestalling social dislocation. On the grounds of utility, it pays the wealthy to forego a certain amount of progress in order to preserve the orderliness of
the community and to avoid disruption which would jeopardise the whole of their property. In view of the calamitous nature of anarchy—"the greatest of all curses"—it seems a small price to pay.

This is, I think, a reasonable explanation of why Calhoun lays a degree of responsibility on the wealthy to protect the poor. It is an attempt "to enlist the individual on the side of the social feelings to promote the good of the whole." I should point out, however, that Calhoun does not suggest ways in which this should be accomplished, nor does he amplify on the degree to which this responsibility should be taken. (Presumably, he would say that the poor should be helped only to the extent of forestalling potential discontent amongst them, which, of course, leaves the question entirely flexible and open-ended.) It is not difficult to see where this sense of noblesse oblige in Calhoun's thought originated, for in parts of Southern slave society there existed a highly developed notion of the mutual duties and obligations of slaves and masters which formed part of the South's Romantic feudal dream. The thrust of Fitzhugh's later defence of slavery took the form of a violent indictment of the northern system of "wage slavery". It was, he argued, a more pernicious and degrading form of exploitation because it permitted industrial capitalists to escape their responsibilities to their labourers. For Fitzhugh, the South's "peculiar institution" represented an entire social system, not simply an economic relation, within which the duties and responsibilities of masters and slaves were defined. It was this kind of paternalistic outlook that Calhoun, as a slaveholder himself, shared and which
is evident in the part of the Disquisition we have been discussing. 22

We have strayed somewhat from the original point—that Calhoun conceived progress primarily in terms of economic acquisitiveness—though not without profit, for we have emphasised Calhoun's division of society into the economic classes "wealthy" and "poor". The point is that in Calhoun's vision of society, the existence of both classes was an intrinsic necessity if social progress were to be achieved: the poor were to be allowed to compete in a free enterprise system for the material benefits which the wealthy enjoyed, while the wealthy themselves, fearful of being overtaken by their competitors, were encouraged to maintain their position by increasing their exertions. In the Disquisition, then, Calhoun envisaged a dynamic relation between the classes which contrasts singularly with the static reality of slavery, for slavery, as R.M. Hare has pointed out, is primarily a legal status which prevents by law the slave from competing on the same grounds as the freeman. 23 The type of society that Calhoun was describing in the Disquisition was an idealised one which bore little relation to either the southern slave system or to the "wage slavery" of the North, and in his less philosophical moods Calhoun was prepared to concede the point. In 1837, he told the Senate that "There never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labour of the other", 24 but by his own later reckoning this is exactly the type of society which leads to stagnation and decadence: if the wealthy are released from the drudgery of their exertions, supposedly to follow higher cultural pursuits, it is also true
that they lose the incentive to compete to maintain their position, and ultimately it is the community which suffers because the conditions which lead to social progress are abandoned.

Calhoun's interpretation of progress, as economic acquisitiveness, was consonant with, and largely shaped by, the dominant American interpretation of the idea. History had conspired with geography to produce in the American imagination an overwhelming confidence that with due application and industry, the vast natural resources of the continent could be tapped for the nation's benefit. But wealth could only flow from the raw materials once the appropriate scientific and technological processes had been refined and perfected. Between 1815 and 1860, therefore, a stream of technological inventions appeared in America prompted by the industrial revolution. According to Arthur Ekirch, "the older interest of the eighteenth century enlightenment in pure science was supplanted by the increasing domination during the nineteenth-century of utilitarian science."25 Although Ekirch overstates the purely theoretical nature of the Enlightenment's interest in science (could anyone accuse Franklin or Jefferson of being too theoretical?), he is right to stress the practical usefulness of nineteenth century technology, because it was the means whereby the raw materials of the continent were converted into the wealth of the nation. Amongst the most important of these advances were the development of the railroad, the application of electrical power to manufacturing industries, and in the realm of communications, the invention of the telegraph.26

Calhoun, no less than other Americans of his generation,
shared in the faith and optimism of advancing science and technology. In the *Disquisition*, he showed himself keenly sensitive to the effects of such progress on man's condition and on the fabric of social institutions. He maintained, for example, that the vastly increased importance of the role of public opinion was directly attributable to "the many discoveries and inventions made in the last few centuries". Amongst the older discoveries he singled out the "practical application of the magnetic power to the purposes of navigation by the invention of the mariner's compass, the discovery of the mode of making gunpowder and its application to the art of war, and the invention of the art of printing." Each of these had contributed not only to man's material progress but also to a great increase and diffusion of knowledge". "Through the invention of the mariner's compass the globe has been circum-navigated and explored, and all who inhabit it, with but few exceptions, brought within the sphere of an all-pervading commerce, which is daily diffusing over its surface the light and blessings of civilization. Through that of the art of printing the fruits of observation and reflection, of discoveries and inventions, with all the accumulated stores of previously acquired knowledge, are preserved and widely diffused. The application of gunpowder to the art of war has forever settled the long conflict for ascendancy between civilization and barbarism in favor of the former, and thereby guarantied [sic] that whatever knowledge is now accumulated or may hereafter be added shall never again be lost." 28

Important as these older scientific advances were, they were but the foundations--the necessary preconditions-- of
modern technological progress. The more recent developments in chemistry and mechanics had greatly accelerated the pace of change beyond anything that had been previously imagined, and had increased the potential wealth of nations by utilising more efficiently their natural resources. Calhoun recognised the economic implications involved in the application of such inventions to the manufacturing industries, though he was less willing to acknowledge the social and political consequences.

The application of steam to machinery, for example, had "increased many-fold the productive powers of labor and capital", thereby creating a greater degree of wealth for the community; but increased mechanical efficiency implied a corresponding decline in the numbers needed in the labour force, which led both to a higher level of unemployment and a depression in the level of wages. Technological progress thus proved to be a doubled-edged sword: it increased the aggregate wealth of the community but in the process accentuated differences between rich and poor. By the 1830s, social reformers like Robert Dale Owen were beginning to perceive that technology was not an unmixed blessing. In 1830, he wrote: "I see the immense modern powers of production might be a blessing, and that they are a curse. I see that machinery, instead of aiding the labourer, is brought into the market against him; and that it thus reduces his wages and injures his situation." Calhoun, however, refused to concede that such progress could be anything other than beneficial; he accepted that a higher level of unemployment was unavoidable, but saw this as an opportunity for the unemployed to "devote themselves to study and improvement". He was apparently unconcerned as to how they should
do this when they were unable even to obtain an adequate degree of subsistence.

Calhoun's faith that technological advancement would ultimately and inevitably lead to economic progress was a one-sided view, but one which most Americans of his generation shared. The contrary view, represented by Robert Dale Owen's statement cited above, was most definitely a minority position; Owen, along with other social reformers and labour leaders, perceived the social effects of machine technology on individual men and women who were thrown out of work, while Calhoun and the majority could only see the economic benefits which accrued to the community. It is significant that Calhoun singles out as evidence of progress those technological inventions which contribute to an increase and improvement in commercial relations, like "The application of steam to the purposes of travel and transportation by land and water," and the telegraph which rivals "in rapidity even thought itself." All this adds up to Calhoun having a very definite sense of progress as material advancement.

There would seem, however, to be another sense in which Calhoun was conceiving the idea of progress, that is as a gradual improvement in the moral nature of man itself. Throughout the Disquisition, Calhoun refers to the development of man's moral and intellectual faculties as being the primary purpose of society. Presumably, the intellectual improvement of man was partially dependent on the availability of knowledge which in turn relied on improvements in printing techniques. But in what senses did Calhoun think that the essence of man's moral nature could be changed? Indeed, the implication that it
could be changed at all seems to run counter to his other assertions in the text that man's nature was unalterable. We noted in chapter six that Calhoun compared the unchanging nature of man to the universal and immutable laws of astronomy and elsewhere in the Disquisition he was equally emphatic about the impossibility of man overcoming his natural moral make-up: man's "social feelings may", says Calhoun, "... in a state of safety and abundance, combined with high intellectual and moral culture, acquire great expansion and force, but not so great as to overcome this all-pervading and essential law of animated existence"—by which he meant the law of self-preservation. Again, in his discussion of the value of a free press as an organ of public opinion, Calhoun states that "The press may do much—by giving impulse to the progress of knowledge and intelligence—to aid the cause of education and to bring about salutary changes in the condition of society. These, in turn, may do much to explode political errors, to teach how governments should be constructed in order to fulfil their ends, and by what means they can be best preserved when so constructed. They may also do much to enlarge the social and to restrain the individual feelings, and thereby to bring about a state of things when far less power will be required by governments to guard against internal disorder and violence and external danger, and when, of course, the sphere of power may be greatly contracted and that of liberty proportionally enlarged. But all this would not change the nature of man, nor supersede the necessity of government." Given the apparent incontrovertibility of these assertions, what interpretation are we to place on Calhoun's belief that man is, in some way, capable of improve-
There are occasions in the Disquisition where one gains the impression that Calhoun was not asserting the possibility of the personal moral improvement of individuals, so much as the collective moral progress of the community. This interpretation is not without its difficulties for Calhoun specifically states at one point that "public and private morals are so nearly allied [and] .... That which corrupts and debases the community politically must also corrupt and debase it morally." But at another point—during a discussion of the criteria according to which power and liberty are apportioned—Calhoun uses the word "moral" in connection with a number of public or civic qualities, among which are the "different degrees of intelligence, patriotism, and virtue among the mass of the community, and their experience and proficiency in the art of self-government." Now, if the purpose of government, as we have already noted, is to protect and perfect society, and to perfect society "it is necessary to develop the faculties, intellectual and moral, with which man is endowed", this would seem to suggest that government is charged with the task of diffusing a sense of political rather than personal virtue throughout the community. This is seen most clearly in the case of "patriotism", which is pre-eminently a public virtue designed to emphasise the individual's attachment to the community. In all this, Calhoun is not concerned with the personal virtue of individuals in itself (mainly because he does not believe in it), but rather with channelling the natural inclinations of man so that they are harnessed for the public good. Moreover, the way in which
society organizes its political institutions is crucial in determining what elements of man's nature are developed; Calhoun argues that governments of the concurrent majority are more likely to encourage the individual qualities of "knowledge, wisdom, patriotism and virtue" than governments of the numerical majority which foster "cunning, fraud, treachery, and party devotion". Governments must therefore be carefully constructed in such a way as to develop the "character" of the community by enlisting "the individual on the side of the social feelings to promote the good of the whole."

If this interpretation is correct, it has two important implications for an understanding of Calhoun's political theory. In the first place, it reaffirms the argument advanced earlier that Calhoun rejects the individualist approach to politics and instead places a higher value on the development of the community. Secondly, it portrays Calhoun's notion of the community in almost Rousseauian terms as having the attributes of a collective personality which generates a general will and a common good all of its own, independent of the individual moral virtue of its citizens. Calhoun, despairing of any hope of an improvement in the nature of man, looks instead to the ways in which a communal virtue (having as its object the good of the community) may be fabricated out of that flawed nature. The question remains as to how the naturally selfish impulses of man may be negated, and ultimately converted to secure the public welfare. The answer which Calhoun puts forward is substantially the same one that Madison and the Founding Fathers proposed three-quarters of a century
earlier: man's passions must be neutralised by virtue of a sound and balanced constitution. Calhoun, therefore, does not conceive the moral progress of man in terms of the personal improvement in the nature of individuals, but in the capacity of men to construct social institutions which are adequate to the task of restraining his baser instincts and diverting them into creative channels.

Viewed in this light, there is considerable logic in Calhoun's pairing of the "moral" faculties of man with the "intellectual" as the objects of improvement, because the progress of the one is dependent on the progress of the other. If the moral progress of man is comprehended in terms of the increasing efficiency of political institutions to control him, this implies a prior improvement in the capacity of the human mind to grasp the elements which best achieve this. Social institutions can only be properly improved if there is an increase in reliable information about how they operate on the community. Calhoun is acutely aware that the success of social engineering of this kind depends largely on the extent to which it coincides with the temperament of the people. "A constitution, to succeed, must spring from the bosom of the community and must be adapted to the intelligence of the people.... If it does not, it will prove in practice to be not a constitution, but a cumbrous and useless machine...." This does not imply, of course, that constitutions are to be prescribed according to a set of a priori beliefs; Calhoun is simply arguing that the political knowledge necessary to construct a worthwhile and lasting constitution must include information which arises from the historical experience of
the nation. So far from arguing that political constitutions should be based on abstract reason, Calhoun actually believes that they arise from "fortunate circumstances acting in conjunction with some pressing danger". Calhoun is profoundly sceptical of man's ability to "plan and construct constitutional governments, with a full knowledge of the principles on which they were formed, or to reduce them to practice without the pressure of some immediate and urgent necessity." Nevertheless, it remains an ideal for him that constitutions should periodically undergo some deliberately planned change in response to the evolving circumstances of the nation. Calhoun actually makes provision for such change by prescribing a flexible relation between liberty and security; where a community possesses the moral qualities sufficient for self-government, it is entitled to extend the sphere of liberty and contract the sphere of power whilst the reverse is true for a people who have not yet attained the requisite moral qualities.

In this section we have discussed the senses in which Calhoun used the notion of progress, and we have concluded that it was primarily and overwhelmingly used to connote economic and materialistic acquisitiveness. Science and technology in early nineteenth century America provided the most obvious evidence of progress of this kind by converting into wealth more efficiently the nation's resources. Yet there was a secondary sense in which Calhoun used the term progress to mean the gradual adaptation of social institutions to correspond with the character of the people. This is, I think, what he must mean when he talks of moral progress because he emphatically denies that man's nature itself is capable of improvement.
Moreover, Calhoun's remarks coincide with a generally increasing scepticism that man was capable of moral progress. Some, like Henry C. Carey and William Ellery Channing, were able to maintain that moral progress was possible and would be achieved in time, but an increasingly discordant note was struck by men like Timothy Flint, editor of Knickerbocker magazine, who wrote in September 1833 that the "physical improvements of the country have infinitely outbalanced the advance in morals." For Calhoun, progress in both senses of the term was entirely beneficial and desirable and he appears not to have considered the possibility that it was not so for all the people. In the next brief section, we shall examine the scale of values which decreed for Calhoun that economic and political changes were progressive.

(b) "... had been improving..."

In the definition of progress that we suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the word "improving" necessarily implies that a judgement of value has been made in the areas in which some degree of change has taken place. The question arises as to what the scale of values is which determines that such change is desirable and beneficial. This has been the source of much confusion and may account substantially for the lack of precision with which the notion of progress is treated, for, as Sidney Pollard has maintained, the belief in progress implies that there exists a "scale of values outside the areas of history itself, and not historically condit-
ioned, against which the improvement postulated by "Progress" may be measured. 46 But if such standards of judgement are extrinsic to history, from what do they derive their meaning and validity? Prior to the eighteenth century—the century which gave birth to the fully-fledged idea of progress—medieval philosophers derived a teleological explanation of the movement of history from religious ideologies, particularly from Judaeo-Christian ideas. History was not seen as a series of recurring cycles (as the Greeks had postulated), but as a linear movement towards a definite end; 47 in Christian cosmology history was purposeful and deliberate and would eventually culminate in the Second Coming of Christ and the Final Judgement. The secularisation of thought which began in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the rise of modern science did much to convert the Christian notion of Providence into the Enlightenment idea of Progress, though ironically in the process of secularisation it lost its universality as a standard of judgement. 48 Progress, as the Enlightenment philosophes envisaged it, remained teleological, but emphatically not eschatological; the goal of human history would not be realised by an objective event in the future, but by the active effort on the part of mankind to eradicate evil from the world. But in dispensing with the peculiarly objective nature of Christian teleology, the philosophes were forced to substitute their own historically conditioned scale of values and to portray it as a supposedly universal standard of judgement for all human progress.

The essence of the Enlightenment's concept of progress was the optimistic belief that the audacious advances in know-
ledge—particularly in the experimental sciences—could be enlisted in the campaign to better man's condition on earth. Knowledge was the key to all progress because it opened up the way to improvement in all spheres of human endeavour; scientific discoveries, for example, not only made more efficient use of natural resources in the creation of wealth, but it also gave great impetus to developments in medicine and cure.\footnote{The scientific spirit, moreover, applied to society and its institutions, enabled man to create rational theories of explanation which substituted reliable information for metaphysical speculation and superstition. Knowledge truly was power because it gave man the ability to control his environment, and hence his own destiny, and it was this which formed the yardstick by which progress was measured. This habit of thinking, which holds that progress consists in man being able to control more perfectly the environment he inhabits, has persisted into the twentieth century, though the optimism which originally accompanied the mood, has long since evaporated. But the most significant point to grasp is that since the idea of progress was first systematised into a complete doctrine by the Enlightenment, it has projected the assumptions and values which were current in the eighteenth century forward in time to the twentieth, so that the scale of values according to which progress is measured is, after all, historically conditioned. It is only from the perspective of the present, where the belief in progress has a much less controlling influence than it had formerly, that we can appreciate the full extent to which it has dominated the thought patterns of the past two hundred years.}
Little of the present-day disenchantment with the idea of progress existed in early nineteenth century America for the reasons outlined in the previous section. The prospect of developing the resources at their disposal fired Americans with optimism and energy and, as Frederick Jackson Turner noted in 1893, this in turn did much to shape their character as a people. In *The Frontier in American History*, Turner maintained that the "American intellect owes its striking characteristics to the frontier. That coarseness and strength, combined with acuteness and acquisitiveness; that practical inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil; and withal, that buoyancy and exhuberance which comes with freedom—these are the traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier." Given the deep-rootedness of the idea of progress within the American environment, it is difficult to see how Calhoun could have avoided sharing it as a basic assumption. But what was the measure that Calhoun used to determine whether change was progressive or not? In the *Disquisition*, as we have said, economic growth and practical skill in constitution-making were the main senses in which Calhoun envisaged progress taking place, but these were aimed at the more general goal of increasing the sum of human happiness. In March 1846, Calhoun informed the Senate that he was opposed to a war with Great Britain not only because it would disrupt commercial relations between the two countries, but also for "higher reasons".
I am opposed to war as a friend to human improvement, to human civilization, to human progress and advancement.... Civilization has been spreading its influence far and wide, and the general progress of human society has outstripped all that has been previously witnessed.... All this progress, all this growth of human happiness, all this spread of human light and knowledge, will be arrested by war.... And this work is at yet but commenced; it is but the breaking of the dawn of the world's great jubilee. It promises a day of more refinement, more intellectual brightness, more moral elevation, and consequently of more human felicity, than the world has ever seen from its creation.

Calhoun's measure of progress is thus the degree to which human happiness is increased by change and in this he appears to be taking a utilitarian line. Indeed, the utilitarian maxim "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" is an appropriate description of Calhoun's theory of progress, for he recognised that progressive change did not necessarily involve universal happiness; he was prepared to accept that the suffering of some individuals was a regrettable, though unavoidable, necessity tolerable only because the happiness of the greater number would ultimately be increased. He further recognised that the benefits of progressive change were not always immediately diffused through society. Change—particularly violent and unexpected change—was initially likely to bring with it many "temporary evils". "It seems to be a law in the political as well as in the material world", he wrote in the Disquisition, "that great changes cannot be made, except very gradually, without convulsions and revolutions—to be followed by calamities in the beginning, however benefic—
ial they may prove to be in the end." 52

Calhoun was in no doubt that the temporary discomfiture which often accompanied progress had to be submitted to stoically until the tangible benefits became apparent; no useful purpose could be served by opposing such change on the grounds that it brought with it suffering because, as Calhoun argued, it was simply in the nature of things that change was accompanied so often by suffering. He thus accepted that there was a degree of inevitability involved in the mechanism of progressive change which decreed that the highest good of the community was preeminent over the private interests of individuals. This inevitability, moreover, was not simply a part of the historical process—it was also divinely inspired; in the next section we shall examine this more closely.

(c) ’... in the past....'

The idea of progress is primarily thought of as a vision of the future, but it is true to say that it originated as an attempt to make rational sense of the past. Again, it was the scientific frame of mind—with its emphasis on seeking general "laws" of explanation—which inspired Enlightenment historians to approach the past with a new attitude. No longer should history be seen as a succession of interesting, though largely unconnected, events but rather as the unfolding of a vast, predetermined drama. The usual preoccupations of medieval chroniclers with the narrative history of reigns, battles and

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religious controversies gave way to a "scientific" search for historical continuities and similarities in the realm of social and cultural history. Hume's *History of England* reflected precisely the change in emphasis when he declared that the stuff of history consisted in taking "a general survey of the age, so far as regards manners, finances, arms, commerce, arts and sciences. The chief use of history is that it affords materials for disquisitions of this nature."53

Hume's phraseology is particularly instructive because it suggests that history is instrumental in furnishing reliable information which may subsequently be used in the framing of general historical "laws" of development. History was thus assumed to possess a rational structure which was discoverable by careful investigation of sources and the painstaking sifting of evidence.

The new approach to history—which was the nearest equivalent to the Baconian method of inductive inference—demanded that its evidence be drawn from as wide a source as possible, so that the historical continuities emphasised might be portrayed as general "laws". The idea of world history (or universal history) in which cultures and societies were compared and contrasted, was therefore especially attractive to Enlightenment historians. The obvious disparity in the levels of civilisation of various societies, however, led to the notion of historical stages of development. If, as it was assumed, mankind was following a single historical evolution, differences in the level of civilisation between communities could only be explained by maintaining that the time-scale of development varied from society to society. It was further
maintained that in the march towards civilisation, there existed a fixed pattern of historical stages or "states" through which each community had to pass. These states, as Sidney Pollard has written, "were not to be thought of as simple, accidental sequences, but to be logically and scientifically connected, so that each arose necessarily and inherently out of the preceding one, and contained within itself the inescapable seeds of the one following."\footnote{54}

Turgot's *Discours sur les progres successifs de l'esprit humain* (1750), for example, described three necessary stages of mental development: in the first stage (the "theological" stage), the human mind was dominated by superstition and men were believed to be the pawns or playthings of the gods. The second, "metaphysical", stage was thought to be an improvement on the first in the sense that it was sceptical of religious superstition, though without fully grasping the true nature of reality; in place of religious myth and fables, it posited pure rationalist abstractions like "essences" and "faculties". The third and final stage would be reached when man had achieved a scientific or "positive" understanding of himself and the world in which he lived. Turgot's stages of development were followed closely by August Comte in the nineteenth century, though his was by no means the only attempt on the part of the Enlightenment to chart the course of human progress: Turgot's contemporary, the Marquis de Condorcet, formulated the progressive history of mankind in ten epochs, ranging from the primitive tribal stage through to a vision of the future in which the moral faculties of man had themselves been perfected.\footnote{55}

The notion of historical states is certainly the most
distinctive feature of the progressive sense of history and is arguably the most lasting contribution of the Enlightenment to the realm of historiography. Although Calhoun has no occasion in the Disquisition to set down explicitly a fully worked-out philosophy of history, there are clear signs that he accepted the Enlightenment approach, and particularly the existence of historical stages of development. Early in the text, he considers the difficult problem of how to prevent government from abusing its powers whilst at the same time allowing it sufficient power to fulfil its ordinary functions. "The question involves", he says, "difficulties which, from the earliest ages, wise and good men have attempted to overcome—but hitherto with but partial success." In the ensuing paragraph, Calhoun maintains that a number of devices have been resorted to at "the various stages of intelligence and civilisation through which our race has passed" and that prominent amongst these are the use of "superstition, ceremonies, education, religion, [and] organic arrangements...." Now, although Calhoun is talking specifically about the evolution of political or constitutional arrangements, he clearly has the same sense of historical states that Turgot or Condorcet have. The use of superstitious practices and religious ceremonies to control political events bears the hallmark of the most primitive of Turgot's stages of development, the "theological" stage. Calhoun, moreover, cites with evident admiration the Egyptians, the Hindus, the Chinese and the Jews as examples of civilisations which have applied such practices "with consummate wisdom and skill", and which consequently have laid the foundations for "the subsequent advance of our race in civilisation and intelligence." Calhoun
thus sees the present stage of history as developing out of a previous, necessary, stage.56

There are other, equally striking, examples of where Calhoun assumes that the development of humankind is divided into fixed, successive and necessary stages. In this connection, the effect of scientific and technological invention on the development of communities is doubly striking; not only does it furnish in itself evidence of progress, it also provides the means whereby "civilised" societies establish their superiority over "barbarous" ones. "The discovery of gunpowder", writes Calhoun, "and the use of steam as an impelling force, and their application to military purposes have forever settled the question of ascendancy between civilized and barbarous communities in favor of the former."57 This is not to say that barbarous communities will remain forever barbarous; on the contrary, Calhoun assumes that in time they will pass through the barbarous stage and emerge into a state of civilisation.

All these themes came together in Calhoun's attitude to the Revolutions of 1848 which swept the European continent, beginning in France in February of that year. In his correspondence with his daughter Anna and her husband Thomas G. Clemson, charge d'affaires in Brussels, he revealed his scepticism that France should be able to sustain the fruits of the revolution without degenerating into anarchy and disorder. On April 1, he told his son-in-law that "Thus far the revolution in France exhibits to the inexperienced eye a fair prospect; but I see much to excite in me deep distrust as to the result. Indeed, I have no hope, that she will ever be able to establish any
government deserving to be called a republick." France, he thought, was "not prepared to become a Republick" because the character of the people was too impetuous and unrestrained. At the end of the month, he spelled out to his daughter his objections to too violent a change in political institutions: "It ought never be forgotten, that the past is the parent of the present, and that the past condition of Europe, which has given birth to a state of advance and civilization, far exceeding any heretofore known to the world, could not be a bad one. It may have, indeed, contained, within itself, causes calculated to retard, or prevent a farther progress, but these ought to have been removed cautiously, as experience pointed them out, without overthrowing all at once the peace of Governments, and the social condition of communities, which led to such great and happy results; especially as such an overthrow must of necessity be accompanied by such universal embarrassment and distress, and run the hazard of a retrograde, instead of an advance movement, in the condition of the race." But if he had little faith in the successful outcome of the French Revolution, he was certainly more optimistic about the German one. On April 13, 1848 he told Thomas Clemson: "Germany seems to be in a fair way to be completely revolutionised, and I hope permanently improved. I have much more hope for her, than France. Her old institutions, as I suppose we may call them now, furnish an excellent foundation, on which to errect (sic), if not a federal Republick like ours, a federal Constitutional Government, United at least in a Zollverein league...." There is no inconsistency involved here, nor a personal preference for the German people; it was simply that Calhoun felt the character of the German people to be more capable of sustain
ing a constitutional government. Towards the end of June, when the French uprising was nearing its termination, Calhoun once more explained its failure: "There is no prospect of a successful termination of the efforts of France to establish a free popular Government; nor was there any from the beginning. She has no elements out of which such a government could be formed; and if she had, she still must fail from her total misconception of the principles, on which such a government, to succeed, must be constructed." In his attitude towards the European Revolutions of 1848, Calhoun displays a highly developed sense of the social forces which shape the cultural and progressive development of nations.

But if Calhoun accepts the Enlightenment's view of the past as being categorised into clearly defined historical states, he adds to it a providential dimension which is entirely unknown in the works of Turgot or Condorcet. Not only does history unfold according to a discoverable pattern, but it is a pattern which is designed by a benign Providence. Surveying the effects of technological progress in the Disquisition, he wrote: "What will be their final bearing, time only can decide with any certainty. That they will, however, greatly improve the condition of man ultimately, it would be impious to doubt. It would be to suppose that the all-wise and beneficient (sic) Being, the Creator of all, had so constituted man as that the employment of the high intellectual faculties with which He has been pleased to endow him—in order that he might develop the laws that control the great agents of the material world and make them subservient to his use—would prove to him the cause of permanent evil, and not of permanent good. If, then, such a
supposition be inadmissible, they must, in their orderly
and full development, end in his permanent good." 63 Progress
for Calhoun was therefore benevolent, inevitable and designed
and there was considerable logic in this position. If History,
like Nature, operated according to fixed patterns of behaviour,
was it not reasonable to suppose that there existed an unseen,
guiding Hand? John Adams had earlier crystallised the sentiment
aptly when he wrote that the "progressive improvement in the
condition of man is apparently the purpose of a superintending
Providence", 64 but that does not explain the absence of providen-
tial attribution in the writings of the European Enlightenment.
One likely reason for its absence is that the strain of religious
scepticism, which made hardly a dent in American piety, domi-
ated the style of the European—and especially the French—
Enlightenment. Moreover the writers who enunciated the progress-
ive history of mankind tended to be violently, even viciously,
anticlerical; Condorcet, for example, was described by a
contemporary biographer as "fanatically irreligious and smitten
with a sort of hydrophobia on this subject." 65

Once again, Calhoun's idea of progress may be seen to
conform broadly to the views of the Enlightenment; his sense
of the historical process as moving from one stage of develop-
ment to a succeeding, higher, stage was a classic characteristic
of Enlightenment historiography. Even his insistence that the
gradual progress of mankind was intended by Providence does
little to set him apart from the European writers; Condorcet,
for all his anticlericalism, is not categorically atheistic
and even if he were it would be a minority position amongst
the philosophes. In the less sceptical, more pious environment
of America, Calhoun's providentialism seems not at all out of place.

(d) "... and would continue to improve in the future."

The most familiar aspect of the idea of progress to modern ears is the belief that the future will bring unlimited improvement in the condition of man. Although the present generation is less inclined to accept that advances in scientific discovery and technological development are an unambiguous blessing, the general feeling persists that the future will, in some way, be better than the past. To the men of the Enlightenment, the sense of progress as an ineluctable movement forward was both more marked and more optimistic, though they too, as modern scholars have noted, were not without their reservations. Peter Gay has maintained that the philosophes' optimistic view of progress was "controlled by an ineradicable strain of pessimism". The writings of Hume, D'Alembert, Condillac, Turgot and supremely Voltaire, testify to the belief that even though progress is inevitable and ultimately benign, it does exact a price and that setbacks are a part of the necessary rhythm of scientific, social and moral advance. Nevertheless, an appreciation of the Enlightenment's less cheerful moments ought not to obscure the fundamental exhilaration and hope it cherished for the future.

If, on the surface, this optimism appears to be a triumph of faith over reason, it is so in a deeper sense than the philosophes themselves would have cared to admit,
for although they cloaked their hope in the garments of scientific rigor, they failed to appreciate (or would not admit) that there was a limit to what could be achieved by scientific means. The application of supposedly scientific techniques to the study of history could never establish general "laws" with the same certainty that they could in the experimental sciences because, quite simply, there was no way in which their tentative hypotheses could be empirically validated. Moreover, the Enlightenment's attempt to impose a fixed sequence of development on the raw material of history betrayed the fact that their scientific temper was controlled by their intellectual and ideological preconceptions. This is most clearly so in the case of Condorcet who marks the turning point from one epoch to another in the \textit{Esquisse} with events like the invention of the alphabet, the invention of printing and, of course (and ironically) the rise of modern science. The superimposition of such \textit{post hoc} categorisations owed less to science that to the \textit{philosophes}' intellectual passions.

Having said that, it is not difficult to understand why they should have felt the need to construct a theory—or rather a vision—of systematic betterment in the future. The very real gains they had witnessed in their lifetimes, and indeed helped to bring about, in the realm of knowledge led them to extrapolate from their own experience an unbroken continuity of advancement. After all, the heart of Enlightenment was the belief that the gloomy, confining fetters of the Middle Ages had been thrown off and that the world could now bask in the penetrating light of reason. All that had
gone before was but the prelude to the real dawn of civilisation in which mankind could, at last, subdue his environment and control his own destiny. The philosophes believed that their generation had had a foretaste of what could be achieved through knowledge—practical, useful, productive knowledge—which would set man free to develop in all kinds of ways, socially, morally, economically, and even in some instances, biologically. They were so intoxicated by their own achievements and thrilled by the endless possibilities that knowledge had opened up to them, that they could not seriously contemplate anything other than a continuous line of advance. Progress for the writers of the Enlightenment—albeit tinged with a grim pessimism—was as much a psychological necessity as it was an act of faith.

For Calhoun, whose mental habits and natural assumptions were shaped by the atmosphere of strict Calvinism in which he was reared, (even though he soon rejected its harsh tenets in favour of a mild deism), a faith in the capacity of man to rise above the exigencies of his environment was never unbounded. Calhoun did not visualise, as Condorcet did, a gradual and inevitable progress in the nature of man itself, but he did expect that advances in knowledge and technical expertise would enable man's impulses to be kept more perfectly in check. Although he did not explicitly formulate a theory of continuous future improvement, there are good grounds for believing that he assumed such would be the case. In economics this was certainly so. The previous experience of America had been an unbroken advance in technological development leading to economic accumulation and, in the 1830s and 1840s, this
seemed likely to continue without limit. Of course, Calhoun's rigorous sense of logic ought to have told him that the natural resources at the nation's disposal were not limitless, but the danger of their depletion was not imminent. What was of greater concern to Calhoun was the prospect that economic advance would bring with it new social problems which would have to be solved politically and institutionally. In the Disquisition, Calhoun envisaged that economic progress would exact its price in terms of class conflict, for "as the community becomes populous, wealthy, refined, and highly civilised, the difference between the rich and poor will become more strongly marked.... With the increase of this difference, the tendency to conflict between them will become stronger...."69 Indeed, the whole concept of the concurrent majority, which we shall be discussing in the next chapter, is Calhoun's response to precisely this kind of problem; government of the concurrent majority would seek to harmonise the interests of the various sections of society and direct them towards the common good. The Disquisition itself is therefore an attempt to refine existing institutional arrangements (with the aid of new information constructively applied) in the light of evolving economic and social circumstances.

If Calhoun envisaged a continuing and perpetual progress in the condition of man, he was both less exhilarated and less utopian than the European philosophes were. His matter-of-fact attitude may be attributed less to personal conviction than to the overwhelming pervasiveness of the idea of progress in America. For Americans, progress—especially economic and political progress—had become a part of their way of life, a
phenomenon to be assumed, not to be questioned or analysed. Unlike the European Enlightenment, which only conceived the idea and imagined its possibilities, the Americans had discovered the practical reality of the idea and were busy putting it into effect. Like so many other ideas which were inherited from the Enlightenment, "progress" conformed too precisely to the American experience to remain for long the self-conscious doctrine it did in Europe; it was quickly subsumed within the cultural mainstream and lost its intoxicating flavour. Calhoun is therefore a good representative of early nineteenth century American opinion on progress for two reasons: first, the way in which an unarticulated, though very definite sense of progress controls the bulk of his political writing and second, the hard-headed recognition that there is a limit to the areas in which human progress can actually take place. Calhoun's realism would have led him to dissent from Condorcet's opinion that Nature "has set no limit to the perfection of human faculties."
Chapter Nine: The Concurrent Majority—Organic vs Atomistic Conceptions of Society

Throughout this dissertation we have been examining aspects of Calhoun’s Disquisition on Government with a view to establishing the validity of Louis Hartz’s suggested categorisation, the "Reactionary Enlightenment". Hitherto we have been particularly concerned with clarifying aspects of his intellectual apparatus and style of discourse and this has included an examination of his philosophical method and his religious views, an evaluation of his propositions of human nature, and latterly an appreciation of his concept of social progress as the ultimate purpose of political association. In each of these areas, we have concluded, there are elements of Calhoun’s thinking which conform more nearly to the intellectual spirit of the Enlightenment than to any other cohesive system of thought. This is not to imply, as Wilson Carey McWilliams does, that Calhoun’s writings “are entirely based on Enlightenment concepts”, ¹ for as we have already said, the Enlightenment style was characterised as much by its humanitarian and egalitarian values—which Calhoun emphatically does not share—as it was by its supposedly objective, scientific method. In the previous two chapters we have caught more than a glimpse of Calhoun’s objections to the value-system of the Enlightenment: his attachment to liberty, for example, though considerable, is not of the same categorical order it was for the Natural Rights theorists he sought to oppose; the degree of liberty enjoyed by individual citizens is always determined by the collective sense of
the community—however this is expressed—and does not exist as an abstract, prior right. Similarly, Calhoun not only rejects equality of condition either as a political axiom or as an aim of the political process, but he goes further and makes inequality, coupled with man's competitive spirit, essential to the realisation of personal and social progress. If Nature was to provide the standard according to which society was organised, men could not fail to be impressed by the orderly differentiations which were built into her structure by a benign Providence. Thoughtful social theory, therefore, would not concern itself with eradicating such inequalities amongst men, but with reproducing them within an hierarchical social structure. On these points of political value, Calhoun differed strikingly with the writers of the classic European Enlightenment and with the leading thinkers of the American tradition of Natural Law. 2

It is fair to say, however, that important as these values and concepts are, they represent only a partial view of Calhoun's political thinking because they deal exclusively with the ends of politics and not with the means of achieving those ends. If, as we have argued in chapter seven, Calhoun's ideas of liberty, equality and power are controlled by his belief that social progress is the ultimate telos of the political process, it remains to be seen how he proposes to translate that into institutional practice. In other words, what kind of governmental mechanism does he envisage which is capable of apportioning the proper quanta of liberty and authority and, at the same time, of harnessing the natural energy which exists within society, so as to produce the
optimum conditions under which social progress might be realised? In this chapter we shall be looking at the way in which Calhoun proposes to implant within the structure of government a mechanism which attempts to solve the fundamental problem of politics by reconciling liberty and authority and thereby of producing a stable and balanced social system. The remarkable device by which this is accomplished is the concurrent majority.

I say "remarkable" not because of the ingenuity involved in the construction of this device (though it is as ingenious as it is complex), but because of the breadth of what it was supposed to achieve. If Calhoun is to be believed, the concurrent majority would not only succeed in making government accountable to those whom it governed—the perennial preoccupation of liberal-constitutional theory—but it would also solve the problem of how to involve the whole community in the process of decision-making, and thus create an ideological consensus which would bind the community together. This concern with making the government the agent of all the people is apparent in both the Disquisition and Calhoun's later speeches. In May 1847, Calhoun issued a public reply to Robert L.Dorr of Dansville refuting charges that he was seeking to subvert the will of the majority: "You will see", Calhoun maintained, "that if I am opposed to a government based on the principle that a mere numerical majority has a right to govern, I am equally opposed to the government of a minority. They are both the government of a part over a part. I am in favour of the government of the whole; the only really and truly popular republican government—a government
based on the concurrent majority—the joint assent of all the parts, through their respective majority of the whole. In the Disquisition, this concern is reflected in Calhoun's assertion that it was a "leading error" to "confound the numerical majority with the people", for

If the numerical majority were really the people, and if to take its sense truly were to take the sense of the people truly, a government so constituted would be a true and perfect model of a popular constitutional government; and every departure from it would detract from its excellence. But as such is not the case, as the numerical majority, instead of being the people, is only a portion of them, such a government, instead of being a true and perfect model of the people's government, that is, a people self-governed, is but the government of a part over a part—the major over the minor portion.

In this very obvious sense, then, the problem to which Calhoun was proposing a solution was one which could only have arisen from liberal conceptions of government and the state. Absolute governments, as Hobbes had shown, had neither the need nor the means of being representative since the several interests of the citizens were supposedly wrapped up in the will of the sovereign. For Hobbes, the fear of anarchy and conquest were the paramount evils which confronted society, and he was prepared to tolerate an absolute and uncontrollable sovereign power, rather than risk the disintegration of the state. Liberal-constitutionalists, however, emphasised the danger of an irresponsible sovereign power tyrannising its subjects, and sought ways of making government accountable to the governed. Locke, the co-author with Montesquieu, of modern
constitutional theory, had evolved a system of checks on absolute power which in early nineteenth century America was becoming increasingly unsatisfactory; following the model of Newtonian physics, he had made weight of numbers the decisive factor in determining the will of the community because "it being necessary to that which is one body to move one way; it is necessary the Body should move that way whither the greater force carries it, which is the consent of the majority: or else it is impossible it should act or continue one Body, one Community, which the consent of every individual that united into it, agreed that it should; and so every one is bound by that consent to be concluded by the majority."6 In seventeenth century England, where the wresting of any power from the King was considered an achievement,7 the majoritarian implications of Locke's theory were hardly relevant, but in America of the nineteenth century political practice was continually exposing the inadequacy of simply counting numbers in determining the will of the community. It was no longer sufficient that the government should be accountable to a portion of the community, for all that meant was that the portion of the community to which the government was accountable, was itself, in effect, the ruling class. Locke apparently seems not to have recognised this possibility (mainly because, as C.B. Macpherson has said, he did not share the "concern with the democratic principle of majority rule which was to be the focus of much American political thinking in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries....")8 though Rousseau, who did, sacrificed practicability for an abstract symmetry.9 It is this problem—of finding within the
community a collective and unified consensus, a Rousseauian "general will"—that Calhoun is addressing in his theory of the concurrent majority. He recognises that the solution proposed by Rousseau of acquiring the consent of each member of the community before putting a particular policy into effect is impracticable, though if it were at all possible to achieve it would be a "perfect government". The concurrent majority represents a median point between the outright majoritarianism implied in Lockean theory and the doctrinaire attempt by Rousseau to instil a sense of unanimity in the community.

The essence of republican government which Americans embraced so enthusiastically in the 1770s was, as Thomas Paine remarked, "the good of the whole, in contradistinction to the despotic form which makes the good of the sovereign, or of one man, the only object of good government". The difficulty, however, which became increasingly apparent in the early decades of the nineteenth century, was that there did not appear to be a single, unified interest which bound the whole of American society together. The diversity of interests and classes which Madison, in the Federalist 51, had imagined to be a source of security to minority groups, was becoming instead the source of group conflict which in turn led to political factionalism. The almost universal condemnation of Faction which characterised the early years of the Republic, gave way to the realisation that the United States was an extremely heterogeneous collection of communities and that if a single public interest existed at all, it was too much to expect the various sections to recognise it. Wisdom, courage and virtue, the prerequisites of good republican government,
increasingly surrendered to a narrow and self-seeking representation of interests. By the 1830s and 1840s, moreover, it was becoming clear that minor, local interests were being subsumed within the arc of two great, identifiable and ideologically incompatible sections: the rapidly industrialising North with a system of free labour and the degenerating agricultural "Slave Power" of the South. The political and social values of either section were sufficiently at odds with the other to ensure a complete breakdown in sectional relations. The Civil War was the result.

The circumstances of the sectional conflict exposed an unenviable—and in some ways, unanswerable—problem which political theorists had failed to come to terms with: how to reconcile within a single polity two interests which hold fundamentally opposite views of the nature of government and society and the intrinsic value and dignity of individual human beings? Actually, there were two perfectly respectable points of view involved in the conflict, each drawing on, to a greater or lesser extent, the elements of Lockean theory which had historically played so important a role in the nation's founding. 12 The North believed that the professions of the American creed which were contained in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution implied a particular view which the South could not accept because of the peculiar historical, cultural, geographical and economic position in which she found herself. The South, on the other hand, believed that within the Union she had a right to express her point of view and live according her own rules and customs. Moreover, as a minority section (and a permanent one at that), she
demanded the right to the equal protection of the law for her institutions against the encroachments of a northern majority. It was in this latter form that Calhoun perceived the problem, that is as protection for a defenceless and permanent minority, and in this sense he was drawing on a well-established theme in American political theory.

Calhoun's concern with the protection of minorities within the community is actually an extension of the liberal-constitutionalist preoccupation of protecting the subject from the uncontrollable power of his rulers. "If there be a political proposition universally true", Calhoun maintained in 1836, "one which springs directly from the nature of man, and is independent of circumstances—it is that irresponsible power is inconsistent with liberty, and must corrupt those who exercise it". The solution to "irresponsible power" which Calhoun proposed was the creation of a constitution, a framework of rules imposed on government by the people who were the original authors of government. In a letter to Samuel D.Ingham, Secretary of the Treasury, in October 1830 Calhoun maintained that "To protect the subject against the Government is in fact the only object & value of a Constitution. The government needs no constitution. It is the governed that needs its protection."14

Now, if protection of the ruled from abuse of power by their rulers is the fundamental purpose of Calhoun's constitution, it is indeed an ironic one on two counts. In the first place, it is strange that Calhoun should have so tender a regard for the rights of the ruled when he has already cheerfully forfeited on their behalf a teleology which would have
afforded them supreme protection—that is, the theory of Natural Rights. What more all-embracing a form of protection could the citizen require than one in which his life, liberty and property were fully guaranteed, and in which government was held to the performance of certain specified functions, beyond which it was not legitimate for it to stray? We have seen in chapter seven how the theory of Natural Rights constituted an absolute standard of behaviour for governments, which were conceived as the servants of society and the individuals who comprised it. But we saw too that Calhoun went out of his way to demolish Natural Rights propositions because an acceptance of them would have implied that black slaves were fully entitled to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. What is ironic about Calhoun's belief that the function of a constitution is to protect the ruled from the aggressiveness of their rulers is that he seems to be reimposing on the structure of government limitations from which he has previously liberated it.

The irony, however, doesn't end there, for Calhoun goes on to compound it with a contradiction. In his zeal to destroy Natural Rights and to seek legitimacy for his alternative conception of government, Calhoun was led to describe government as a divine institution. Indeed, Calhoun went so far as to contrast the divinity of government with the peculiarly human construction of the constitution: "Constitution is the contrivance of man, while government is of divine ordination. Man is left to perfect what the wisdom of the Infinite ordained as necessary to preserve the race." But the point is, if government is thought of as a divine institution, why is it...
that it needs to be restrained at all? Does this not imply some incompetence on the part of the Divine Creator?

Government, Calhoun has already said, arises as a natural phenomenon, out of the tensions engendered by the dual nature of man. Although to a degree he is a social animal, man is fundamentally selfish in that he follows an innate instinct for material possession and security. This brings him into conflict with other individuals who are likewise following the same instincts of their nature. The result is "a universal state of conflict between individual and individual, accompanied by all the connected passions of suspicion, jealousy, anger, revenge—followed by insolence, fraud and cruelty, and... ending in a state of universal discord and confusion, destructive of the social state and the ends for which it is ordained."\(^{16}\) Now, this portrait of unorganised society is as grim as any of the state of nature envisaged by Hobbes, and can only be prevented by instituting "a controlling power" which "wherever vested or by whomsoever exercised, is Government."\(^{17}\) So, for Calhoun, government is that institution which possesses sufficient power to prevent discord and conflict amongst individuals; and because it performs so high a function, Calhoun accords it the status of a divine institution. In this connection, Calhoun, unlike the social contract theorists, makes the origin of government a function not of rational choice, freely arrived at, but of necessity. "Like breathing", he says, "it is not permitted to depend on our volition. Necessity will force it on all communities in some one form or another."\(^{18}\) But this still does not answer our question: if Calhoun grounds the existence
of government in the necessity of preserving order, where
does he then find the need to impose control on that govern-
ment?

The purpose of government is to protect and perfect society, but, say Calhoun, the institution itself suffers from "a strong tendency to disorder and abuse of its powers" because "The powers which it is necessary for government to possess in order to repress violence and preserve order cannot execute themselves. They must be administered by men in whom, like others, the individual are stronger than the social feelings." The fatal flaw in human nature thus prevents government from being wholly good and altruistic. At this stage of the argument, it is important to grasp that Calhoun is using the term "government" not to describe the legal status of a properly constituted authority, but rather to describe any person or group of persons which is capable of grasping the reins of power and performing the functions of governing. This concern with the actuality of the exercise of power is once more a reflection of Calhoun's realism, for he recognises that whoever is the government, may not necessarily be legitimately entitled to that status. Legitimacy is only created when government is held to strict account and to the performance of certain well-delineated functions—in Locke, it was the protection of Natural Rights, in Calhoun it is the protection and perfection of society. But the need to limit the operations of government is traced directly back to Calhoun's propositions of human nature because "the powers vested in them [the individuals who constitute the government] to prevent injustice and oppression on
the part of others will, if left unguarded, be by them converted into instruments to oppress the rest of the community. That by which this is prevented is what is meant by constitution, in its most comprehensive sense, when applied to government."\(^{20}\)

It appears, then, that Calhoun is about to return to the liberal-constitutionalist fold by reimposing on his previously uncontrolled and divine government certain restrictions to its power. The constitution is therefore crucial, but difficult to construct because it must be based on a sound and reliable knowledge of human nature and social principles. Calhoun goes so far as to say that the construction of a perfect constitution—one which "would completely counteract the tendency of government to abuse... has thus far exceeded human wisdom and possibly ever will."\(^{21}\) Nevertheless, he is prepared to identify some of the essential principles involved. In the first place, the government cannot be controlled by the institution of a higher power because that "would be but to change the seat of authority, and to make the higher power, in reality, the government, with the same tendency on the part of those who might control its powers to pervert them into instruments of aggrandizement."\(^{22}\) Nor can it be accomplished by depriving the government of any of its essential powers because that would make it "too feeble" to perform its functions of protecting and perfecting society. Calhoun was always aware that limiting the powers of government was a delicate operation because unless the right balance was struck, there was the danger of emasculating the government to the degree that it was unable to successfully protect and
perfect society; government had to possess sufficient power to repel foreign aggressors and to defend its citizens and to maintain internal public order, otherwise there was no point in its existence. The problem faced by Calhoun in this regard was substantially the same as the one faced by the Founding Fathers three-quarters of a century earlier: what is the appropriate balance between the liberty of the citizens and the authority of their government. In principle, at least, Calhoun's solution followed that of Madison.

Calhoun, we have seen, discounted the notion of creating a superior agency to control the operations of government because this would simply transfer ultimate power to this new agency and make it, in effect, the government. What Calhoun proposes, instead, is to build into the structure of government itself the means of resisting its own aggressiveness. He proposes to explain "on what principles government must be formed in order to resist by its own interior structure—or to use a single term, organism—the tendency to abuse of power." 23 Now, this is precisely what Madison intended in the Federalist 51; compare the striking similarity of ideas and language; Madison maintains that the prevention of government from abusing its powers can only be achieved "by so contriving the interior structure of the government as that its several constituent parts may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places." 24 Madison is primarily concerned with preventing any single branch of government from accumulating to itself an over-preponderance of power at the expense of the other branches. Calhoun, however, is concerned that government should be accountable to the ruled. Both accept,
in Madison's words, that "A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions." It is in the "auxiliary precautions" that Calhoun and Madison differ, and the difference may be attributed to evolving historical conditions. This is not to say that Madison did not recognise the problem that Calhoun was addressing, for again in the Federalist 51, he specifically mentions the problem of the tyranny of the majority: "It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure." But for Madison, this existed as an abstract possibility, which, if it arose in practice, could be counteracted by the natural diversity of interests which existed in the United States. For Calhoun and the South, however, the tyranny of a powerful and aggressive majority was actually threatening their way of life. The solution that Madison had predicted had proved to be an inadequate safeguard; he had maintained that the possibility of the nation dividing into two great hostile parties—a majority and a minority—was a remote one because the size and diversity of interests would "render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole very improbable, if not impracticable." Recent history had shown, however, that the country had split into two ideological camps with precisely the effects that Madison had hoped would not occur.
The problem that Calhoun was addressing was precisely how to avoid a situation where a minority was being unjustly treated by a majority. He agreed with Madison that the primary check on government was through the people by means of the right of suffrage, but maintained that this alone was an insufficient safeguard. All that the right of suffrage could possibly accomplish was to "give complete control to those who elect over the conduct of those they have elected." So, suffrage makes "those elected the true and faithful representatives of those who elected them." Government is not now the irresponsible power it formerly was, but it is now the direct agent of the people who elected it. The ultimate effect of suffrage, therefore, is to make a majority of the community the source of government "without counteracting in the least the tendency of the government to oppression and abuse of its power." The fatal flaw in this scheme of things—which makes suffrage in itself insufficient as a safeguard—is the fact that society, the community, is not a monolithic entity possessing a single, unified interest. It is made up of individuals and groups which have different and often conflicting interests. So, ironically, what Madison had imagined would be a safeguard against majority tyranny—the diversity of interests—had actually contributed to it. Calhoun rightly maintains that if there existed a single, national interest, there would be no need to pile further checks onto the government in order to make it accountable; the only question which would concern the members of the community would be who was the wisest and most fit to understand how the national interest could best be served.
But this is manifestly not the case; every society is made up of a number of heterogeneous interests which vie with each other to gain the attention and protection of the government. In the resulting struggle, the discrete interests will combine with each other in order to gain a majority to obtain control of the government; the eventual outcome is that the community is split into a majority and a minority party.

(Calhoun says that the main motivation for wanting to capture control of the government is in order to advance the peculiar economic interests of certain groups. But there is a subsidiary reason: the government itself possesses vast powers which it needs to fulfil its functions of protection and perfection; that is, it "must be clothed with powers sufficient to call forth the resources of the community" and to this end it must have at its command large scale military and civil establishments, which in turn must be managed by a "host of employees, agents and officers". The combined effect of this "must necessarily place under the control of government an amount of honours and emoluments sufficient to excite profoundly the ambition of the aspiring and the cupidity of the avaricious, and to lead to the formation of hostile parties and violent party conflicts and struggles to obtain the control of the government."

So, if suffrage is not a sufficient safeguard, because it merely makes the government the agent of the numerical majority instead of the whole people, what other organism can be adopted? Calhoun says that a written constitution, while it has "many and considerable advantages" is not sufficient
either unless there is the means of compelling the majority to observe its provisions. There is a natural tendency, says Calhoun, for the majority to regard limitations to the exercise of its power as an unnecessary inconvenience, and a corresponding belief on the minority's part that its protection lies in the strict observance of the constitution. But for this to work successfully, the minority must possess an enforcing mechanism. It is not enough that the minority should have the explicit protection of the constitution, if the majority is in actual possession of all the organs of the state; even if the government is organised in such a way that the legislative, executive and judicial powers are kept separate, this is insufficient to prevent the majority from placing its agents in the strategic positions of influence in each branch, including the judicial. As early as 1830, Calhoun recognised that "there is not the least practical difference between a government of unlimited (sic) powers, and one of limited powers on paper, but with unlimited right of concussion (sic, construction?)" 34

What Calhoun is saying is that all the devices conceived by Madison and the Founding Fathers had proved to be unequal to the task of preventing a fixed majority from tyrannising a minority, and that a further protective device was needed. In the Discourse, his long essay on constitutional theory, Calhoun had argued that the Founders had intended to establish the government of the United States on the principle of the concurrent majority, but that political practice had perverted the principle. 35 Now, Calhoun was proposing to reestablish it as the operational principle of American politics by refining
the Framers' original formulation and adding fresh institutional checks. The essence of the concurrent majority was that it aimed at preventing any one single interest or set of interests from gaining control of the government for its own benefit and to the detriment of other interests within the community. This could only be properly achieved by "taking the sense of each interest or portion of the community which may be unequally and injuriously affected by the action of the government separately, through its own majority or in some other way by which its voice may be fairly expressed, and to require the consent of each interest either to put or to keep the government in action." Calhoun further proposed to divide the powers of the government amongst the various interests, so that each possessed a concurrent voice in the execution of the laws or in their veto.

Two steps were therefore necessary in the establishment of representative government: the right of suffrage, whereby the numerical sense of the community was expressed by the people collectively, and the concurrent voice which supplemented the right of suffrage, and which was designed to collect the sense of the various interests of which the community was composed. Only by adopting both modes of representation could the will of the community be properly gauged, and not simply the will of the majority.

Calhoun is, however, prepared to concede that some objections may be made to this system of collecting the sense of the community. In the first place, the difficulty of constructing a government which embodied perfectly the principle of concurrence is admitted openly by Calhoun, though he does
contend that this is a feature of all constitutional governments. Indeed, Calhoun makes the interesting observation that "the tendency of all governments is from the more complex and difficult of construction to the more simple and easily constructed, and, finally, to absolute monarchy as the most simple of all." It is not difficult to see the reasonableness of Calhoun's claim in this connection, for the more responsible the government is to the people it governs, the more rules and devices are necessary to ensure its accountability. What is a little more startling is Calhoun's utter lack of faith in the ability of man to construct such rules and devices according to rational and calculated decision. So great is the complexity of proper constitutional governments, maintains Calhoun, that their construction "has been the result, not so much of wisdom and patriotism, as of favorable combinations of circumstances. They have for the most part grown out of the struggles between conflicting interests which, from some fortunate turn, have ended in compromise by which both parties have been admitted, in some way or another, to have a separate and distinct voice in the government." Even if it were possible for men to acquire the wisdom to plan comprehensively their own political institutions, it would be "difficult to find any community sufficiently enlightened and patriotic to adopt such a government without the compulsion of some pressing necessity." Calhoun is thus not optimistic about the rational planning of governmental institutions.

A second objection which he thinks may plausibly be made to the concurrent majority is that under such a government
it would be practically impossible to obtain a sufficient degree of consensus amongst the diverse interests to put the government into operation. If each interest has a veto on the action of the government, that would effectively mean that the government of a particular community would remain inactive until unanimity was achieved; in times of grave crisis, so the objection runs, it would mean that the government would be paralysed and unable to meet the needs of its citizens. Calhoun's answer to this objection is compelling. He concedes that where no emergency exists, it would be difficult to achieve a consensus amongst the interests on a common policy, but he is not unduly alarmed at this prospect. Indeed, this is what his whole theory was originally intended to establish—the virtual paralysis of government in the absence of unanimity. Calhoun wants all the major interests to agree on a particular policy before it becomes law in order to avoid unjust coercion of dissenting minorities. But in times of emergency would this system not work to the disadvantage of the nation? In wartime, for example, where a speedy response is of the essence, would not the need to establish a unanimous consensus cause fatal delay in the protection of the state? No, says Calhoun, because in times of national crisis, the urgency of the situation would stimulate an unusual degree of unanimity: "When something must be done", he wrote, "and when it can be done only by the united consent of all—the necessity of the case will force a compromise...." In times of crisis, therefore, the various interests of the community will have a "disposition to harmonize" in the interest of self-preservation.
The essence of the concurrent majority is its ability to reconcile the various interests which make up the community through the spirit of compromise. By giving each interest a veto on the action of the government, it becomes crucial that "each portion, in order to advance its own peculiar interests, would have to conciliate all others by showing a disposition to advance theirs." If the government can only operate with the consent of all, then compromise is essential if government is to operate at all. Calhoun says openly that it is obvious that if the action of the government were arrested for even a short time, the community would be subject to "convulsions and anarchy". Self-interest would therefore dictate that a degree of compromise was essential.

What Calhoun is attempting to do by the principle of the concurrent majority is to substitute the spirit of unanimity and compromise for that of coercion. In governments of the numerical majority, where weight of numbers decides the policy of the whole community, the minority has no recourse to a higher appeal, other than persuasion at election times. Once a decision is made, the whole community is bound to obey, and if a dissenting minority resists (as South Carolina did during the Nullification Crisis), then it is regarded as legitimate for the government to use force of arms to assert the authority of the law. So, ultimately, the majoritarian implications of Lockean theory ground themselves in force, and Calhoun recognises this. But in governments of the concurrent majority, force (in the literal sense of physical compulsion) plays no part in the implementation of public policy because all the interested parties will already given their prior assent to a
particular policy. It is true that necessity will persuade conflicting interests to modify their attitude and to seek compromise, but this necessity rests on the acknowledgement that for each to give way a little in the interest of self-preservation is better than to resist outright and to risk anarchy and internal collapse. Calhoun also draws the distinction between the "motive, the feeling, the aim which characterize the act in the two cases" (that is, governments based on the majoritarian and concurrent principles respectively). Where a minority is literally coerced into accepting the will of the majority "it is done with that reluctance and hostility ever incident to enforced submission to what is regarded as injustice and oppression, accompanied by the desire and purpose to seize on the first favorable opportunity for resistance." But where the principle of compromise is institutionally embodied in the decision-making process, the respective portions submit "willingly and cheerfully, under the impulse of an exalted patriotism, impelling all to acquiesce in whatever the common good requires." 41

Now, there are good grounds for believing that Calhoun was overestimating both the capacity of compromise to effect social harmony and the inclination of individual interests to submerge their own views and take an enlarged view of national policy. There is something paradoxical about Calhoun, the uncompromising genius of the South, appealing for compromise in the midst of the crisis which was to split the Union apart, for although Calhoun grounds his theory of government in compromise, he was not prepared to extend that principle to the practical politics of the 1840s. His personal correspondence
during the latter half of the 1840s, the period in which his political texts were composed, bears striking testimony to his increasing personal intractability. In February 1849, he told J.H. Hammond that "Now is the time to vindicate our rights. We ought rather than to yield an inch, take any alternative, even if it should be disunion, and I trust that such will be the determination of the South." By December of the same year, he was triumphantly proclaiming that "The South is more united, than I ever knew it to be, and more bold and decided. The North must give away, or there will be a rupture." By this time there was little hope in Calhoun's mind at least of a sectional adjustment and in these last few months of his life he seems reconciled to the prospect of disunion. On the last day of 1849, he told his daughter Anna that the South "have borne the wrongs and the insults of the North long enough. It is time they should cease." This is hardly the language of compromise, and if Calhoun had generalised from his own example, he ought never to have placed such faith in its efficacy.

I have spent some time in describing the principle of the concurrent majority which Calhoun put forward in the Disquisition as a means of creating a virtually unanimous social consensus. A number of important points flow from this. In the first place, the concurrent majority, as scholars have not been slow to point out, constitutes a frank recognition of the importance of economic interests in political life. Calhoun has been praised for acknowledging—before Marx—the importance of such interests, but there are certain difficulties which need to be explained more fully. The first
involves a theoretical point which has important practical implications: how exactly are interests to be defined and identified? For Calhoun, there is no essential difficulty here because the interests he was referring to were historically conditioned by the circumstances of nineteenth century America. When he spoke of interests, he meant primarily the states of the Union or the two great sections, North and South, but in the *Disquisition* he recognised that there were other kinds of interest groupings— he speaks of "interests, classes, portions" of the community. The geographical or sectional interests he had in mind were also specific and conflicting economic interests and it is this which has given Calhoun's theory its economic squint. What Calhoun fails to recognise in his theory of the concurrent majority is that if it is pushed to its logical limits, it gives to each single individual within the community a veto over the action of the government. Louis Hartz has graphically characterised this by saying that Calhoun's concurrent majority "unravels itself out into Locke's state of nature". Logically, it cannot be denied that each individual has a unique and peculiar interest in his own person, so why, therefore, should each individual not have a concurrent veto?

This implication of the principle of concurrence was probably not considered by Calhoun on the grounds of impracticability. We have earlier noted that Calhoun believed the Rousseauian argument for unanimity was practically unattainable, and it is likely that the concurrent majority was meant to offer a practicable solution to the problem of majoritarianism, rather than a purely doctrinaire one. This is supported
moreover by the complex argument Calhoun develops over how the sense of each individual interest is collected. He does not insist on absolute unanimity within each interest, only a majority of the whole "for whatever diversity each interest might have within itself—as all would have the same interest in reference to the action of government—the individuals composing each would be fully and truly represented by its own majority or appropriate organ, regarded in reference to the other interests. In brief, every individual of every interest might trust, with confidence, its majority or appropriate organ against that of every other interest." But this statement makes it even more imperative that interests are clearly identifiable within the community, but in this regard Calhoun offers no clear direction. (It is probable that he simply assumed that interests "emerged" from time to time and trusted to the community to recognise when they did so.)

What Hartz perceived as a criticism of the concurrent majority—the logical implication that individuals could arrest the action of government—has been perceived in another light by some modern anarcho-libertarian writers, notably Murray Rothbard. Rothbard claims that the concurrent majority offers a legitimate theory of resistance to government which is sufficiently all-embracing precisely because it can be extended to individuals. Moreover, if it is extended to individuals, it obviates the necessity of finding a definition for other less well-delineated social groupings.

Rothbard and Hartz point in their respective ways to valid theoretical objections to the concurrent majority, but there is a more serious objection which is the theme of Morton
Horwitz and, again, Louis Hartz. This objection is concerned with the use of mechanistic devices as a means of resolving social conflict. Horwitz, a most eloquent critic of the American preoccupation with reconciling conflict through impersonal rules and procedures, maintains that Calhoun shares with the Founding Fathers an undue faith "in the magical ability of institutions to solve all political problems, regardless of the makeup of society." The substance of this criticism—which is also a criticism of a well-established tradition in American political theory—is precisely that impersonal institutional mechanisms are unable to resolve fundamental social cleavages because, as Louis Hartz says, they "are only as strong as the sense of community that underlies them." The concurrent majority, according to this line of argument, can only work efficaciously if there is an underlying degree of social harmony to sustain it; alone, and unaided, it cannot substitute (except in a superficial sense) for a consensus of shared values which is a deeper cement than any fragile compromise which may be elicited from a complex mechanical device. Calhoun's mistake, which is also the mistake of the Founding Fathers, is that he relied on "institutional juggling" to achieve the spirit of community.

Now, these criticisms are important because not only do they sharpen the focus between two wholly different conceptions of the way in which society is held together, but each represents antithetical systems of thought in social theory. The first, and older, view is that society exists as a living, organic entity which is in the continual process of dynamic evolution. All the historical experiences of this organic
entity pass into the collective memory and acts as a social cement which binds the community more tightly together. While the shared experiences of a common history serve to enhance the uniqueness of its identity, other factors play an important part: the life of the community (rather than simply of the individuals who compose it) is emphasised at all times and great stress is placed on the public virtues of patriotism and service. Religious rites may frequently be enlisted in support of the collective action of the social organism, and in times of national crisis, especially wartime, this is particularly evident. But while shared experiences are important, so too are shared values and ideals; history may well be a significant factor in the shaping of a community's value-system, but without it, without a fundamental consensus on the values which the social organism aspires too, no society can hope to remain united for long.

Against this conception of the community, which was prevalent in medieval political theory, we may juxtapose the liberal notion of society and the state. Where the organic community emphasises the life of the collectivity, the liberal notion stresses the "atomistic" nature of society. The community, in this scheme, is essentially made up of individuals who have rationally created it for their own convenience and to serve their interests; according to this view, society has no separate collective existence beyond that of the individuals who comprise it, and it is held together by artificial mechanisms which are based on a sceptical appreciation of man's nature. "Possessive Individualism"—the phrase coined by C.B. Macpherson—captures precisely the purpose of the atomistically
constructed community: man is considered an avaricious and acquisitive animal, and society is deliberately created by him to make the fulfilment of his desires more easily achievable.

The criticism levelled at Calhoun by Hartz and Horwitz is essentially a criticism of the atomistic view of society. Mechanistic devices, they maintain, however complex and well-constructed, can never substitute for a genuine spirit of community which comes from shared experiences and values. The only fundamental consensus which is immediately apparent in the atomistic society is the agreement on the means of gratifying individual self-interest, that is, an agreement on the efficacy of artificial mechanisms. The irony, they maintain, is that atomism has been the fundamental characteristic of American political thought since the time of the founding of the republic, and that "the real tragedy of Calhoun's thought was that he was the only American thinker who had to pay the price for the illusion which he shared with those who went before him. He shared a superficial conception of politics as mere institutional juggling, while the triumph of a numerical majority through force exposed the glaring disparity between the profound sickness of the body politic and the sterility of his proposed remedy." To what extent is this a valid criticism of Calhoun's position?

In the first place, it is necessary to clarify the way in which Calhoun conceived society: did he hold to an organic or atomistic conception of society? Hartz and Horwitz believe that Calhoun was an atomist, certainly in so far as the theory of the concurrent majority is concerned. Yet, other scholars
have displayed a remarkable degree of confusion over this. Allen Guttman and Wilson Carey McWilliams both seem overly perplexed by this aspect of Calhoun's theory, for, as McWilliams has written, "Calhoun spoke of his theory of the 'concurrent majority' as an 'organic' theory, but the image of an 'organism' is curious indeed, being wholly mechanical." Similarly, Guttman claims that the concurrent majority is "manifestly mechanistic." Both Guttman and McWilliams have made too much of Calhoun's use of the word "organism" in this context, for it is clear from a close reading of the Disquisition that the concurrent majority cannot really be anything other than mechanistic. Indeed, Calhoun employs the term "organism" synonymously with the phrase "interior structure" of government, and this would tend to suggest that he had in mind a mechanistic, rather than an organic, analogy. Guttman and McWilliams have seized too readily on what is admittedly a terminological imprecision on Calhoun's part, though they are right to point out the misleading implications of his language.

If we grant that the theory of the concurrent majority necessarily reflects an atomistic view of society, two important points emerge from this. In the first place, it demonstrates the potency of the grip which liberal frames of reference held on Calhoun's thinking, and supports Hartz's contention that Calhoun was unable to transcend the Lockean formulae which dominated the whole of American political thought. If this is true, it offers striking support for the concept of the "Reactionary Enlightenment" because, as we have seen, the liberal scheme of government grew out of the political style of the
Enlightenment. The preoccupation with balancing mechanisms, moreover, was directly influenced by the Newtonian synthesis which was carried over into political theory by Locke and his later popularisers. Few political mechanisms exist, either in practice or in theory, which rival the complexity of the concurrent majority and this may be taken as an indication of the dominance of Enlightenment mechanics on Calhoun's thought.

The second point to emerge is this: if Calhoun's theory of the concurrent majority represents the "logical culmination of American thought on this topic", that is, on the topic of protective mechanisms, it is not at all clear that he did not recognise the potency of invisible social forces as a binding agent on the community. Even a cursory examination of his early congressional speeches (during the period when he was supposedly a staunch nationalist), reveal his awareness of the inadequacy of mechanistic devices in fostering a truly national spirit. It is an ironic fact that one of his major statements on this theme was made in a speech on the first Tariff Bill to be introduced before Congress in 1816. Speaking in support of the bill (a speech which in February 1833 he repudiated as some "hasty and unguarded remarks"), Calhoun maintained that the tariff was

"... calculated to bind together more closely our widely-spread republic. It will increase our mutual dependence and intercourse; and will, as a necessary consequence, excite an increased attention to internal improvements, a subject every way so intimately connected with the ultimate attainment of national strength and the protection of our political institutions. He [Calhoun] regarded the fact that it
would make the parts adhere more closely; that it would form a new and most powerful cement...." 56

Similarly, in February of the following year, speaking to the Internal Improvements Bill which he had largely created, Calhoun maintained that

"... much of our political happiness derives its origin from the extent of our republic.... Let it not, however, be forgotten; let it be forever kept in mind, that it exposes us to the greatest of all calamities—next to the loss of liberty—and even to that in its consequences—disunion. We are great, and rapidly—I was about to say fearfully growing. This is our pride and our danger; our weakness and our strength.... We are under the most imperious obligation to counteract every tendency to disunion. The strongest of all cements is, undoubtedly, the wisdom, justice, and above all, the moderation of this House.... Whatever impedes the intercourse of the extremes with this, the centre of the republic, weakens the Union. The more enlarged the sphere of commercial circulation—the more extended that of social intercourse—the more strongly are we bound together—the more inseparable are our destinies.... Let us then, bind the republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals. Let us conquer space." 57

This tone comes as a stark contrast to Calhoun's later career and to the language of the Disquisition, but it most definitely is not the tone of someone who is unmindful of the cohesive power of shared experiences and common purpose. But the point is that Calhoun's purpose at the two stages of his career are diametrically opposite; in 1816-17, he was attempting to build up the nation into united and tight-knit community and for that purpose the encouragement of social
intercourse was an obviously valid policy; at that stage of his career he was even prepared to admit that "In a country so extensive, and so various in its interests, what is necessary for the common good may apparently be opposed to the interest of particular sections. It must be submitted to as the condition of our greatness." By the 1830s and 1840s, however, Calhoun's purpose was to insist that the interests of one section be given special protection in the form of constitutional guarantees. Binding the nation together, in the 1840s, meant placing the interests of the South at the mercy of a northern, fanatical majority, and Calhoun was not prepared to compromise on that. The curious irony is that he fell back on the expedient of attempting to undo the measures and refute the arguments he had advocated at the outset of his career. He took refuge behind a strict construction of the Constitution, repudiated internal improvements, and even repudiated attempts by the federal government to prevent incendiary literature being sent through the United States mails (on the grounds that this would be admitting its competence to act in the matter). In short, as Louis Hartz has said, he attempted to shatter the American community and then to restore it by purely mechanical and impersonal means.

What, then, are we to make of the concurrent majority? The criticisms of Hartz and Horwitz are certainly valid ones, but, as they concede, the same criticisms apply to the work of the Founding Fathers. The tragedy in Calhoun's case is that he was "trying to solve by legal means the only problem in American history that has shattered completely the framework of our legal institutions." The important point to grasp is
that the ethos of the Enlightenment permeated Calhoun's thinking on the subject. He began from the premise that social harmony was attainable through institutional tinkering, even in the face of deep ideological conflict. It was not really until the last few weeks of his life that he was able to admit to himself and his son-in-law, Thomas G. Clemson, that "it is difficult to see how two peoples so different and hostile can exist together in one common Union."61
Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have attempted to examine aspects of Calhoun's *Disquisition on Government* in the light of Louis Hartz's suggestion that antebellum Southern thought is best characterised by the paradoxical category, the "Reactionary Enlightenment". In certain key areas, we have concluded, Calhoun's style of discourse appears to derive its inspiration more from the thought-patterns of the eighteenth century Enlightenment than from the usual and recognisable categories of western reaction. This is certainly true of what we might call his intellectual apparatus; his philosophical method, for example, is cast in an unmistakably empirical mould and his religious thinking owes more to the cerebral deism of the Enlightenment than it does to the fiery evangelicalism of his own section. But at the same time, we have seen that Calhoun was reluctant to embrace all the intellectual conventions of Enlightenment political theory, and this is most evident in his complete rejection of the logical apparatus of the social contract and Natural Rights philosophy. Indeed, it is in the utter repudiation of Natural Rights that we find the clue to Calhoun's reactionary purpose, for without appearing to defend the institution of slavery outright, Calhoun is impelled to include in the *Disquisition* no proposition which might be construed as being incompatible
with a justification of it. Moreover, in dispensing with
the apparatus of Natural Rights philosophy, Calhoun is left
without a coherent teleological explanation of the purposes
of government and society, and this he has to supply by sub-
stituting the ill-defined notion of "progress" for the well-
known "life, liberty and property" of Lockean theory. In the
process of making this substitution, Calhoun acknowledges
that the rights of individuals cannot be abstracted from the
social context they inhabit, and he thus repudiates the
individualism on which the foundations of American social
theory rest. By making the community in its collective cap-
acity the final arbiter of the rights of its individual
citizens, Calhoun appears to be advocating a communitarianism
which is alien to the American tradition. But immediately he
does this, he nullifies its effect by reimposing on society's
institutions a complex checking and balancing mechanism which
gives his theory a contradictory twist: for having apparently
abandoned the liberal purposes of government (that is, the
protection of Natural Rights), he then seeks to reintroduce
checks on government which no longer have any basis in logic.
This is the peculiarly paradoxical character of Calhoun's polit-
ical thought, and it may be traced directly back to mental
domination of Lockeanism in America.

Throughout this study, I have laboured the point that
the "Reactionary Enlightenment" is a paradoxical category, but,
of course, like most paradoxes, its component parts are not
logically exclusive. It is not a necessary inference, for
example, that Enlightenment thinkers should be fundamentally
at odds with those whose values may be termed reactionary,
and this becomes obvious when we consider the intellectual connections established between the philosophes and the autocratic princes of Europe. But if there is no substantive reason to think that the two elements are incompatible, there is certainly a temperamental one. Temperamentally, the Enlightenment connoted not simply a distinctive method, but also a system of values; empirical information was only useful insofar as it could be put to practical use in the improvement of existing conditions and institutions. This is precisely why the theory of progress was uniquely special to the Enlightenment: it was the systematic expression of the philosophes' deepest hopes and their reforming zeal. The point is that temperamentally, the Enlightenment refused to concede that improvements in the collection and assimilation of new knowledge could lead to anything other than change for the better in all spheres of man's existence. Allied to their liberal, humane and decent values, it added up to a restless demand for, and anticipation of, progressive change.

Viewed in this light, it becomes difficult to reconcile the Enlightenment temperamental with the reactionary one because the latter connoted not simply the absence of change, but the systematic opposition to it; if the reactionary allowed any change at all, it was only in an attempt to "recreate in the future an ideal which he assumes to have existed in the past." So, where the Enlightenment temperamental insistently demanded change in an effort to improve existing conditions, the reactionary one was fundamentally satisfied with the status quo, and would only countenance change if it attempted to restore a past Golden Age. One begins now to see how the "Reactionary Enlight-
enment acquires its paradoxical quality. But if it is to be valuable as an explanatory concept in the history of American ideas, how is it to be understood? From what has been said in preceding chapters, there is, I think, only one way in which the apparently irreconcilable ideas can be combined to produce a useful paradigm of Calhoun's thought and that is by maintaining that the style of the Enlightenment is employed in an effort to defend values which are reactionary. And in a curious way, this actually puts things right in terms of categorical logic because the liberal and humane values which the Enlightenment derived from its preconceptions never really matched the its supposedly value-free empiricist style. This is certainly evident from Calhoun's reinterpretation of Natural Law, for his empirical method gave it a touch of philosophical realism which was absent from the philosophes' idealised conception.

But if the category of reaction implies the systematic opposition to change, how are we to view Calhoun's theory of the concurrent majority which ushers in a massive change in constitutional mechanics? Actually, it is not difficult to reconcile because Calhoun, like all rational reactionaries, calculates that some measure of change is needed to restore the Constitution to its original status. The point was that the maintenance of the status quo was daily placing the South in a precarious relation to the rest of the Union, and that if she were to be protected at all, some change was essential. Calhoun always maintained that the concurrent majority, and state interposition before it, was designed as a "preservative" to keep the Union in being, but at the same time to "turn back the government to where it commenced its operation."
Perhaps the most important point to grasp in all this is the one which Louis Hartz himself makes, and that is the remarkable pervasiveness of the Lockean ideal in America and the powerful grip it has on its patterns of thought. Not even the most cataclysmic threat to her social institutions could induce Southern thinkers to emancipate themselves from the intellectual sway of Locke. The few who attempted to do so, like Fitzhugh, were forced to utilise a form of discourse which even in nineteenth century Europe was considered medieval. Even Calhoun, who more than most of his Southern contemporaries lived in the intellectual atmosphere of the liberal Enlightenment, was sometimes caught in the trap: in May 1847, he found himself having to refute the patriarchal philosophy of Sir Robert Filmer—but who in Europe or America (outside the South) was even reading Filmer in the 1840s? This was the kind of absurdity that Southern thinkers were thrown into by their attempts to evolve a justification of slavery, though it is difficult to see what else they could have done, for where could the logical defence of slavery rest except on paternalistic, pre-liberal, anti-bourgeois foundations which directly contradicted the creed and the experience of the early United States?
References to Chapter One


4. Amongst the most vociferous of these is Margaret L. Coit, John C. Calhoun: American Portrait, (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1950), 518, but see all of chapter XXX. Peter Viereck, Conservatism from Adams to Churchill, (Van Nostrand, Princeton, 1956), 96 also maintains that Calhoun's main concern was with the protection of minorities.


12. Spain, op. cit., 256-257.

13. (a) At least three of Calhoun's biographers (Spain, Current and Wilte) make specific mention of Calhoun's devotion to the writings of Aristotle, Spain, op. cit., 35; Current, op. cit., 43-44; Charles M. Wilte, John C. Calhoun: Sectionalist, 1840-1850, (Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1951), 420-423. Calhoun regarded Aristotle's treatises "as among the best", Calhoun to A.D. Wallace, December 17, 1840 in J. Franklin Jameson, The Correspondence of John C. Calhoun, (Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1899, 2 volumes), II, 469 (hereafter cited as Calhoun Correspondence)

(b) As for the relationship between Calhoun and German constitutional theory the link is, indeed, tenuous. Spain, op. cit., 275 claims that the German doctrine had been imported to America by Thomas Dew" and cites William E. Dodd, The Cotton Kingdom, (New Haven, 1921), 49-50 as his source, but he also maintains that the German scholar Max von Seydel "was certainly indebted to Calhoun.... he had read much of Calhoun's work, cited and quoted from him with approval" (208), but
against this Spain quotes Prof. Anton Dryoff of Munich who was of the opinion that Von Seydel was not directly influenced by Calhoun's theory. (221).


20. Current, op.cit., 133 (emphasis added). Note a similar comment in Clement Eaton, Freedom of Thought in the Old South, (Peter Smith, New York, 1954), 154 to the effect that "The influence of Calhoun on his section was not fully revealed until ten years after his death."


23. The first paragraph of John Plamenatz's introduction to Hobbes' Leviathan, (Collins/Fontana, 1962), 3, is revealing: "Hobbes lived as quietly as he could contrive to do in a troubled age, and might never have turned his mind to
politics had political events not forced themselves upon his notice". It is often forgotten that in the case of Locke's Two Treatises a large portion—"more than half of Locke's text"—is lost to us. See Peter Laslett's edition of Locke's Two Treatises (Cambridge University Press, 1960), 63, 90.


25. Laslett, ibid., 29


27. Spain, op.cit., 29-30; Current goes so far as to say that Calhoun's texts cannot be correctly understood without reference to his "other statements". Current, op.cit., 37.


29. I am tempted to quote Calhoun's own words that "Nothing ... was more easy than by taking detached parts of papers, and omitting to take circumstances into view, entirely to misrepresent any question" were it not for the fact that it would by its nature violate the point I am trying to make! See Calhoun's "Speech on the Results of the War [of 1812]", February 27, 1815, in The Papers of John C.Calhoun, op.cit., Vol.1, 281 (hereafter cited as Calhoun Papers).


33. There is a considerable body of scholarship which believes that the decline of political theory is, in the words of Alfred Cobban, "a reflection of the feeling that ethical values have no place in the field of social dynamics and power politics". One of the reasons for this decline is that much of modern thinking is dominated by scientific approaches to the subject, but "the degree of moral disinterestedness possible in the natural sciences is impossible in the field of political theory", Alfred Cobban, "The Decline of Political Theory", Political Science Quarterly, Vol.68 (1953), 328, 335. See also H.R.G. Greaves,


39. The later works I am referring to are the Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England (1666) and Behemoth (1668); J.W.N. Watkins, Hobbes' System of Ideas: A Study in the Political Significance of Philosophical Theories, (Hutchinson University Library, London, 1965), 2.


42. Wilfred Harrison, "Texts in Political Theory", Political Studies, Vol. III (1955), 28-44 maintains that "in some historical settings the misread, misunderstood, and misinterpreted author may be much more significant than the actual author."

Nevertheless, philosophers continue to subject the question of the existence of God to rational analysis, though in recent times (following the trend of most British philosophy) this has taken the form of examining the linguistic implications of the claims that God exists. Two recent books, for example, which adopt this approach are Richard Swinburne, The Coherence of Theism (Clarendon Library of Logic and Philosophy, Oxford, 1977) and, again, Richard Swinburne, The Existence of God (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979). See the review of the former by Adel Daher in the International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 12 (No. 4 1981), 245-248. I tend to agree with Sir Karl Popper's statement that "Theology, I still think, is due to lack of faith", Unended Quest: An Intellectual Autobiography (Fontana/Collins, London, 1976), 18.

Hacker, "Capital and Carbuncles....", op. cit., 783.


Raphael, op. cit., 10.


Richard Ashcraft, "Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?", American Political Science Review, Vol. 62 (No. 3, Sept. 1968), 898-915 concludes that Locke intended the state of nature to be construed as "both an historical and a moral description of human existence" (898).


Levin, op. cit., 473.


Richard Hofstadter, "John C. Calhoun--Marx of the Master Class", op. cit.,

Levin, op. cit., 473-474.


58. Hartz, ibid., 159.

59. See, for example, Calhoun's letter to his daughter, Mrs. T. G. Clemson of December 27, 1846 in which he stated: "I desire above all things to save the whole Union; but if that cannot be, to save the portion where Providence has cast my lot, at all events.", Calhoun Correspondence, 716.


63. Richard K. Crallé to R. M. T. Hunter, March 23, 1850 just a week before Calhoun's death: "As to Mr. C's views in respect to an amendment of the Constitution, that might well be passed over. It goes rather to the philosophy of our system, than to its present practical operation which has thrown up the present issues." in Charles Henry Ambler (ed.) The Correspondence of Robert M. T. Hunter, 1826-1876, (Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1916, Washington, 1918, 2 vols.), II, 107

64. Capers, op. cit., 245.


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References to Chapter Two


4. Manning J. Dauer, for example, described the Disquisition as "one of the major political writings of American theory", Journal of Politics, Vol.15 (Feb. 1953), 156. See also Ralph Lerner, "Calhoun's New Science of Politics" American Political Science Review, Vol. LVII, (No. 4, Dec. 1963), 918-932; Peter Viereck, Conservatism from Adams to Churchill, (Van Nostrand Co., Princeton, 1956), 96 maintains that Calhoun is "being increasingly rediscovered today as America's most original political theorist. He combined profound political philosophy with practical politics."; Vernon Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought: The Romantic Revolution in America, (2 vols, New York, 1926) 69 believed that Calhoun was "the one outstanding political thinker in a period singularly barren and uncreative".

5. Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America, 158.

6. For the moment I am concerned with examining the dominant orthodox interpretations of Calhoun. A discussion of the view put forward by Richard N. Current and Richard Hofstadter, to the effect that Calhoun's proper significance lies in the identification of economics and the class struggle as a crucial factor in political conflict, will be treated in chapter seven, pp 255-258 below.


12. This is the theme of Louis Hartz's chapter on Calhoun and Fitzhugh in *The Liberal Tradition in America*. Hartz's concept of the "Reactionary Enlightenment" forms the conceptual point of departure for the second part of this study.

13. As regards the problem of causation in history, I agree substantially with Richard Rovere who has written: "I hold a kind of Tolstoyan view of history and believe that it is hardly ever possible to determine the real truth about how we got from here to there. Since I find it extremely difficult to uncover my own motives, I hesitate to deal with those of other people, and I positively despair at the thought of ever being really sure about what has moved whole nations and whole generations of mankind. No explanation of the causes and origins of any war—of any large happening in history—can ever be for me much more than a plausible one, a reasonable hypothesis." Richard H. Rovere in *The New Yorker*, October 28, 1967, 87.

14. This is what Quentin Skinner means when he says that the "'context' mistakenly gets treated as the determinant of what is said. It needs rather to be treated as an ultimate framework for helping to decide what conventionally recognizable meanings, in a society of that kind, it might in principle have been possible for someone to have intended to communicate." Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding....", op. cit., 49.


16. Calhoun to Francis Wharton, Dec. 25, 1843 in Calhoun Correspondence, 558-559.


21. Calhoun Papers, Vol. XIII, "Bill from Select Committee on the Circulation of Incendiary Publications", Feb. 4, 1836, 67-69. Calhoun was deputed by the Select Committee to present the report on the floor of the Senate. Section 3 of the draft bill required officials of the Federal government to "co-operate, as far as may be, to prevent circulation" of incendiary literature. The bill failed its third reading in the Senate on June 8, 1836 by a vote of 18 to 25. See also Calhoun's "Speech in reply to criticisms of the bill to prohibit the circulation of incendiary publications through the mail", April 12, 1836, 147-166 (esp. 150-153) and "Further remarks on the bill...", April 13, 1836, 166-169.


25. Calhoun to A. D. Wallace, Dec. 17, 1840, Calhoun Correspondence, 468-469.

26. Calhoun to J. H. Hammond, Nov. 27, 1842, Calhoun Correspondence, 519-522.

28. Calhoun to Unnamed Correspondent, March 9, 1844, Calhoun Correspondence, 573-576. Secretary Upshur was killed in the explosion on board The Princeton when a naval cannon exploded in a freak accident in March 1844. Wiltse, op.cit., Vol.III, 159-160. Calhoun's close friend Virgil Maxcy was also killed in the accident.


30. Wiltse, op.cit., Vol.III, 164. Henry Yates Thompson recorded the following extract in his diary for Tuesday, Nov.17, 1863: "Dr. Lindsley took me into the house to call on Mrs.Polk.... She had lived a long time in Washington and knew Calhoun intimately..... She told me, as a piece of secret history known to a few, that Mr.Calhoun had wanted to continue in office under her husband." Thompson Diaries, op.cit., 137. Calhoun, however, disavowed any bitterness over his treatment by Polk: "Personally there is no hostile feelings towards him or his administration, on my part. It is no grievance to me, personally, that he did not invite me to remain, as one of its members." Calhoun to R.M.T.Hunter, March 26, 1845, Hunter Correspondence, 75.

31. Account of conversation between Francis Wharton and Calhoun, Feb.18-20, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 644-645.

32. Calhoun to C.J.Ingersoll, April 12, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 651-652.

33. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, May 22, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 656-657.

34. Calhoun to Thomas G.Clemson, Sept.18, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 671-672.


36. Sydnor, op.cit., 329; David M.Potter, The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861, (Harper & Row, New York, 1975), 20-23 describes the sectional nature of the vote: on Wilmot's amendment to the bill the vote was 80 to 64 in its favour "with every negative vote except three coming from the slave states" (22). On a motion to kill the entire bill "an ominous development occurred. The roll call produced a division not between Whigs and Democrats, but between Northerners and Southerners. 74 Southerners and four Northerners voted to table the bill; 91 Northerners and 3 Southerners voted against tabling" (22); see also Richard R.Stenberg, "The Motivation of the Wilmot Proviso", Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol.XVIII,

37. Calhoun to Unnamed Correspondent, Nov.7, 1846, Calhoun Correspondence, 710-711.

38. Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 15, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 749-751.

39. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, April 28, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 752-753.

40. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, April 28, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 752-753.

41. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, June 15, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 766-768.

42. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, June 15, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 766-768.


45. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, June 15, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 766-768.


47. Calhoun's desire to save the Union is apparent from his letters; in December 1846 he wrote to his daughter Anna: "I desire above all things to save the whole, but if that cannot be, to save the portion where Providence has cast my lot, at all events." Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, Dec. 27, 1846, Calhoun Correspondence, 714-716; also Calhoun to Unnamed Correspondent, Nov.7, 1846; Calhoun to Duff Green, Nov.9, 1847; Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, Dec.11, 1847, all in Calhoun Correspondence, 710-711, 739-740, 741.

48. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, June 15, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 766-768.

50. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, Oct. 14, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 772.


52. Capers, *op.cit.*, Appendix, 255-256.

53. Calhoun to J.H. Hammond, Nov. 27, 1842, Calhoun Correspondence, 519-522. This remarkable letter serves as an excellent illustration of Calhoun's need to convince himself and others that his political actions were based on principle rather than self-interest. "What I want to say", Calhoun wrote, "is, that in this long, laborious, and perilous course, I have been actuated and sustained solely by a sense of duty. I have looked to nothing beyond. I have been anxious for relaxation and repose to refresh myself and attend a little to my domestic and private affairs, after a tour of more than 31 years in the service of the Union; but I stood fast at my post, and cheerfully sacrificed all to effect the great object I had in view...." Less than a page later Calhoun continues: "If I can be of any future service to the country it will be in carrying through this great reform, and elevating the moral and political tone of the country, and establishing firmly the victory, which has already been achieved; and these can only be effected by wielding the power and influence of the Executive Department.... it rests with the people to say, whether I shall be selected to finish the work, which has been carried forward to where it now is." (Emphasis added).


56. Robert J. Turnbull, for example, declared that "Congress cannot promote, the great Cotton Planting interests of South Carolina nor can it encourage the manufacturing interests of the North. And why?—Because these are local interests of the States, and not the general interests of the Union." quoted in Carpenter, *op.cit.*, 40. Moreover, Calhoun argues in the Discourse that "the separate governments of the several States were far more competent and safe, than the general government of all the States. Their knowledge of the local interests and domestic institutions of these respectively, must be much more accurate, and the responsibility of each to their respective people much more perfect. This is so obvious as to render it incredible, that they would have admitted the interference of a general government in
their interior and local concerns, farther than was absolutely necessary to the regulation of their exterior relations with each other and the rest of the world;—or that a general government should have been adopted for any other purpose. " Richard K. Cralle (ed.), The Works of John C. Calhoun (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1854-1857, 6 vols.), Vol.I contains both the Disquisition and the Discourse. The above passage is taken from the Discourse, p.215.

57. Quoted in Spain, op.cit., 49.

58. Calhoun to C.J.Ingersoll, April 12, 1845 (651-652); Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, May 22, 1845 (656-657); Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 15, 1848 (749-751); Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, April 28, 1848 (752-753); Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849, (769-770); Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, Oct.14, 1849 (772) all in Calhoun Correspondence.

59. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, Dec.31, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 776-777.

60. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, Feb.24, 1850, Calhoun Correspondence, 782-783.

61. Ibid., 782-783.


64. Meigs, op.cit., 424 (fn.68); Coit, op.cit., 518.


67. Calhoun to Mrs. T.G.Clemson, June 23, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 757-759.


69. Clyde N. Wilson to D.J. Clarke, Feb.3, 1981. I am indebted to Dr. Wilson for much of the information contained in this paragraph.

70. Mill's copy of the texts is preserved in the J.S. Mill Collection of the Library of Somerville College, Oxford. Unfortunately, Mill's copy is not annotated so we do not know what Mill thought of Calhoun's specific ideas, though in a letter to his wife dated Feb.18, 1854, Mill
wrote the following: "I am reading the American book, a Treatise on Government generally & on the institutions of the U. States in particular—it is considerably more philosophical than I expected, at least in the sense of being grounded on principles—and the stile, except in being rather diffuse, may be called severe—the writing of a logician not an American rhetorician. But there is not a word to take the writer out of the category of hewers of wood & drawers of water. He is in some points a very inferior likeness of my father. One did not expect that in an American, but if in any, in this particular man." J.S. Mill to Harriet Mill, Feb. 18, 1854 in Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, (eds.) The Collected Works of J. S. Mill: The Later Letters, 1849–1873, (University of Toronto Press, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), Vol.XIV, 163. Also Pauline Adams (Librarian) to D.J. Clarke, January 30, 1981.

71. Examples of Southern reviews of the texts are: Southern Literary Messenger, June 1854; Southern Quarterly Review, April 1853; DeBow's Review, August, 1857; Contrast the dates of these reviews with the one which appeared in the North American Review of October 1865.


74. W.S. Jenkins, Proslavery Thought in the Old South, (Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass., 1935), 125–126, 290 (fn.9), 80–81, 89–90, 287.


76. Jenkins, op. cit., 106.

77. A Southern Clergyman, (I.L.Brookes), A Defence of Southern Slavery against the attacks of Henry Clay and Alex' Campbell in which much of the false philanthropy and mawkish sentimentalism of the abolitionists is met and refuted. In which it is moreover shown that the association of the white and black races in the relation of master and slave is the appointed order of God, as set forth in the Bible, and constitutes the best social condition of both races, and the only true principle of republicanism,
(Hamburg, South Carolina, 1851), 5; also Jenkins, op. cit., chapter entitled "The Moral Philosophy of Slavery"; also John White and Ralph Willett, Slavery in the American South (Longman's, London, 1970), 47-54; also Eric L. McKitterick (ed.) Slavery Defended, (Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1963) offers a selection of the various styles of argumentation adopted by proslavery propagandists.

78. Actually, the Scriptural argument extrapolated from prior assumptions that slavery applied to negroes: A Southern Clergyman, A Defence of Southern Slavery..., maintained: "Let Mr. Clay read the ninth chapter of Genesis, and say whether the curse inflicted upon Canaan and his posterity, and the annexed prophecy of their servitude, in the form too of slavery (for the terms imply bondage,) do not indicate the Canaanitish or African race, as doomed under the appointment of God, to perpetual servitude. That curse gave the flat skull, and other physical changes, which stamp upon them inferiority of intellect, and their whole history has, thus far, shown them incapable of self-government...", op. cit., 6. Winthrop D. Jordan, White Over Black, American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812 (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1965, Pelican books, 1971), 17-19 maintains that the assumption that the curse of Canaan applied to negroes derived from the early Church fathers, St. Jerome, St. Augustine and certain Jewish sources; Talmudic and Midrashic writings couple the connotation of dark skin with the name of Ham. In the late Medieval Renaissance, the curse of Ham was a popular assumption in Christian thought, though, as Jordan says (p.19) "the difficulty with the story of Ham's indiscretion was that extraordinarily strenuous exegesis was required in order to bring it to bear on the negro's black skin."


81. Southern Literary Messenger, Vol.XXIII (Oct.1856), 241

82. Southern Literary Messenger, Vol.XXXI (Dec.1860), 468-474


84. Harvey Wish, George Fitzhugh:Propagandist of the Old South (Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass., 1962), 343.
85. Clement Eaton, Freedom of Thought in the Old South, (Peter Smith, New York, 1951), chapter three, 64-88.


88. Eaton, op.cit., 155

89. Henry Bidleman Bascom, Methodism and Slavery, (Frankfort, 1845). Bascom was head of the University of Kentucky, see Calhoun to J.H. Hammond, Aug. 2, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 667.

90. Calhoun to Thomas G. Clemson, June 23, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 665.

91. Calhoun to J.H. Hammond, July 7, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 666.

92. J.H. Hammond to Calhoun, Aug. 18, 1845, Calhoun Correspondence, 1045-1049.

93. Hammond Diary, August 9, Sept. 6 quoted in Faust, A Sacred Circle, op.cit., 126-7.


95. Calhoun to Francis Wharton, November 20, 1844, Calhoun Correspondence, 629-630.


101. I do not want to exaggerate this aspect because although there were some abolitionists like Garrison who became increasingly liberal on the interpretation of Scripture, there were others, like the Tappan brothers, who refused to abandon a literal interpretation of the Bible, and indeed, who preferred to abandon their comrades in the cause rather than yield on this point. See Aileen S. Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850, (Pantheon Books, Random House, New York, 1967), 91-95, 96; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery, (Press of Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, 1969), 60-61; Sorin, op.cit., 44-52; Donald M.Scott, "Abolition as a Sacred Vocation" in Lewis Perry and Michael Fillman (eds.), Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge & London, 1979), 51-74; Anne C.Loveland, "Evangelicalism and 'Immediate Emancipation' in American Antislavery Thought", Journal of Southern History, Vol.XXXII (1962), 172-188.


103. Jenkins, op.cit., 49.


106. Morrow, op.cit., 80. But this was not simply confined to the North, for there was equal difficulty in getting northern opinions on the subject across in the South. See Calhoun's letter to an unnamed correspondent dated Nov.7, 1846 in which Calhoun thanks the writer for sending him two articles which were intended for publication in Southern journals, putting forward the anti-slavery case. In reply Calhoun wrote that the South "has made up her mind, both as to her rights, morally and politically, and her capacity to defend them, and has ceased in great measure, to discuss the question, or publishing anything
in relation to the subject, except to note the progress of the evil among yourselves. In this state of mind, it is difficult to get any of our papers to publish anything from your papers on the subject.... In this state of feeling, I can give no assurance that any of our Journals will publish at this time the two articles; and let me add with frankness, especially the one, which so strongly advocates a measure, to which we of this state are almost unanimously opposed." Calhoun Correspondence, 710-711.


110. Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, Oct.22, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 772-773.

111. Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 769-770.


113. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, Dec.31, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 776-777.

114. Capers, op.cit., 244 passim; Calhoun's letters written at this time offer conclusive support for Capers' contention, though it must be admitted that Calhoun was pessimistic of the North altering its policies. See, Calhoun to J.H. Hammond, Feb.14, 1849 (762-763); Calhoun to John H.Means, April 13, 1849 (764-766); Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849 (769-770); Calhoun to Abraham W.Venable, August 1849 (770-771); Calhoun to J.H.Hammond, Jan.4, 1850, (778-780); Calhoun to J.H.Hammond, Feb.16, 1850 (781-782); Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, Feb.24, 1850 (782-783) all in Calhoun Correspondence.

115. Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, Oct.22, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 772-773. See also Calhoun to Herschel V. Johnson, Nov.1, 1849 (773) and Calhoun to J.H.Hammond, Dec.7, 1849, (775-776), Calhoun Correspondence.

116. Capers, op.cit., 244-248.

117. Carpenter, op.cit., Part I


119. J.H.Hammond to Calhoun, March 5, 1850, Calhoun Correspondence, 1210-1212.
120. Calhoun to Francis Wharton, Dec. 25, 1843, Calhoun Correspondence, 558-559.


125. Charles M. Wiltse, "A Critical Southerner: John C. Calhoun on the Revolutions of 1848", Journal of Southern History, Vol. XV, (1949), 300; Clyde N. Wilson has also emphasised the close affinity between Calhoun and his daughter when he wrote that Anna was "the person who was to become perhaps closer to him in mind and temperament than anyone on earth." Wilson, (ed.), Calhoun Papers, Vol. XI, xxxi.


127. Duff Green to Calhoun, Sept. 29, 1843, Calhoun Correspondence, 884-885.

128. William R. King to Calhoun, October or November 1844, Calhoun Correspondence, 986-990; Calhoun later authorised King to spend a sum "not exceeding $500, to be charged to the contingent fund of the Department" to finance a propaganda campaign in the French press. Calhoun went so far as to suggest that the literary talents of Robert Walsh, formerly Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, be enlisted to this end. Calhoun to William R. King, Dec. 13, 1844, marked "Strictly Confidential", Calhoun Correspondence, 631-633.

129. Howard Temperley, British Antislavery, 1833-1870, (Longman Group, London, 1972), ch. 10, 184-220; also Holt, op. cit., 40-45; Sydnor, op. cit., 321-325; David M. Fletcher, The Diplomacy Of Annexation: Texas, Oregon and the Mexican War (University of Missouri Press, 1973), 115 maintains that some elements in the North (led by John Quincy Adams in the House of Representatives) were prepared to secede rather than allow Texas into the Union as a slaveholding state.
130. Temperley, op. cit., 198.

131. Calhoun to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, June 23, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 757-759; Calhoun continually expressed doubts about the ability of European countries to manage their political affairs properly. In 1848, he predicted that the European monarchies were coming to an end because "The intelligence and progress of the age have outgrown them; but it is by no means certain, that they are so far advanced and enlightened on political science, as to substitute more suitable ones in their place. I fear they are not...." Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 18, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 749-751.


133. Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 15, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 749-751.

134. Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849, Calhoun Correspondence, 769-770.

135. Calhoun to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, April 28, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 752-753.


139. Calhoun to T.G. Clemson, March 10, 1850, Calhoun Correspondence, 783-784.

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References to Chapter Three

1. This was the theme of Calhoun's last major speech in the Senate on March 4, 1850, read for him by James M. Mason of Virginia. Calhoun called on the North "to cease agitating the slave question, and to provide for an insertion of a provision in the constitution, by an amendment, which will restore to the South, in substance, the power she possessed of protecting herself, before the equilibrium between the sections was destroyed by the actions of this Government" Congressional Globe XXXI, 1st, 451-455 and Crallé, Works of Calhoun, IV, 542-573. Although Calhoun did not specify in his speech the exact nature of the constitutional amendment he had in mind, it seems clear that he was referring to the proposal for the creation of a dual executive which appears in the closing pages of the Discourse. I find Galliard Hunt's dissent from this view altogether unconvincing. Galliard Hunt, John C. Calhoun, (George W. Jacobs, Philadelphia, 1908), 309-311.

2. Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 15, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 749-751.

3. A Discourse on the Constitution and Government of the United States in Crallé (ed.) Works of Calhoun, Vol.II, 311-406. The Discourse falls roughly into three sections: 111-315, Calhoun argues that the framers intended to establish the principle of concurrence in the U.S. Constitution; 315-381, Calhoun shows how that principle has been subverted in practice; 381-406, Calhoun's proposed reforms, including a constitutional amendment to provide for a dual executive.


7. Discourse, op.cit., 238. On the relation of the federal and state governments Calhoun maintained that "... the framers of the constitution contented themselves with drawing as strongly as possible, the line of separation between the two powers;—leaving it to time and experience to determine where the danger lay; to develop whatever remedy the system might furnish to guard against it; —and, if it furnished none, they left it to those, who should come after them, to supply the defect. We now have the benefit of these: Time and Experience have shown fully, where the danger lies, and what is its nature and character."

9. William Freehling, "Spoilsmen and Interests in the Thought and Career of John C. Calhoun", Journal of American History, Vol. LII (1965–66), 26 (fn. 3) maintains that although the Disquisition was "partially intended" as an introduction to the Discourse, it was also intended to stand on its own. I can find no evidence in Calhoun's correspondence to support this claim. The fact that by its theoretical nature the Disquisition was more likely to appeal to historians and commentators is no indication that Calhoun originally intended it to be treated as such.

10. Spain, op.cit., 45-68; Current, op.cit., 37-43.


18. The profitability of slavery continues to be a much-debated argument amongst historians. Kenneth M. Stampp, The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Antebellum South, (Knopf & Vintage, New York, 1956) maintained that it was a profitable institution and he was supported in this by Alfred H. Conrad and John R. Meyer, "The Economics of Slavery in the Antebellum South", Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 66 (1958), 95-130 and in their expanded version of this article, The Economics of Slavery and other studies in Economic History, (Aldine Press, Chicago, 1964). Against this view are the works of Eugene D. Genovese who has maintained that slavery primarily offered the Southern slaveholder a system of social values and mores which aped the feudalism of medieval Europe, but which at the same time acted as a restraining influence on the section's economic development. This argument is put forward most forcefully and compellingly in The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South, (Pantheon Books, New York, 1967) and The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation, (Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London, 1969).

19. Hartz, The Liberal Tradition, op. cit., 157 recounts the tale of Fitzhugh's apparent contentment at having his indictment of northern "wage slavery" ignored by his opponents. "The North is silent", proclaimed Fitzhugh, "and thus tacitly admits the charge". But Fitzhugh was not always so happy to be ignored. "Why the devil don't someone abuse me?!" he thundered in the 1850s. See Morrow, op. cit., 81.


23. Genovese, The World the Slaveholders Made, op. cit., 157-8, 165-194, 230-231. On the subject of racial slavery, Fitzhugh wrote: "We deem this peculiar question of negro slavery of very little importance. The issue is made throughout the world on the general subject of slavery in the abstract. The argument has commenced. One set of
ideas will govern and control after awhile the civilized world. Slavery will everywhere be abolished, or eventually be re-instituted." Fitzhugh, Sociology for the South or the Failure of Free Society, (Richmond, Virginia, A. Morris, 1854), Harvey Wish (ed.) (Capricorn Books, New York, 1960), 95. By 1861, however, Fitzhugh had apparently been converted to racialism. See Harvey Wish, George Fitzhugh: Propagandist of the Old South, op. cit., 298.


25. On the painful contradictions implied by the existence of racial slavery see Lawrence W. Levine, Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1977), 114 ff. Louis Hartz maintains that "to take all humanity away from a human being was... more than the philosophic conscience could successfully accomplish", Hartz, The Liberal Tradition, op. cit., 169.


Both Voltaire and Montesquieu were greatly influenced by the ideas of English intellectuals; indeed, one of Voltaire's biographers maintains that his visit to England between 1726 and 1729 "was the most important incident in his life". Archibald Ballantyne, Voltaire's Visit to England, 1726-1729, (John Murray, London, 1919), preface. For the influence of English religious ideas on Voltaire's thought see Norman L. Torrey, Voltaire and the English Deists, (Marston Press, Oxford, 1963), 202-203; Montesquieu, though in England for a shorter time than Voltaire, was equally impressed with its leading intellectual figures and, according to George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory, (George G. Harrap & Co., London, 1937), 467, the visit "formed the crucial experience in his intellectual history." England, moreover, was impressed with Montesquieu and elected him a fellow of the Royal Society on February 26, 1730. J. Churton Collins, Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau in England, (Everleigh Nash, London, 1908), 163.

Sabine, op. cit., 460-465.


marked a turning point in modern history because it broke the stranglehold of the clergy on the life of the mind.

34. Baron d'Holbach, Commonsense, or Natural Ideas opposed to Supernatural, extract from Jack Lively (ed.), The Enlightenment (Longman's, London, 1966), 45.

35. This is a well-established theme in the historiography of the Enlightenment dating at least as far back as R.H. Tawney, who suggested it was an Age of Faith, not of Reason. Peter Gay, The Science of Freedom, op.cit., 625, maintains that "of all the labels imposed on the Enlightenment, the label 'Age of Reason' has been the most persistent, and the most damaging. It is accurate only if 'reason' is read to mean 'criticism' and counterposed to 'credulity' or 'superstition'." For similar statements in the scholarly literature, see Peter Gay, The Party of Humanity, (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1964), 192-4, 269-272; Alfred Cobban, In Search of Humanity: The Role of the Enlightenment in Modern History, (Jonathan Cape, London, 1960), 7 passim; Charles Vereker, Eighteenth Century Optimism: A Study of the Interrelations of Moral and Social Theory in English and French Thought between 1669 and 1789, (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1967), preface; the era might more appropriately have taken its name from the title of Thomas Paine's other work, Commonsense. The subtitle of David Hume's Treatise of Human Nature: The Method of Experimental Reasoning applied to Moral Concepts, is perhaps the best characterization of all.


41. Jean le Rond d'Alembert, Essai sur les éléments de philosophie, quoted in Lively, op. cit., 5.

42. For the relationship between Locke and Newton, see G.A.J. Rogers, "Locke, Newton and the Enlightenment", in Vistas in Astronomy, Vol.22, (Pergamon Press Ltd., 1979), 471-476. Rogers holds the opinion that Newton's influence on Newton is overestimated and that Newton's Principia merely confirmed what Locke had already suspected earlier.


44. Francis Bacon, Novum Organum or True Suggestions for the Interpretation of Nature 1620 (London, 1850), 10.


49. R. Hooykaas, Religion and the Rise of Modern Science, (Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1972) describes the inspiration the early scientists derived from their Christian faith. See 7-13, 39-40 (Bacon), 44-46 (Pascal), 49-52 (Newton); Donald M. MacKay, "Value-free Knowledge: Myth or Norm?", Christian Graduate, Vol.34 (No.2, June 1981), 13 maintains that "The modern scientific enterprise grew up in an atmosphere not merely favourable to biblical religion but in large measure generated by it."; See also Frank E. Manuel, The Religion of Isaac Newton, (originally
Donald Meyer has recently reminded that Voltaire's famous line: "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him" continues thus: "all nature cries aloud that He does exist: that there is a Supreme intelligence, and immense power, an admirable order, and everything teaches us our own dependence on it." Donald H. Meyer, *The Democratic Enlightenment*, op. cit., 14. For Voltaire's attitude to institutionalised religion, however, see A. Owen Aldridge, *Voltaire and the Century of Light*, (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1975), 50-51, 125-126, 177-178, 294-296, 336-339.


Professor Hazard has expressed this far better than I could hope to do: "God was to remain, but a God so remote, so watered down, so pallid that his presence imposed no constraint on the City of Men. He would neither visit them with his wrath, nor bedazzle them with his glory. Deism and theism required no act of faith. The process involved was a purely technical one, culminating in one simple, satisfying conclusion, namely that God exists. We have but to glance at Creation as a whole to recognise how admirably it works. But we cannot imagine effects without a cause, therefore we must state it that a primary cause exists. A clock implies the existence of a clockmaker. Well, we have before us what we may compare to a well-regulated clock; therefore, there must be somewhere the skilful craftsman who made it and who keeps it in order. That craftsman is God." Paul Hazard, op. cit., 128; see also Charles Vereker, *Eighteenth Century Optimism*, op. cit., 17-38 on "The God of Reason".

It was no accident that during the French Revolution the cult of the Supreme Being arose. In 1794, the French Convention resolved that "the French people recognises the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul." Festivals of Worship of the Supreme Being were called, the most spectacular of which occurred on June 8, 1794 when a large procession marched from the Tuileries to the Champ-de-Mars. See Francois Furet &

55. These are, of course, the opening words of chapter one of Rousseau's Social Contract.


61. Gay, The Science of Freedom, op. cit., x; Lively, op. cit., xiii-xiv. The Encyclopedie, which represents more than anything the Enlightenment in its entirety, is after all, a compendium of all known and established knowledge, not an account of current or recent research.


64. On the peculiarly philosophical nature of the American Revolution see Andrew J. Reck, "Some Philosophers and the Declaration of Independence" in Peter Caws (ed.) Two Centuries of Philosophy in America, (Basil Blackwell, American Philosophical Quarterly Library of Philosophy, 1980), 11-21. See also Peter Caws' introductory essay entitled "Philosophy at the Bicentennial".


Though this did not preclude them from recognising the massive contribution of Newton. In the writings of some New Englanders, Newton was praised almost as much as he was by the French philosophers. Cotton Mather, in a communication to the Royal Society, called him "the perpetual Dictator of the Learned World", while William Livingston of New York, rivaling Alexander Pope in the poetic celebration of Newton's achievement, wrote:

INMORTAL NEWTON; whose illustrious name,  
Will shine on records of eternal fame.

Both these are quoted in Clinton Rossiter, Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the American Tradition of Political Liberty, (Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, 1953), 130.


68. Grob & Beck, op. cit., 84.


72. Paul Hazard, op. cit., 122 ff.;

74. See the extract of Charles Chauncy's Commencement Sermon, God's Mercy Shewed to His People in Giving them a Faithful Ministry and Schooles of Learning for the Continual Supplies Thereof, quoted in Grob & Beck, op.cit., 76-78.


80. Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America, op.cit., 35-64, passim.

81. The phrase is Bailyn's in "Political Experience....", op.cit., 346.

82. Donald H. Meyer, The Democratic Enlightenment, op.cit., x.


86. May, op.cit., 117


88. Useful narrative accounts of the development of British Constitutional history, and especially the separation of King and Parliament are Betty Kemp, King and Commons, 1660-1832, (St. Martin's Press, Macmillan, London, 1959), 1-6, 7-31; G.E. Aylmer, The Struggle for the Constitution,


94. Bonwick, ibid., 15
96. Locke, Second Treatise (Laslett edn.), section 4 (p. 309).
97. "The State of Nature has a Law of Nature to govern it, which obliges everyone: And Reason, which is that Law, teaches all Mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions", Locke, Second Treatise, ibid., section 6 (p. 311).
98. Locke, Second Treatise, ibid., section 8 (312-313), section 10 (313-314).
99. Locke, Second Treatise, ibid., section 89 (368-369), sect-
100. Locke, *Second Treatise*, *ibid.*, sections 95-99 (374-377).


107. Note the wording of the Mayflower Compact of November 1620: "We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James... having undertaken for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith, and the honour of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic... and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws... as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." quoted in Marchette Chute, *The First Liberty*, *op. cit.*, 38

111. This is why the philosophes of Europe looked with such hope across the Atlantic to the new political and social experiment which was happening there. See Gay, The Science of Freedom, op. cit., 555-563.
113. Hindle, ibid., 4-5.
115. The words are Cadwallader Colden's quoted in Grob & Beck, op. cit., 215.
References to Chapter Four

1. Bertrand Russell, The Problem of Philosophy, (Oxford University Press, seventh impression, London, 1976), 41. According to Morris Raphael Cohen, Reason and Nature: The Meaning of the Scientific Method, (Free Press of Glencoe, Collier-Macmillan, London, second edn., 1953), the epistemological conflict between rationalism and empiricism has been too sharply drawn. Cohen emphasises the sterility of stressing one theory of knowledge to the exclusion of the other, for both, he maintains, have their place; pure empiricism, for instance, can never claim to be the sole method of scientific knowing because "without reasoning, as the process of drawing logical inferences, there is no science." (p.5). See also pp.16-17, 76-146 passim. The scope of things which are knowable purely by reason or purely by observation is indeed limited, and it is, I think, safe to say that the bulk of our knowledge is derived from a delicate and subtle combination of the two methods. The best characterisation of this balance, which draws out the fullest nuances, is by R. Hooykaas, Religion and the Rise of Modern Science, op. cit., 29: "When the rational element gets more than its due, it becomes rationalism, which considers rationality to be the criterion for reality and allots a secondary role to observation and experimentation. A rational empiricism, on the other hand, recognises that reason is indispensable for the creation of order, but that it has to submit to what has been given in the world; it has an open eye for the contingency of the existence and the way of being of things."

2. Peter Gay, The Science of Freedom, op. cit., 455-461; Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, op. cit., chs. 1, 2 & 3; George Sabine, History of Political Theory, op. cit., 463, 473, 483. Sabine's judgement of Montesquieu, that "He alone undertook what purported to be an empirical study of society and government on a large scale, and yet his supposed inductions were controlled throughout by preconceptions for which he neither had nor sought empirical proof" might just as accurately be applied to Voltaire, Helvetius, the Physicocrats or Condorcet!


4. Locke, First Treatise, sections 30, 52-54, 85, 86; Second Treatise, sections, 5, 56. Willmoore Kendall, John Locke and the doctrine of Majority-Rule, (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1965), 69 tellingly begins to recount the stages of Locke's argument concerning the rights of property in the state of nature with the sanction of God.
5. A brief but good discussion of Jefferson's religious views is to be found in Adrienne Koch, The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1943, Quadrangle Paperbacks), ch. iv, "Morals, and Religion". The chapter entitled "Politics, Religion and Science" in Edwin T. Martin, Thomas Jefferson: Scientist, (Henry Schuman, New York, 1952) is disappointing as is (surprisingly) Garry Wills' treatment of the subject in Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, (Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, 1978), chs. 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 passim. See also W.D. Gould, "The Religious Opinions of Thomas Jefferson", Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XX (1933), 191-209. See also Carl Becker's statement about the religious temper of the revolutionary generation in general in The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1951), 36-37: they "had lost that sense of intimate intercourse and familiar conversation with God which religious men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries enjoyed. Since the later seventeenth century, God had been withdrawing from immediate contact with men, and had become, in proportion as he receded into the dim distance, no more than the Final Cause, or the Great Contriver, or Prime Mover of the Universe."


8. The words are, of course, from Pope's Essay on Man which enjoyed a spectacularly successful prestige in America. According to Agnes Marie Sibley, Alexander Pope's Prestige in America, 1725-1835, (New York, 1949), 23, the Essay on Man was printed 68 times between 1747 and 1809; on Pope's influence in America, see also Henry F. May, The Enlightenment in America, op.cit., 37.

Darwinism in American Thought, (George Braziller, New York, 1944), esp. ch. on Sumner, pp. 51-66, 85-104, and the way in which he juxtaposes the Protestant ethic and laissez-faire economics with the new concept of natural selection.

10. The political writings of all three philosopher-theorists cited were published within the context of broader philosophical and epistemological speculations, to which each contributed considerably. The political ideas of Locke and Hume were initially considered to be of secondary importance to their ideas on the nature of knowledge. Garry Wills has gone so far as to maintain that in the case of Locke, it was the political implications of his epistemology in the Essay Concerning Human Understanding which exercised more influence on the course of American political theory than did the Two Treatises. See Garry Wills, Inventing America, op.cit., 181ff. Indeed, one Locke scholar has maintained that until the beginning of the twentieth century, Locke's reputation was primarily as an epistemologist, see S.P. Lamprecht, The Moral and Political Philosophy of John Locke, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1918), iii. Similarly with David Hume; his political ideas are contained in the third volume of the Treatise of Human Nature which was published later than the two previous volumes. Moreover, Hume's reputation certainly at the time of his death in 1776, was more that of an historian than as a philosopher. See D.F. Pears, David Hume: A Symposium, (Macmillan, London, 1963), 89. Of Hobbes, George Sabine has written that he "was in fact the first of the great modern philosophers who attempted to bring political theory into intimate relation with a thoroughly modern system of thought, and he strove to make this system broad enough to account, on scientific principles, for all the facts of nature, including human behaviour both in its individual and social aspects." Therefore, "Political theory was only one part of what he designed to be an all-inclusive system of philosophy formed upon scientific principles. This system would now be described as materialism." Sabine, op.cit., 388-389.

11. See the methodological discussion in chapter one, pp. 15-16 below; also, C.B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, op.cit., 5.


14. The literature on Natural Law is extensive, though the following books have greater relevance for the concept as it was used in American usage: B.F. Wright, American Interpretations of Natural Law, (Russell & Russell, New York,


18. I do not mean to imply that Natural Law, in the sense of being a descriptive observation of physical phenomena, suddenly burst onto the scene in the sixteenth century; what I am saying is that the "systematic spirit" of which Ernst Cassirer speaks, gave added meaningfulness to the previously disjointed shreds of physical information which had long been observed. What the rise of modern science did was to provide a new, all-encompassing framework in which these bits of information could be evaluated and related to each other.

19. J.R.Pole, "Enlightenment and the Politics of American Nature", Porter & Teich, op.cit., 192-214, maintains that the "analogy between the world of people and the structure of the cosmos implied another connexion, fundamental to Enlightenment thought and particularly significant in several aspects of the American experience. Under the influence of the analogy it became necessary to infer moral laws governing human conduct from the laws of the natural order." (196).


21. Though, according to Morris Cohen, op.cit., 5, neither Newton nor his contemporaries of the period were aware of a conflict of method. After all, Principia Mathematica, is a suggestive title and it betokened Newton's ultimate ambition to reduce the laws of motion of the universe to an exact mathematical formula. See, D.D.Raphael, "Physics and ethics: the influence of Newton on Moral Philosophy", Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Philosophy at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, March 11, 1975.
22. This is the essence of Hume's later rejection of the principle of induction; "scientific truth" could never be established with absolute certainty because its validation depended on a future event which was predictable, statistically speaking, but not necessary. See Bertrand Russell, History of Western Philosophy, (George Allen & Unwin, London, eighth impression, 1952), Book Three, Part I, ch.XVII. This is also the basis of Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability, that is, that a scientific hypothesis stands only for as long as it cannot be falsified. See too Donald MacKay, The Clockwork Image: A Christian Perspective on Science, (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1974), esp.ch.2.


30. Locke, Essay, Book I, ch.2; Book IV, ch.7; see also Woolley's introduction, esp.21-24.


32. Locke, First Treatise, ch.ix, section 101 (p.253); Second Treatise, ch.11, sect.6 (p.311); Second Treatise, ch.11, sect.8 (p.312); Second Treatise, ch.11, sect.61 (p.350).


34. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.xv, sect.172 (p.429-430).


36. Locke's use of the term "property" is not always consistent; at times he uses it to include life and liberty,
but at other times it is used in the sense only of chattels and goods. See, Macpherson, Possessive Individualism, op.cit., 197-199; John Plamenatz, Man and Society, op.cit., I, 209-252 passim.

40. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.viii, sect.95 (p.374).
44. Henry F. May, The Enlightenment in America, op.cit., 119ff; Adrienne Koch, The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson, op.cit., 126. Jefferson was not the only one to think of Hume primarily as an historian. Hugh Trevor-Roper has maintained that "when Hume died in 1776, he was known more as an historian than as a philosopher" and that "For seven decades Hume's History [of England] was the standard account", in D.F. Peirs, David Hume: A Symposium, op.cit., 89, 99; compare this with the statement by D.D. Raphael in William B. Todd (ed.), Hume and the Enlightenment: Essays Presented to Ernest Campbell Mossner, (University of Edinburgh Press, 1974), 14.


49. Throughout this study I shall be using C. Gordon Post's edition of Calhoun's Disquisition, (The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Liberal-Arts Press, Indianapolis, 1953), 44. (Hereafter cited as Calhoun, Disquisition.)

50. Calhoun, Disquisition, 45, though Calhoun had at one time accepted the existence of a state of nature. See his Address to the People of South Carolina (the Exposition) in Gralle, Works of Calhoun, op. cit., Vol. 6, 138.

51. Calhoun, Disquisition, 45.

52. Calhoun, Disquisition, 44.


55. At the time of the American Revolution, the Quaker David Cooper noted that if the principles of the Declaration of Independence were valid, then racial slavery could not be: "If these solemn truths of the Declaration, uttered at such an awful crisis, are self-evident: unless we can shew that the African race are not men, words can hardly express the amazement which naturally arises on reflecting that the very people who make these pompous declarations are slaveholders, and, by their legislative conduct, tell us, that these blessings were only meant to be the rights of white men, not of all men: and would seem to verify the observation of an eminent writer; "When men talk of liberty, they mean their own liberty, and seldom suffer their thoughts on that point to stray to their neighbours", quoted in Winthrop Jordan, White over Black, op. cit., 290. also, 184, 227, 414-15, 255, 364-5, 322-323.

56. I take Locke's statements in the Second Treatise, ch. viii, sects. 101-104, to indicate that Locke believed that a state of nature had actually existed as a matter of historical fact. Hume's dissent from this on empirical grounds is valid, but it does his reputation no good in the light of his acceptance of the moral consequences of the state of nature whilst he denies it as a matter of fact. Locke's
position is, I think, arguable, but his defence of the state of nature as an historical reality is more respectable than Hume's position. See Richard K. Ashcraft, "Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?", op. cit.

57. Calhoun, Disquisition, 42-43.
59. Ibid., 507-507.
60. Ibid., 507-509.
62. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.
63. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.
64. Calhoun's appeal to "universal experience" is repeated at intervals throughout the texts, Disquisition, 3, 5, 44.
65. Calhoun, Disquisition, 4.
66. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.
68. Edmund Burke, Reflections on the French Revolution, W. Alison Phillips and Catherine Beatrice Phillips (eds.), (Cambridge University Press, 1929), 61. Calhoun's admiration of Burke was intense and throughout his career he appealed to Burke as a statesman and as a philosopher. See, for example, Calhoun to Samuel D. Ingham, Secretary of the Treasury, Oct. 30, 1830 in Calhoun Papers, Vol. XI, 254 in which he holds Burke to be "the greatest of all philosophers"; "Speech on the Bill to Cede the Public Lands to the States in which they are Situated" of Feb. 9, 1837 in which Burke is referred to as "the greatest of modern statesmen"; also "Speech on His Amendment to Separate the Government and the Banks" of Oct. 3, 1837, 601.
71. Calhoun, Disquisition, 54-56, 70-81.
72. W.S. Jenkins, Proslavery Thought in the Old South, op. cit., 65.


75. Spain, op.cit., 80.
References to Chapter Five


2. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.

3. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.II, sect.15 (p.318); ch.III, sect.17 (p.320); ch.IV, sects.22-23 (pp.324-25); ch.VIII sects.112, 117, 119, 121, 122 (pp.388, 391, 392, 393-94, 394).


5. Calhoun, Disquisition, 5.


7. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.VIII, section 95, (p.375).


9. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.VIII, section 95 (p.374-75); ch.II, section 6 (p.311); Ch.II, section 13 (p.316-17); See also Peter Laslett's introduction, p.109.

10. Calhoun, Disquisition, 8.


14. See, for example, Calhoun's Speech on the Force Bill of Feb.15 & 16, 1833 in Calhoun Papers, Vol.XII, 45-94.

15. Calhoun, Disquisition, 7.


17. Calhoun, Disquisition, 8.

18. Calhoun, Disquisition, 8.


20. Calhoun, Disquisition, 10.

of Tyranny of the Majority in American Thought", (unpublish-

22. Calhoun, Disquisition, 8.

23. Calhoun, Disquisition, 8.

24. According to Caroline Robbins, "European Republicanism in
the Century and a Half before 1776" in Richard B.Morris,
(ed.) The Development of a Revolutionary Mentality (Lib-

tary of Congress, Washington D.C., 1972), 32, one of the
slogans of the American Revolution was "Rebellion to
Tyrants is Obedience to God", thus implying the supremacy
of Natural Rights over the Sovereign will of the govern-
ment.

25. Yehoshua Arieli, Individualism and Nationalism in American
Ideology, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.,

26. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, John Plamenatz (ed.), (Fontana

27. Calhoun, Disquisition, 7.

28. Calhoun, Disquisition, 43.

29. This is at the heart of Calhoun's distrust of the French
Revolution of 1848—he believed that the French people
were not sufficiently trained in the science of politics
to be able to construct a truly free government and hence
the Revolution would ultimately degenerate into anarchy.
See Calhoun to James Edward Calhoun, April 15, 1848 (749-
751); Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, April 28, 1848; Calhoun

to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, June 23, 1848 (752-753; 757-759) all
in Calhoun Correspondence.

30. Henry F.May, op.cit., 133-149; F.B.Simkins & Charles P.
Roland, A History of the South, (Alfred A.Knopf, New
York, 1953, 4th edn.), ch.Vi; For the general character of
deism in eighteenth century America see Herbert M.Morais,
Deism in Eighteenth Century America, (Columbia University
Press, New York, 1934), esp.ch.1; Sydney E.Ahlstrom, A
Religious History of the American People, (Yale University
Davis, Intellectual Life in Jeffersonian Virginia, (University
of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1964), 123-
128.

31. May, op.cit., 120.

32. May ibid., 119-120; For an explanation of the issues
involved in Hume's critique of Miracles see Ninian Smart,
Philosophers and Religious Truth, (S.C.M.Press, London,
1954), ch.2, pp.25-49.

33. Irving H.Bartlett, The American Mind in the Mid-Nineteenth
6-10.


36. In Deistic theology the figure of Jesus Christ was shorn of all divinity and he became instead, in the words of J.S. Mill, "the greatest moral reformer, and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth", quoted in A.O.J. Cockshut, *The Unbelievers: English Agnostic Thought 1840-1890*, (Collins, London, 1964). Jefferson, of course, epitomised the deism of the Revolutionary generation and believed that Jesus' mission had been "to reform their [the Jews'] moral doctrines to the standards of reason, justice and philanthropy." Herbert M. Morais, op.cit., 15-16; even John Adams, the most pious and Puritan of the Revolutionaries, according to Paul Conkin, denied the divinity of Jesus. See Paul Conkin, *Puritans and Pragmatists*, (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1970), 121.


38. For a representative selection of the literature of the Revolution, see Bernard Bailyn, *Pamphlets*, op.cit.


40. Quoted in May, op.cit., 327.


42. Ahlstrom, op.cit., 658-659; for example, see Thornton Stringfellow's *Scriptural and Statistical Views in Favor of Slavery*, (Richmond, J.W. Randolph, 1856) extract reproduced in Eric McKitrick, *Slavery Defended*, op.cit., 86-98.

43. May, op.cit., 328.


45. Ibid., 56.

46. Ibid., 295.

47. William Stanton, *The Leopard's Spots*, op.cit., 162; see also 68-69, 119.


49. Stanton, op.cit., 194.


51. Most of the authorities maintain that Calhoun contributed to the building of the first Unitarian Church in Washington D.C. See Charles M. Wiltse, John C. Calhoun: Nationalist, 1782-1828, (Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1944), 268-59; Galliard Hunt, op.cit., 38; William Meigs, op.cit., II, 102; Gerald Capers, op.cit., 75-76.

52. Richard Hofstadter, for example, has said precisely this in relation to the Founding Fathers in chapter one of his American Political Tradition, op.cit., 3-17.

53. Mary Boykin Chesnut, A Diary from Dixie, Ben Ames Williams (ed.) (Riverside Press, Houghton & Mifflin, New York, 1949), 16. See also the recent edition of the Diary by C. Vann Woodward entitled Mary Chesnut's Civil War, (Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1981) and especially his introductory section: "Diary in Fact—Diary in Form", pp. xv-xxix in which he highlights the fact that the Diary was actually written between 1881 and 1884 from notes taken at the time.


55. R.B. Rhett to Calhoun, December 8, 1843, Calhoun Correspondence, 898-900.


58. Burke's Reflections offers strong support for this contention; he believed, for instance, that "religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort." (p.91) Moreover, "the consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment, is necessary also to operate with a wholesome awe upon free citizens...." (p.93). In 1749, Benjamin Franklin's paper "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania" maintained that "History will... afford frequent opportunities of showing the Necessity of a Publick Religion, from its usefulness to the Publick...." quoted in Catherine L. Albanese, Sons of the Fathers: The Civil Religion of the American Revolution, (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1976), p.viii.

60. Calhoun used the unusual, though completely deistic designation "the Great Disposer of Events" in a speech to a Meeting of the Citizens of Charleston on March 9, 1847 which was subsequently reported in Niles' National Register of April 3, 1847, Vol. LXXII, 73-75.

References to Chapter Six


7. The title of Peter Gay's second volume on the Enlightenment --The Science of Freedom--is suggestive in that it combines the ideas of a supposedly value-free method with the emotionally-charged value of freedom. Gay develops this theme in the chapter on "The Science of Society" (ch.7). With regard to Montesquieu, Gay claims that he "smuggled ideology into his science" (p.324) and indeed, that his brand of sociology, so far from being value-free, was "a science designed to advance freedom and humanity." (p.323).


9. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40 ff.


11. This is the subtitle of Hume's Treatise.


20. It was this belief which gave rise to environmentalist thought in America; if God had created men equal, so the argument went, the obvious and inescapable disparity in intellectual capacity, strength, skill etc., had to be explained by some other factor, the most obvious candidate being environment. See Winthrop D.Jordan, White Over Black, op.cit., 288 ff; Graham Wallas, Human Nature in Politics, (Constable, London, 1920), 1-19, 138-166 passim for the belief that human nature was constant.


25. Quoted in Merle Curti, ibid., 105.

26. For environmentalist strands in Jefferson's thought, see Jordan, op.cit., 435-440, 478-480; also Duncan MacLeod, Slavery, Race and the American Revolution, op.cit., 129-


32. Madison in The Federalist, op. cit., No. 51 (p. 337) Compare this with Calhoun's statement in the Disquisition that "Power can only be resisted by power—and tendency by tendency." (p. 11).


34. The first part of Hobbes' Leviathan—"On Man"—is devoted to an attempt to explain man's motivation in terms of physics and the laws of motion; human actions, from the simple physical to the complex psychological, were explicable in mechanistic terms, that is, the displacement of molecules. By basing man's actions and motivations on a supposedly scientific level, Hobbes was presenting his conception of human nature as a morally neutral postulate. For a deeper examination of Hobbes' scientific materialism, see, C. B. Macpherson, Possessive Individualism, op. cit., 10, 78-79; Sabine, op. cit., 388-392; Watkins, op. cit., 28-42, 69-84 passim.

35. See my comments on Hacker on p. 1 above.
36. Though Ralph L. Ketcham dissents from this; he has maintained that "once a philosopher has divulged what sort of creature he takes man to be, both in fact and in potentiality, his arguments in other fields of inquiry are often readily anticipated." Ralph L. Ketcham, "James Madison and the Nature of Man", Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. XIX (No. 1, Jan. 1958), 62-76. The point I am making, however, is that once one has understood a particular theorist's concept of human nature, one cannot anticipate the outcome of his political theory unless one has grasped too the values he is seeking to uphold.

37. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.


40. Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, J.H.Burns & H.L.A.Hart (eds.) (University of London, Athlone Press, 1970), 11. (Although the text was written in 1780 and privately printed in that year, it was not published until 1789, according to Sabine, op.cit., 548.)

41. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.

42. By "innate sociability" I mean that mode of thought which holds that the impulse for man to associate with his fellows in groups, is implanted as an intrinsic part of his nature. The opposite I take to be the mode of thought which believes that social groups are deliberately and consciously created in order to fulfil certain calculated ends for the individuals which have consented to create them.


45. Locke, Second Treatise, ch. II, sects. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, (pp. 311-314).

46. Locke, Second Treatise, ch. VIII, sect. 95, (p. 375).

47. Richard Ashcraft, op.cit., 898-915.

48. This point is well made by C.W.Cassinelli, "The Consent of the Governed", Western Political Quarterly, Vol. XII, (1959), 391-409. Cassinelli argues that consent is actually a fiction, though he concedes that governments do enjoy what he terms "hypothetical consent" or legitimacy.

49. Calhoun, Disquisition, 4.

50. See chapter four above, pp. 184-185.
51. Calhoun, Disquisition, 5.

52. Calhoun, Disquisition, 5.


57. Calhoun, Disquisition, 5.

58. According to Hobbes, reason "is not, as sense and memory, born with us; nor gotten by experience only, as prudence is; but attained by industry....", Leviathan, 85.


60. For the intellectual relationship between Hobbes and Locke, see Peter Laslett's introduction to the Two Treatises, pp.80-105. Laslett argues that Locke's acquaintanceship with the works of Hobbes was slight indeed.
References to Chapter Seven

1. I do not wish to impugn the sincerity of Calhoun's religious convictions, only to point out that as far as politics were concerned, religion was useful only in the sense that it infused as spirit of social cohesion within the community. Religion was thus an instrument for attaining more desirable political ends. Actually, at the start of his career, Calhoun was loath to admit that politics and religion had any useful connection with one another. In January, 1813 he had told the House of Representatives that he could not "point out an instance in ancient or modern times when the junction of religion and politics has not been fatal to the interest of both. It is this unnatural union which has engendered the foulest progeny of human woes." Speech on the New Army Bill, Jan. 14, 1813, Calhoun Papers, Vol. I. In this Calhoun differed strikingly with his idol Edmund Burke; even though Burke believed that "When religion is brought into a question of civil and political arrangement it must be considered more politically than theologically...", he nevertheless understood that the political system was designed to uphold the truth and value of religion. In a letter to his son Richard in November 1792, Burke maintained that "nothing is worth saving if religion is destroyed. See Burke's Letter on the Affairs of Ireland in The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, (John C. Nimmo, London, 1899, 12 vols.), Vol. 6, 426; also P. J. Marshall & John A. Woods (eds The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, (Cambridge University Press & University of Chicago Press, 1968), VII, 298; also see Gerald W. Chapman, Edmund Burke: The Practical Imagination (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 82.

2. Spain, op. cit., 78.

3. Spain, ibid., 78 ff.

4. Calhoun, Disquisition, 45.

5. Indeed, Gordon S. Wood has maintained that the revolutionary ideology began to be undermined during the period of constitution-making. See Creation of the American Republic, op. cit., 519-524 "The Repudiation of 1776", but see all of that chapter on "The Federalist Persuasion".

6. According to B. F. Wright, "The Philosopher of Jeffersonian Democracy", American Political Science Review, Vol. XXII, (No. 4, Nov. 1928), 887, Taylor understood the authentic principle of government in America to be based on the philosophy of the Declaration of Independence. The most important of Taylor's works are Arator (1818), Construction Construed and Constitutions Vindicated (1820), An Inquiry into the Principles and Policy of the Government of the United States (1814), New Views of the Constitution of the United States (1823) and Tyranny Unmasked. A full list of
Taylor's works may be found in C. William Hill, *The Political Theory of John Taylor of Caroline*, op.cit., 323-324.


15. See chapter one above, pp.4 ff.


24. Locke, Second Treatise, ch.VIII, section 107, (pp.382-383); see also Laslett's introduction, pp.133-34.


27. McWilliams, *op.cit.*, 172 supports this contention of mine: "'Natural Right' was innate in the individual; he was born morally complete. Hence, the state did not exist to develop man as a moral personality; it could only be justified in terms of its utility to the individual, a doctrine expressed in the theory of the 'social contract'."


31. Morton White, *op.cit.*, 244-256.

32. White, *ibid.*, 249.

33. White, *ibid.*, 251.

34. I am thinking particularly of the period of the New Deal. In October 1932, Herbert Hoover declared that the forthcoming Presidential contest between himself and Franklin Roosevelt was a contest not only of personalities, but of philosophies of government. In this he was correct. See D.J. Clarke, "Critical Realignments and Congressional Behaviour", (University of Keele M.A. dissertation, 1978), introduction.


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38. The fear of concentrated power, like the fear of standing armies, was a part of the legacy of the Revolutionary period. The Whig theory of government preferred to keep the activity of government to a minimum in order to avoid the possibility of abuse of power.

39. Bailyn, Ideological Origins, op.cit., chapter three; the Founding Fathers believed, along with David Hume, that "In all government, there is a perpetual intestine struggle, open or secret, between AUTHORITY and LIBERTY; and neither of them can ever absolutely prevail in the contest. A great sacrifice of liberty must necessarily be made in every government, yet even the authority, which confines liberty, can never, and perhaps ought never, in any constitution, to become quite entire and uncontrollable", Hume, "Of the Origin of Government" in The Philosophical Works of David Hume, (T.H. Green & T.H. Grose eds.) (1882 edn., 4 vols.), III, 116.

40. Quoted in Richard Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, op.cit., 3.

41. Unfortunately, I cannot recall the precise source of this quotation of Jefferson's, though see Hofstadter ibid., 26-32.

42. Hence the crucial importance of prescribed constitutions for liberal societies.


45. For example, on June 23, 1834, Calhoun told a Committee at Farmville, Virginia that "... it is a[s] difficult to preserve liberty as it is to win it. Providence intended, that as it is the greatest blessing on this side of the grave, so it should be the most difficult to obtain and enjoy." Calhoun Papers, Vol.XII, 344-45.

46. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3.

47. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3, 5, 7.


49. See chapter five above, pp.197-198.

50. Spain, op.cit., 92.

51. Calhoun, Disquisition, 6 (emphasis added).

52. Laslett's introduction to Locke, Two Treatises, op.cit., 121.

53. See chapter six above for Calhoun's propositions of human nature.
54. Calhoun, Disquisition, 4-6.


58. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40.

59. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40, 43.

60. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40, 43.

61. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40. The same point is made in Calhoun's Speech to the House of Representatives on May 6, 1812 on the occasion of the presentation of a petition by the Citizens of Albany (against the Embargo), Calhoun Papers, Vol. I.

62. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40.

63. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40.

64. Calhoun, Disquisition, 43-44.

65. Calhoun, Disquisition, 40-41.

66. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.

67. Calhoun, Disquisition, 42.

68. Calhoun, Disquisition, 42.

69. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.

70. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.

71. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.

72. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.


74. Paul Boller's essay on Calhoun in Freedom and Fate in American Thought: From Edwards to Dewey, (Southern Methodist University, Dallas, 1975), 81-105 supports my argument that, contrary to most scholarly opinion, Calhoun was not a classical American individualist.
Boller cites three distinguished scholars—Ralph Henry Gabriel, Charles M. Wiltse and C. Gordon Post—who have all made this error. Carl Degler in *Place Over Time: The Continuity of Southern Distinctiveness*, (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge & London, 1977), 86 also makes the same mistake when he claims that "Calhoun may have found certain aspects of political democracy dangerous, but he never doubted that reason and individualism were at the heart of the good society." The point is that these were precisely the values that he did doubt; Calhoun was never convinced that reason could rise above self-interest and whatever individualism he accepted was always predicated on the higher rights of the community.

References to Chapter Eight

1. Calhoun, Disquisition, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 41-44 passim, 47, 67-68.


3. Pollard, op. cit., 15-30 passim; Bebbington, op. cit., 1-20; amongst the most eminent of modern scholars to formulate a progressive theory of history on a grand scale is Arnold Toynbee. See his A Study of History, (Oxford University Press, London, 1934-1959, 11 vols.)


6. See chapter one, pp.13-16 above.


8. Bury's definition of progress--"that civilisation has moved, is moving, and will move in a desirable direction" (p.2)--contains most of the elements of our suggested definition, but it omits the crucial one of the scope over which progress is thought to extend.

9. See, for example, the variety of definitions and applications of the idea in Charles Van Doren, op.cit.


11. Pollard's categories are extremely plausible, though he offers no quantitative evidence to support them, nor does he specify on what basis they were arrived at.

12. This can, however, be exaggerated, for there is a strong case to be made for believing that cultural renaissance


14. Calhoun, Disquisition, 44.

15. In May 1812, Calhoun told the House of Representatives that he was "sensible that the maxim is generally correct, that individual profit is national gain; and that the party interested is the best judge of the hazard and propriety of a speculation". (But Calhoun added that there were occasions when the government, having the interests of the community in mind, was right to override the wishes of individuals or groups), "Speech on the Petition of the Citizens of Albany (against the Embargo), May 6, 1812, Calhoun Papers, Vol. I, 104.


17. Calhoun, Disquisition, 36.

18. Calhoun, Disquisition, 36.


20. Rollin G. Osterweis, Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South, (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1949), 16ff; Eugene D. Genovese, The World the Slaveholders Made, op. cit., 16-20, 49-52, 53-56 describes the concept of "seigneurialism" which he maintains is a more precise description of antebellum Southern society; also 130-31.

21. The alternative title of Fitzhugh's Cannibals All! is Slaves Without Masters, by which he meant to indicate that the paternal obligations which Southern slaveholders felt towards their slaves, was absent in so-called free society.

22. In Nov. 1844, Calhoun informed William C. Brown that "My character as a master is, I trust, as unimpeachable, as I hope it is in all the other relations of life. I regard my relation to those who belong to me, in the double aspect of master and guardian, and am as careful to discharge the duties appertaining to each, as I am those, which appertain to the numerous other relations in which I am placed." Calhoun to William C. Brown, Nov. 14, 1844, Calhoun Correspondence, 627-629.


27. Calhoun, Disquisition, 66-68.

28. Calhoun, Disquisition, 66-68.

29. Robert Dale Owen, Wealth and Misery, p.14 quoted in Ekirch, op. cit., 134; also Edward Pessen, Most Uncommon Jacksonians: The Radical Leaders of the Early Labor Movement (State University of New York Press, Albany, 1967), Ch. 8 develops the theme that the wealth created by the increasing efficiency of technology merely exacerbated the differences between rich and poor. Thomas Skidmore, "the most original and provocative of what was a strongly non-conformist group" (58) declared that American society was split into "two distinct classes, proprietors and non-proprietors; those who own the world and those who own no part of it." (125).


32. Though there is strong evidence that Calhoun was personally interested in science for its own sake. In 1818, Calhoun supported in strong terms the idea of Prof. Benjamin Silliman to establish a Journal of Science. "The utility of such a work, particularly in this country, must be apparent, and our number, wealth and intellectual improvement have now attained that point at which there ought to be sufficient patronage." Calhoun to Benjamin Silliman, March 26, 1818, Calhoun Papers, Vol. II, 211; in August 1835, Calhoun offered his support in a similar venture to the Southern fire-eater Edmund Ruffin in his effort to establish the Farmers' Register, Calhoun to Edmund Ruffin, Aug. 17, 1835, Calhoun Papers, Vol. XII, 564. Moreover, Calhoun kept up his contact with men of eminence in the scientific world: in December 1836 Joseph Henry (whom I. Bernard Cohen, "Science in America: The Nineteenth Century" in Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr & Morton White (eds.), Paths of American Thought, (Chatto & Windus, London, 1964), 167-189 has described as "without question, the ablest physical scientist produced in America in the first half of the nineteenth century" (167)), wrote his wife that at a meeting with Calhoun, he "was much pleased with his manners, his intelligence and the interest he expressed in
the cause of science." (Joseph Henry to his wife quoted in Calhoun Papers, Vol. XII, p. xlii).

33. Calhoun, Disquisition, 6 ff.
34. Calhoun, Disquisition, 5.
35. Calhoun, Disquisition, 57 (emphasis added).
36. Calhoun, Disquisition, 38.
37. Calhoun, Disquisition, 41.
38. Calhoun, Disquisition, 39.
40. Richard Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, op. cit., 3-17 passim.
42. Calhoun, Disquisition, 60.
43. Calhoun, Disquisition, 60.
44. Calhoun, Disquisition, 60.
45. Quoted in Ekirch, op. cit., 77.
47. Bebbington, op. cit., 27-33.
52. Calhoun, Disquisition, 68.
54. Pollard, op.cit., 35.


56. Calhoun, Disquisition, 10.


58. Calhoun to T.G.Clemson, April 1, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 747-748.

59. Calhoun to T.G.Clemson, March 22, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 746-747.

60. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, April 28, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 752-753.

61. Calhoun to T.G.Clemson, April 13, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 748-749.

62. Calhoun to Mrs.T.G.Clemson, June 23, 1848, Calhoun Correspondence, 757-758.

63. Calhoun, Disquisition, 68.

64. John Adams quoted in Ekirch, op.cit., 73.


68. Gay, ibid., 99-100.

69. Calhoun, Disquisition, 36.

References to Chapter Nine


6. Locke, *Second Treatise*, chapter viii, section 96 (pp.375-376). This principle of majoritarianism was accepted by Calhoun early in his career, before the sectional conflict came to the fore; in January, 1816, Calhoun had asserted in the House of Representatives, that "It is an established principle of politics and morality, that the interest of the many is paramount to that of the few. In fact, it is a principle so radical, that without it no system of morality, no rational scheme of government, could exist." Calhoun, Speech on Commercial Convention with Great Britain, Jan.9, 1816, Calhoun Papers, Vol.I.


9. Rousseau adopts an entirely scholastic approach to the problem of creating consensus. In Book II, ch.II of the Social Contract, he maintains that the sovereign will "either is, or is not, general; it is the will either of the body of the people, or only of a part of it." In the case of the former, Sovereignty consists in the individual wills of each member of the community being consulted before a policy decision is taken, but Rousseau concedes that "To be general, a will need not always be unanimous; but every vote must be counted: any formal exclusion is a breach of generality". This latter statement seems to imply some form of majoritarianism is necessary on occasions, though this conflicts with Rousseau's notion that the general will is, by definition, infallible and unanimous when directed to the common good. See Alfred Cobban, *Rousseau and the Modern State*, (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1934), ch.v on "The Idea of the General Will", pp.113-150.

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12. There is a dissenting minority of scholars who maintain that the influence of Locke on the formation of American revolutionary ideology is greatly exaggerated. Garry Wills' *Inventing America*, *op. cit.*, maintains that Jefferson's political thinking was influenced more by Francis Hutcheson, Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart. This view is supported by Joyotpaul Chaudhuri, "Jefferson's Unheavenly City: An Interpretation" in Chaudhuri, *The Non-Lockean Roots of American Democratic Thought*, *op. cit.*, 17-29. Philip C. Chapman's essay "John Wise and the Democratic Impulse in American Thought" in the same volume (p.2) maintains that Locke's ideas were "probably important to the Revolutionary generation less as a source of inspiration than as a prestigious source of support."


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43. Calhoun to T.G. Clemson, Dec. 8, 1849, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 776; Calhoun to Mrs. T.G. Clemson, Dec. 31, 1849, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 776-778; other examples of Calhoun's growing intractability are: Calhoun to John H. Means, April 13, 1849; Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, June 23, 1849; Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849; Calhoun to Abraham W. Venable, Aug. 1849 all in *Calhoun Correspondence*, 764-766, 768-769, 769-770, 770.
44. Calhoun, *Disquisition*, 20, 21.
49. Hartz, "South Carolina vs the United States", *op.cit.*, 79.

51. Horwitz, op. cit., 174. The classic statement of the liberal-atomist view of society is Thomas Paine, Rights of Man, op. cit., Part II, ch. I (pp. 185 ff) where he maintains that "No one man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre." (185).

52. McWilliams, op. cit., 262.


54. Horwitz, op. cit., 171.


60. Hartz, ibid., 75.

61. Calhoun to T.G. Clemson, March 10, 1850, Calhoun Correspondence, 783-784.
References to the Conclusion

1. Paul Hazard, European Thought in the Eighteenth Century, op.cit., 350-359; Peter Gay, The Science of Freedom, op.cit., 682-683 offers compelling arguments for abandoning the term "Enlightened Despotism" as a description of those absolute rulers, like Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great, who had contacts with the literary Enlightenment; see also Alfred Cobban, In Search of Humanity, op.cit., 161-179.


4. Niles National Register, May 8, 1847, 148
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A Southern Clergyman [I.L. Brookes], A Defence of Southern Slavery against the attacks of Henry Clay and Alex'r Campbell. In which much of the false philanthropy and mawkish sentimentalism of the abolitionists is met and refuted. In which it is moreover shown that the association of the white and black races in the relation of master and slave is the appointed order of God, as set forth in the Bible, and constitutes the best social condition of both races, and the only true principle of republicanizm. (Robinson & Carlisle, Hamburg, South Carolina, 1851)


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