Chapter I

LIFE AND TIMES OF WOODROW WILSON: A BRIEF SURVEY
The significance of Woodrow Wilson's contribution to his own country and to the world cannot be realized nor evaluated without a knowledge of the social, economic, political and intellectual currents of the times in which he lived. Wilson grew up in the South during the post Civil War period of American history. He combined a deep sense of purpose and a healthy perspective of his country's history with a remarkable capacity for growth and the ability to orient himself to new problems and circumstances and reinterpreting them in the light of the past and his own convictions. He was considered a leader of the common people of his country for he was able to articulate the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy to the conditions of a new era.

In the latter years of the 19th century the United States was concerned with the problems that arose out of Civil War and reconstruction. The war, with its demand for a variety of goods, had accelerated the pace of industrialization and economic growth. While a new industrial and urban economy was moving forward, agriculture went through a revolution as significant as that in industry and transportation. With mechanization, farming shifted from subsistence to commercial farming. Productiveness and efficiency vastly increased.
However, there was widespread feeling among the farmers that they received less and less return for their produce. This feeling led to their increased agitation for government relief. Some of the most important legislative battles during the 1890's revolved around the farm problem.

The Granger movement was the farmers' first attempt to oppose the railroad and industrial giants. By the 1890's the Farmer's Alliance, consisting of the north western alliance, the southern alliance and the coloured alliance, took the leadership from the Grangers in voicing agrarian discontent. The problem that confronted them was to arouse the consciousness of the farmers to the agrarian crisis and explore the possibility of using political means to redress their grievances.

The Farmer's Alliance programme was of far greater consequence to United States politics than the mere fact of an agrarian revolt. In its effort to solve farm problems it abandoned the principles of laissez-faire and demanded a programme of governmental intervention in economic affairs. The culmination of the agrarian revolt was the organization of the Populist Party in 1892. The significance of this development has been thus described by Professor Arthur Link:

The adoption of the Populist platform marked the end of an era when practically all Americans put their trust in the English Liberal ideal of a free, competitive economy, operating automatically in the general interest without decisive and planned intervention by government. The adoption of this platform heralded the coming triumph of a new
progressive faith—a faith in the ability of men working together to overcome economic adversity and rectify social injustice by legislative action. The later progressive movement went far beyond the Populist charter in elaborating specific remedies, but the spirit, purpose, and assumptions of progressivism were inherited directly from the Populists, the advance guard of a new reform movement. (1)

The strength of the movement and its philosophy can be gauged from the showing made by William Jennings Bryan and his agrarian followers at the 1896 Democratic convention. Bryan won the Democratic party’s nomination for the Presidency. His campaign alarmed the conservatives and the businessmen of the country.

In the 1890’s the leadership in the reform movement was largely agrarian, but the spirit of progressivism passed on to include small towns and cities in a revolt against the existing conditions. Progressivism thus ceased to be merely agrarian in outlook and objectives. Progressive movements from then onwards operated from different areas and simultaneously supported different programmes.

The economic revolution in the United States enhanced the national wealth, substantially raised the standards of living of its people, produced cycles of prosperity and depression which brought periodic unemployment to American workers, and emphasized class divisions among the American people. In addition it accelerated urbanization. Its

(1) Arthur S. Link, American Epoch (New York, 1955) 11,
resultant opportunities led to an increase in immigration which caused a rapid increase in population.

In addition, however, to the positive results of the economic revolution there were negative aspects. It had created social problems and the wastage of natural resources. Rapid industrialization had brought about the exploitation of women, children, and immigrant groups, unhealthy living conditions, misery, illness and insecure old age. The society was shaped by the 19th century revolution in industry, agriculture, transportation and politics. The economic and social injustices that these revolutions had brought in their wake had to be set right. This was a task to which progressives addressed themselves in their own way. In the beginning of the 20th century there could be discerned an articulate movement dedicated to strengthen democracy, to counter political abuses, to control the economic machinery and to find answers for the evils of special privilege and poverty.

What were the challenges to democracy which engaged progressive minds throughout the country and from all walks of life? The attempt to apply the moral code of an individualistic, agrarian society to the practices of a highly industrialized and integrated social order had resulted in a profound confusion of ethics. The rise of big business and the control of the natural resources and the labour of the country by trusts and monopolies had resulted in the exploitation of social wealth for private aggrandisement. There was a
groesly unequal distribution of wealth and social and class division were being created along economic lines. Increased urbanization was giving rise to many new social problems. Administrative institutions were not able to cope with the new problems of government and political honesty was breaking down.

Woodrow Wilson did not actively become a part of the progressive movement until he became involved directly in politics as Governor of New Jersey. Before 1890, when a significant movement could be recognized, Wilson had however, written an essay on administration in which he had recognized that changes in the administrative machinery were required if government was to handle its ever expanding functions. He had analysed the American governmental system and explored the concept of social harmony. He had come to the conclusion that fear of government was illogical in a democracy and that there was nothing either immoral or illegal in a welfare state. It is rather ironic that in 1910, the Democratic party should choose Wilson as the hope for the conservatives. Anybody who had read his works would have seen that he believed in an evolving state and saw the United States of America as an ever changing nation whose constitution had the capacity to adjust itself to a changed environment and could be interpreted in the context of the times.

Wilson, William Jennings Bryan, Robert La Follette, and Theodore Roosevelt are considered great progressive leaders in
American history. Throughout his long political career, Bryan, who was closely associated with the Populists, advocated the extension of governmental regulation over business and the strengthening of popular government. As Governor of Wisconsin, La Follette fought for the direct primary, and against the evils of the boss system in politics, and for regulation of the railways and public utilities. As Governor he established an industrial commission and, working through the state university, made Wisconsin an experimental laboratory for progressive ideals. In the Senate he applied progressive ideas to national politics. Theodore Roosevelt made his reputation as a reformer by his support of trust and railway regulation, civil service reform and the conservation of natural resources. While Roosevelt fought political privilege in the nation, Wilson contended with social privilege at Princeton. The new political ideas espoused by Bryan and La Follette such as the adaptation of the constitutional system to the requirements of a modern society, the regulation of the economic by the political authority and the development of new techniques of administration were put into effect by Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.

Wilson's ambition in life was to be active in politics. His family, his religion, and the inclination of his own temperament moulded and shaped him for the role he was to play in academic life and practical politics. Wilson was born on
28 December 1856 at Staunton, Virginia, the son of Dr. Joseph Ruggles Wilson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Staunton. His parents were of Scotch and Scotch-Irish background, descended from families of strong character and intellectual ability.

From both parents Wilson received the love and affection that deeply influenced his life. Many years later he still spoke of his mother as 'one of the most remarkable persons I have ever known.' (2) For his father he had deep admiration and love. The elder Wilson was a strong personality—a cultivated and learned man, and a fine preacher. Under the guidance of his father, Wilson received his earliest education in clear thinking and expression. Dr. Wilson often took his son on walks through the town, visiting a corn mill, cotton gin, or ammunition plant, explaining all the details to him. Upon returning home, he would talk over the experience. Dr. Wilson would never permit his son to use a wrong word or a wrong sentence; he insisted that every idea, every description be expressed clearly and correctly. If the boy faltered in using a word or phrase, he would be made to consult a dictionary. What his father had done for him, Wilson said later, was to teach him to think for himself. To Dr. Wilson education was

(2) Ray S. Baker, Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters. (Garden City, 1927) I, 34. Hereafter cited as Life and Letters. This is the authorized biography of Woodrow Wilson,
not the accumulation of facts but the training of the mind to use them. 'My son,' he told Wilson, 'the mind is not a prolix gut to be stuffed.' It was rather, he said, a 'vessel made to transmute something.' (3) Those habits of asking questions, thinking clearly, and expressing himself correctly, instilled in him by his father, were invaluable to Wilson throughout his academic and public life.

Since his father was a pastor, the church was naturally the centre of the family's life. Prayer, singing, and Bible-reading were part of each day. From this early training Wilson developed complete faith in the presence and judgment of God, and a belief in the value of the human personality. He came to regard the Bible as the Magna Carta of the human soul. The chief message of the Bible was to him that every man is "a distinct moral agent, responsible not to men, not even to those men whom he has put over him in authority, but responsible through his own conscience to his Lord and Maker. Whenever a man sees this vision," Wilson declared, "he stands up as a free man, whatever may be the government under which he lives, if he sees beyond the circumstances of his own life." (4)

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(4) Ibid., II, 292.
Even as a boy Wilson demonstrated his capacity to organize. Once he organized an adventure club, calling it the "Lightfoot Club." He worked out a kind of a constitution for the group and insisted that all debates be conducted according to rules. A few years later, at sixteen, he had already decided he wanted to become a statesman. He hung a picture of Gladstone over his desk, remarking, 'That is Gladstone, the greatest statesman that ever lived. I intend to be a statesman too.' (5) His interest in politics and government evidently began in such hero worship.

At college he further developed his interest in politics and actively participated in the debating societies. In 1873 he entered Davidson College, Piedmont, North Carolina, situated twenty miles north of Charollette, his home. There he was chosen a member of the Rhenish Society, a debating group, and soon he begun planning to redraft its constitution. The revised constitution declared that "the object of this Society shall be the acquirement of literary knowledge, the promotion of virtue, and the cultivation of social harmony and friendship." (6) This phrase social harmony was later to become the keynote of his thinking on the nature of the state and government.

(5) Life and Letters, I, 57.
(6) Ibid., 76. Italics mine.
Before and after entering Princeton in 1875, he read many books and journals on politics. Some of his early interest in politics and government can probably be traced to his reading of The Edinburgh Review and The Nation, to which his father subscribed. It is very likely that many of the views and ideas held by Wilson were derived from those two periodicals, especially the liberal Nation, then under the editorship of Edwin L. Godkin. In addition Wilson read The Federalist, T. H. Green's Short History of the English People, and the works of T. D. L'Orange and essays of Walter Bagehot. He also read the speeches of Edmund Burke and John Bright. All these readings influenced his later thinking. He was impressed too by the articles in The Gentleman's Magazine of 1874, especially the articles on "The Orator" and "The Democratic Party in the United States." They gave him an insight into the drama of popular government. His imagination was captured by the role of the leader who helps to translate the common will into law. (7)

(7) Ibid., 86-7. G. L. Godkin, an American editor, was born in Ireland. He came to the United States in 1856. In 1866, he founded the Nation, an independent news weekly whose incisive editorials and scholarly criticisms soon made it a national influence. In 1883 he became editor of the New York Evening Post. Godkin's writings reflected his support for free trade, colonial autonomy, world peace and the exclusion of government from business and industrial spheres. In all this he echoed the political and economic philosophy of the Manchester liberals. He looked to an intellectual elite to mould and perfect the social order.
In reading the lives of great political leaders he began to realize that the qualities they possessed were latent in him. He saw that if he were to become a statesman he must prepare himself by improving his ability as a speaker and a writer and by gaining a knowledge of history and politics. Confident in his own inner powers, he declared, "The rule for every man is, not to depend on the education which other men prepare for him, not even to consent to it; but to strive to see things as they are, and to be himself as he is. Defeat lies in self-surrender." (8) From then on Wilson set upon himself the discipline of educating himself for political leadership. He continued to study the lives and ideas of political thinkers, and undertook the study of political life and the machinery of government.

Princeton's intellectual atmosphere helped to develop his boyhood dreams of a statesman's career into a definite life purpose. Considering oratory as essential in training for leadership, he again spent a great deal of his time in debate. By the end of his first year he had become a member of the Old Whig Society, a debating club organized by James Madison in 1769. Before joining the society he demonstrated his interest in oratory by writing an article in The Princetonian. In his opinion, American oratory had declined because it was regarded as an end in itself. To him it was only a means.

(8) Woodrow Wilson, Mere Literature and other Essays (Boston, 1896) 49.
'Its object is persuasion and conviction—the control of other minds by a strange personal influence and power.' The fields open to orators, he said, are 'The bar, the pulpit, the stump, the Senate chamber, the lecturer's platform.' (9)

Unlike most debaters, Wilson refused to argue any position in which he did not believe. Two of the propositions he supported are especially significant in the light of his later thinking. On 17 October 1877 he supported the affirmative, 'That a liberal education is to be preferred to an exclusively practical one.' The following year he supported the affirmative in a debate on the tariff, arguing 'That a protective tariff is now no longer necessary for the protection of our home industries.' (10) His skill in debate and his capacity for leadership were clearly recognized by his fellow students. In February, 1878, Wilson was elected speaker of the Whig Society—its highest honour.

An early indication of Wilson's admiration for the British Parliamentary system could be seen in a constitution that he wrote for the Liberal Debating Club. The constitution followed the British Parliamentary model in regard to the presentation and discussion of bills; the house was empowered to sustain or turn out the secretary of state and his government. Significantly although the model was the British

(9) Life and Letters, I, 92.

(10) Ibid., 93, 94.
Parliament, Wilson used the terms of the American government. Thus, his position of secretary of state was really that of a prime-minister. In retrospect, the organization seems to foreshadow Wilson's later attempt to make the American government function as much like the British system as was possible within the framework of the constitution.

Wilson considered this training in oratory as part of his preparation for statesmanship. This is shown clearly by the following agreement which he made with his friend Charles Talcott. The two agreed to form:

... a solemn covenant that we would school all our powers and passions for the work of establishing the principles we held in common; that we would acquire knowledge that we might have power; and we would drill ourselves in all the arts of persuasion, but especially in oratory... that we might have facility in leading others into our ways of thinking and enlisting them in our purpose. (11)

Not content with only his experience in debate, Wilson also tried to improve his speaking ability by taking long walks to practice the speeches of famous orators. Many times he used his father's church to declaim the speeches of Demosthenes, John Bright, Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster and William Gladstone. (12)

(11) Wilson to Ellen Axson, 30 October 1883, Ibid., 103-4. Wilson held the term covenant sacred, implying purpose and devotion. He used this term later in his covenant of the League of Nations.

(12) Ibid., 92.
To develop his writing ability, he wrote articles on "Prince Bismarck," "Gladstone," "William Earl Chatham," "The Ideals of America," and joined the staff of the college newspaper, The Princetonian. As the basis of many of his articles he used the books and essays on politics which he was now reading more intently than ever. He continued to study the works of Gladstone, Bright, Burke, and Bagehot, and also began to read Richard Cobden, Charles Fox, and William Pitt. In his article on Prince Bismarck, he discussed the qualities of a statesman. The ideals of statesmanship which he expressed in the article were basically the same as those he formulated later in his essay, "Leaders of Men." He defined statesmen as 'men of independent conviction, full of self-trust, and themselves the spirit of their country's institutions.' (13) He was not primarily interested in the personalities of leaders but in the way they used their personalities to influence the conduct of government. The high moral and intellectual standard he set for leaders is evident in his definition of statesmanship:

... that resolute and vigorous advance towards the realization of high, definite, and consistent aims which issue from the unreserved devotion of a strong intellect to the service of the state and to the solution of all the multiform problems of public policy. (14)

(13) Ibid., 95.
(14) Ibid., 95-6.
Evidently, Wilson's speaking and writing further convinced him that he was capable of becoming a statesman. His confidence is indicated by the notation on many of his note cards: "Thomas Woodrow Wilson, Senator from Virginia" at the time when he was an undergraduate at Princeton. (15)

After he graduated from Princeton, in 1879, Wilson decided to study law, thinking that as a lawyer he would have an opportunity to get into politics:

The profession I chose was politics; the profession I entered was law. I entered the one because I thought it would lead to the other. It was once the sure road; and Congress is still full of lawyers. (16)

At the University of Virginia where he entered law school in 1879, he again started speaking and writing on politics. On 6 March 1880 he delivered a speech on John Bright which was published in the University magazine. The speech again illustrated his appreciation of great statesmanship and liberalism. 'Absolute identity with one's cause is the first and great condition of successful leadership,' he declared. 'It is that which makes the statesman's plans clear-cut and decisive, his purposes unhesitating. It is that which makes him a leader of states and a maker of history.' (17)

After his graduation in 1882, Wilson went to Atlanta, Georgia, to establish his law practice. He soon discovered,

(15) Ibid., 104.
(17) PPWW: College and State, I, 59.
however, that there was a great disparity between the philosophy and practice of law. Wilson refused to take cases he considered unjust. Also, Atlanta was already crowded with lawyers. Thus, Wilson had little law business and a great deal of leisure. This period of leisure played an important part in the preparation for his future career, for it gave him an opportunity to pursue his real interest—the study of politics.

Seeing little hope of attaining an active political career through the legal profession, he turned his attention to the other almost equally atractive alternative of writing on questions of politics and statecraft. (18) He decided to begin work on a doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, explaining:

In a word, my ambition could not be fulfilled at the bar; the studies for which I was best fitted, both by nature and acquired habit, were not legitimate in a law office, and I was compelled in very justice to myself to seek some profession in which they would be legitimate. (19)

'A professorship,' he thought, 'was the only feasible place ... [for him], the only place that would afford leisure for reading and for original work, the only strictly literary berth with an income attached.' (20) He said he had not been so much interested in occupying a political office as with being 'an outside force in politics,' and declared he was 'well enough satisfied with the prospect of having

(18) Life and Letters, I, 170-1.
(19) Wilson to Ellen Axson, 24 February 1885, Ibid., 170-1.
(20) Ibid.
whatever influence I might be able to exercise make itself felt through literary and non-partisan agencies. . . . In short, he felt he could not make himself known in political circles through his practice of law and decided he could more successfully utilize his talents to realize his goals through the medium of education. His goal was still the same, "public-spirited statesmanship." Wilson, however, faced an inner paradox. He needed an intellectual life and yet wanted to take his place among the people—to play his part in the events of the world—to satisfy his "strong instinct of leadership. . . ." (21) All his life he was lost between those conflicting passions.

What he wanted to do, he said, was 'to contribute to our literature what no American has ever contributed, studies in the philosophy of our institutions, not the abstract and occult, but the practical and suggestive, philosophy which is at the core of our governmental methods. . . ." He wanted:

. . . to divest them of the theory that obscures them and present their weakness and their strength without disguise, and with such skill and such plentitude of proof that it shall be seen that I have succeeded and that I have added something to the resources of knowledge upon which statescraft must depend. (22)

Upon entering Johns Hopkins University in 1883, he already had a good grounding in the study of political science

(21) Ibid.

(22) Wilson to Ellen Axson, 30 October 1883, Life and Letters, I, 213.
and administration. For the past five or six years, he said, this study had been the "chief amusement and delight" during his leisure hours. He had 'looked into the administrative machinery of England and our own country enough to get a pretty good insight into them,' and strongly desired 'to make a similar study of the national governments . . . of France and Germany.' (23)

At Johns Hopkins, Wilson received encouragement from his professors, especially Herbert Baxter Adams, and Richard T. Ely. It was here that he wrote his article, "Committee or Cabinet Government," developing the ideas he had expressed earlier at Princeton in an article, "Cabinet Government in the United States." These articles contained the basic ideas on American government, which Wilson was to develop further in his doctoral dissertation, Congressional Government. In both articles Wilson stated that if government were to be efficient and responsible, strong executive leadership and close co-operation between the executive and the legislature were necessary. In Wilson's opinion, this co-operation could be secured in the United States by abolishing the separation of powers and adopting a modified form of the British cabinet system of government, under which the President would choose his cabinet from the members of the two houses of Congress. Only by having the President select his cabinet from representatives chosen

(23) Wilson to Ellen Axson, 16 October 1883, Ibid., 174.
by the people, he felt, would it be possible to establish
"the highest order of responsible government." (24)

In "Committee or Cabinet Government" Wilson also added
a note on civil service reform, anticipating the ideas he was
to express later in his essay, "The Study of Administration."
He stated that under cabinet government responsibility was
clearly placed and the department heads could be easily cited
for every violation of principles, and for every deviation
from the proper, accepted civil service practices. He also
emphasized that the reputation of the departments would depend
upon the efficiency of the administration. To be efficient,
he stressed, administrative departments must be rupon upon
sound business principles. This meant that administrative
positions should not be granted on the basis of political
affiliation but on merit. (25)

In formulating these ideas on government and adminis-
tration, Wilson was influenced especially by Walter Bagehot
and Edmund Burke. It was Bagehot who had inspired Wilson to
study comparative governmental systems and administration.
In his study of the British government, Bagehot had used a
pragmatic rather than a localistic approach. His book,
The English Constitution, compared the actual working of the
British government with that of the United States government.

(25) Ibid., 125-6.
Baghot came to the conclusion that the English system was far superior in every way.

In his book, *English Constitution*, Baghot rejected the traditional approach to political institutions as mere forms set on preconceived ideas. On the other hand he sought meaning in the actual functioning of political institutions in their traditional and cultural background. His exposition of the value of the House of Lords, the British monarchy and the role of the House of Commons as an instrument of administrative control is as significant now as it was at the time he wrote on the constitution of England. In his book *Physics and Politics* Baghot clearly indicated the significance in human history of forces like custom and revolt, imitation and innovation, conflict and discussion. Many of the ideas of Baghot appeared to Wilson to be eminently sensible. Subsequently Wilson acknowledged the profound influence of Baghot on his own thinking:

"Baghot's book has inspired my whole study of our government. He brings to the work a fresh and original method which has made the British system much more intelligible to ordinary men than it ever was before, and which, if it could be successfully applied to the exposition of our Federal constitution, would result in something like a revelation to those who are still reading the Federalist as an authoritative constitutional manual. (26)"

Similarly Edmund Burke, another favourite Wilson author, also had induced in Wilson a deep admiration for the British.

constitution. Burke believed in the principles of the organic nature of state and the religious basis of society. He condemned violent changes and pleaded for the gradual adaptation of institutions to circumstances. Burke strongly upheld justice, detested oppression and supported enthusiasm for good administration. Above all he was deeply devoted to religion.

For his doctoral dissertation, *Congressional Government*, Wilson borrowed many of the ideas of Bagehot and Burke. His purpose was, he said, 'to show, as well as I can, our constitutional system as it looks in operation. By desire and ambition are to treat the American Constitution as Mr. Bagehot has treated the English Constitution.' (27) Published in 1885, *Congressional Government* was a great success and was hailed by Wilson's contemporaries as a landmark in the study of American government. Camaliel Bradford wrote in the *Nation* on 12 February 1885:

> We have no hesitation in saying that this is one of the most important books, dealing with political subjects, which have ever issued from the American press. ... His book is evidently modelled on Mr. Bagehot's *English Constitution*, and it will, though the praise is so high as to be almost extravagant, bear comparison with that inestimable work. (28)

Over fifty years later, in 1940 Edward S. Corwin, acknowledged as an authority on American government, remarked that Wilson's

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(27) Ibid., 213-14.

work was "... the pioneer attempt to give a nonlegalistic, factual description of the reciprocal roles of Congress and the President...." (29)

Although he received applause for his book, Wilson was eager to participate in active politics. After completing his book he wrote:

I do feel a very real regret that I have been shut out from my heart's first--primary--ambition and purpose, which was, to take an active, if possible a leading, part in public life, and strike out for myself if I had the ability, a statesman's career. (30)

If he had an independent income, he said, he would have 'sought an entrance into politics anyhow, and would have tried to fight my way to predominant influence even amidst the hurry-burly and helter-skelter of Congress.' Assessing his own temperament he concluded he was more fitted to hold public office than to be a scholar:

I have a strong instinct of leadership, an unmistakably oratorical temperament, and the keenest possible delight in affairs; and it has required very constant and stringent schooling to content me with the sober methods of the scholar and the man of letters. I have no patience for the tedious toil of what is known as 'research'. (31)

In September 1885, three months after marrying Ellen Axson, Wilson went to teach at Bryn Mawr College.


(31) Ibid.
During this period he devoted much of his time to writing on "the science of administration," for a series of lectures at Johns Hopkins. He was also planning an ambitious "Novum Organon" of politics, which he was to call the Philosophy of Politics. In a letter written on 10 July 1886, he described his plans to Horace Scudder, then one of the editors of the Atlantic Monthly. The letter described the pragmatic approach which is found throughout his writing:

I want to come at the true conception of the nature of the modern democratic state by way of an accurate exposition of the history of democratic development. (32)

Calling his projected work a "novum organon" was probably deliberate for like Francis Bacon, Wilson declared that he would not begin with abstract theorizing but with a study of actual conditions:

I would read the heart of political practice, letting political theory wait on that practice and carry weight only in proportion to its nearness to what has been actually accomplished. (33)

To understand the nature of modern democratic institutions, he planned to trace their genesis and development from the earliest political organization of society. What he wanted to do, he said, was study the state as an organic unit, considering its institutions as an expression of its essential character. He pointed out that while Aristotle described political institutions, he 'did not get further than the

(32) Wilson to Horace Scudder, 10 July 1886, Ibid., 272.
(33) Ibid.
outward differences of institutions: 'I and I did not press on beyond logical distinctions to discover the spiritual oneness of government, the life that lives within it.' (32)

All his life Wilson dreamed of writing this book, but he was never able to complete it. Part of his notes for it are in his manuscripts. Some of the ideas have been incorporated in his book, *The State*, a textbook which he undertook to write as a first step toward writing the *Philosophy of Politics*. *The State* is a study of the methods and history of government in all the civilized states. This book is his most systematic analysis of the nature, objects, and functions of government.

Through his writing, he believed, he could still become a force in the practical politics of the nation. He wrote to his friend Charles Talcott:

> I want to keep close to the practical and the practicable in politics; my ambition is to add something to the statecraft of the country, if that something be only thought, and not the old achievement of which I used to dream when I hoped that I might enter practical politics. (35)

He suggested to Talcott that they form a new partnership, similar to that of their "solemn covenant." He hoped to get a group of thoughtful men together who would refine their ideas by conversation and correspondence and make themselves

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(34) Ibid., 273.

felt in public life because they had "thought through" problems to make sensible proposals.

His article "On the Study of Politics," which was published in March, 1887 in The New Princetonian Review again expressed "his favourite idea that in order 'to know anything about government, you must see it alive'--not merely as it appears in written constitutions and laws." (36) Many of Wilson's basic convictions about popular government and his attitude toward reform can be traced to this essay. In it he expressed his ideas on leadership, democratic policy, civil service reform, and the relationship of government to big business. This article was the first indication that Wilson had observed the inevitable trend of democratic government toward the League of Nations.

In the same year he published his essay, "The Study of Administration," the most original of all his works. (37)

(36) Life and Letters, I, 282.

(37) Wilson entitled his essay "Notes on Administration," later "The Art of Governing," and finally "The Study of Administration." "The Study of Administration" preceded F. J. Goodnow's more comprehensive work, Comparative Administration (Two volumes, New York, 1893), by six years. In writing The State Wilson depended largely upon Heinrich Harmsen's Handbuch des Öffentlichen Rechts der Gegenwart. Congressional Government was based primarily on the works of Bagehot. He did not claim any originality for most of his other writings, and in his manuscripts gave acknowledgements to his various sources. "The Study of Administration," however, was an original work, formulating the conclusions at which Wilson had arrived after reading about the workings of various

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Though the conclusions were his own, his pragmatic approach again showed the influence of Bagehot, for he had come to see the necessity of studying administration in order to understand and improve the actual operations of government. It was no doubt from Bagehot that Wilson learned the direct relationship between the structure of a government and its effective functioning.

One of the main questions Wilson dealt with in the study is how the government should be set up so that responsible administration could be secured:

The question for us is, how shall our series of governments within governments be so administered that it shall always be to the interest of the public officer to serve, not his superior alone but the community also, with the best efforts of his talents and the soberest service of his conscience? (38)

In order to serve the public interest, Wilson recognized that administrators must have an adequate income and must be given an opportunity to further their ambitions. Finally, he said,

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(38) PPWV: College and State, I, 157.
his position must give the administrator scope for "advancing his honor and establishing his character." (39)

Although this essay was not widely reviewed in the press, it was recognized that Wilson had some serious ideas on administration. Prof. Leonard D. White subsequently hailed the essay as a path-breaking study in the field of public administration. "Formal recognition of the study of public administration as a phase of government distinct from the traditional 'political' functions of the chief executive may be said to date from the brilliant essay by Woodrow Wilson in 1887," White wrote. (40) Even before the publication of "The Study of Administration," one of his contemporaries, Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, requested Wilson's notes so that he could use them in preparing a course on administration. In his reply, Wilson thanked Hart for his request and explained that since his course was only the "first portion of a three years' course," it was "general in character and had no specific or systematic reference to our own administrative arrangements." Rather, he said, "it concerned . . . the general, theoretical question of administrative service." He explained, moreover, that he never wrote out a lecture, so that he had "merely skeleton notes." (41)

(39) Ibid.
Wilson did not complete his projected study because he became interested in writing on the political history of America. While teaching at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut from 1888-1890, he contributed an article entitled "Division and Reunion" to the "Epoch" series. In it he described the bitter struggle between the North and South from 1829-1889. (42)

In March 1889, in a review of James Bryce's American Commonwealth, he further developed his own conception of the organic nature of the democratic state, and commented on the nature of leadership in a democracy. He later expanded his ideas in an article, "The Character of Democracy in the United States." He finally included the article in his An Old Master and Other Essays, (43) which included a number of articles on democracy. Throughout these essays his thesis was that democracy is a growth rather than an invention; a life not a machine; an effect not a cause.

From Wesleyan Wilson went to Princeton where he lectured on American constitutional law, English common law, and administration. For his course in administration he used the same notes he had prepared for his lecture series at Johns Hopkins. (44) Evidently he had not continued his study in


(43) Woodrow Wilson, An Old Master, and Other Political Essays (New York, 1893).

(44) File III-C, Wilson Papers.
the field of administration. At Princeton he took great
interest in teaching public law, 'its historical derivation,
its practical sanctions, its typical outward forms, its
evidence as to the nature of the state and as to the character
and scope of political sovereignty, ... ] and [ the philo-
sophy of law and of personal rights.' (45)

Even as a teacher, Wilson was not interested in
political facts as mere facts; he wanted to see them in their
application to human problems. What he was trying to do, as
his biographer, Roy Stannard Baker observed, was "to make his
students visualize the organic life of society, the signifi-
cance of political institutions. ..." (46) The impact he
made on his students is evidenced by the comment one of them
made to Baker. 'Wilson, the student wrote, was 'one of the
most inspiring teachers a student ever had.' (47)

Continuing his interest in American history, Wilson
wrote an article entitled "The Course of American History,"
which was later published in his collection, More Literature
and Other Essays. In writing this article he had come to
realize that economic maladjustments have been a greater
factor in American politics than he had formerly believed.

(45) Life and Letters, II, 9.
(46) Ibid., 12.
(47) Ibid., 10. Letter from Raymond B. Possick to
R. S. Baker.
American history, he held, has been dominated largely by the spirit of the frontier. He argued that it was now time to forgo sectionalism so that the nation could work together as a whole. East and West, he said, must try to understand each other's problems:

The westward march has stopped, upon the final slopes of the Pacific; and now the plot thickens. . . . With the change, the pause, the settlement, our people draw into closer groups, stand face to face, to know each other and be known; and the time has come for the East to learn in her turn; to broaden her understanding of political and economic conditions to the scale of a hemisphere. . . . (48)

In his opinion, it was through a liberal education that people could learn to view the needs of the nation as a whole, and to try to balance conflicting interests. To promote liberal education Wilson gave many addresses. On 26 July 1893, he spoke at the Columbia Exposition in Chicago, urging that students in law, medicine, and theology be required to have an antecedent liberal education. (49) In another important address on 23 August 1894, he spoke on "Legal Education of Undergraduates." (50) His article in the Forum, entitled "University Training and Citizenship," expressed most of the ideas on education that established him as an educational thinker. To him education was not merely for the development

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(48) Life and Letters, II, 24-5.
(49) PP. . . . College and State, I, 223-31.
(50) Ibid., 232-45.
of the individual but for the service of the nation; it was a
means to an end, not an end in itself.

The high prestige his writing had gained him is indicated
by the offers of the Presidency of several universities. In
1902 Wilson accepted the Presidency of Princeton University.

In his opinion, the role of the college president was
that of a "minor statesman." The college to him was a little
state, requiring the same kind of responsible leadership
necessary in the national government. In accordance with his
theory that the chief executive must take the leading role in
formulating policies, the board of Trustees granted Wilson
broad powers. He was given the right to 'create such vacancies
in the teaching force as he may deem for the best interests of
the University.' (51)

Wilson first attempted to reorganize the syllabus so
that it would "represent the round whole, and contain all
the elements of modern knowledge..." (52) His ambition was
to reorganize Princeton and establish a preceptorial system
resembling the preceptorial systems of Oxford and Cambridge,
but better than either. He advocated the preceptorial system
in order that students could not merely do their work mechan-
ically, but be transformed into men of thinking by constant
association with 'men who are conversing about the things of

(51) Life and Letters, II, 144.
(52) PPW, College and State, I, 455.
thought..." (53) Under his leadership, Princeton professors began living on campus where they could be in constant touch with the students. Seminars were organized and the honour system was introduced in the examinations.

Wilson was now in a position where he could direct, lead, and create. For the first time he was able to exercise the responsible leadership he had long desired. In acting as the President of the University, he said, he felt like a prime minister. "I always feel, upon an occasion like this, that I am a responsible minister reporting to his constituents." (54)

Although most of Wilson's attention was directed toward problems of education, he continued to speak and write on politics. In an address at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York on 16 December 1905, he maintained that 'Government should supply an equilibrium, not a disturbing force,' a moderately liberal position that appealed to members of both parties. (55)

Wilson had come to the Presidency of Princeton University at a time when the progressive movement was headed by progressive editors, politicians and other urban groups. It was a time when young journalistic reformers, called "muckrakers" by Theodore Roosevelt, were exposing what they

(53) Life and Letters, II, 162-3.
(54) PPW: College and State, I, 491.
(55) Life and Letters, II, 195.
believed to be degenerate political and business practices.

Wilson was so absorbed with his university work during the first year of his Presidency that he hardly mentions anything on current public affairs. However, Wilson was very much aware of the rising thought. He felt the nation was drifting away from its old standards. Wealth and luxury were beginning to corrupt the state and the government lacked intelligent leadership. Thus, in all his addresses and writings he urges the universities to prepare men to think, to lead, to serve the state. This was for him the great central purpose of the university. He believed that 'In planning for Princeton ... we are planning for the country.' (56)

... I try to join the function of the university with the great function of the national life. The life of this country is going to be revolutionized and purified only when the universities of this country wake up to the fact that their only reason for existence is intellect. ... (57)

As early as 1897 Wilson had thought about various changes at Princeton and had outlined his plans to Stockton Axson. As President of the university some of his plans were accepted and some rejected. Changes in curriculum and the introduction of a tutorial system were accepted. His plans for class grouping and the location and interrelationship of the graduate and undergraduate schools were rejected. He writes:

(56) Ibid., 193.
(57) Ibid., 193-4.
... I should break the university up into groups, with lines cut perpendicularly down through the four classes, bringing freshmen and sophomores into close living conditions with juniors and seniors, and with unmarried members of the faculty. Thus education would become a life process. As things now stand, the freshmen and sophomores are deliberately cut off from communication with upper classmen. It is a vicious plan because it separates the lower classmen from the very men who could most influence and vitalize them. A senior can often do more with a freshman than can any member of the faculty. The difference in their ages is enough to promote hero worship in the younger men, not enough to debar them from free and easy intellectual companionship. (58)

After much careful thought and planning Wilson presented the above proposals to the board of trustees in 1906. In his notes for the Board of Trustees he wrote:

The Upper Class Clubs—decrease of democratic, increase of social feeling—Increase of luxury—the buildings etc.

Remedy—We must integrate—and create a college comradeship based on letters. We have tutor and pupil. Now we must have pupil and pupil in a comradeship of studies. (59)

The faculty as well as the Board of Trustees was divided into two antagonistic groups and Wilson’s plans were defeated.

For Wilson this was a great defeat and a first defeat. Through it he saw clearly that the struggle was wider than the world of the university; that it went to the roots of

(58) Ibid., 215.
(59) Ibid., 220.
national life. From this time on he began to consider more seriously the political advances that were being made to him.

As Wilson became more clearly aware of the nature of the problems of the country, he began thinking on the wider aspects of American politics. His interest in Thomas Jefferson grew and he delivered his first speech on Jefferson before the democratic club of New York on 10 April 1906. In it he laid down the two great Jeffersonian principles as he saw them and called for their application to the problems of the day:

1. The people as the source and their interests and desires as the text of laws and institutions.
2. Individual liberty as the object of all law. (60)

At this point in his life Wilson was crowded with problems. He was working hard for the "social coordination" of the university and at the same time was under pressure to take part in the politics of New Jersey.

It was not only in connection with the university that his power and prestige were growing—the nation was becoming aware of him. The kind of man that he was and the principles for which he stood were becoming clearer. He was much discussed and received praise from the outer world for his ideals and plans for Princeton. He now began to speak on the problems of the country with boldness and sincerity. Thus

(60) Ibid., 199.
his defeat at Princeton, though bitter to him, had added enormously to his prestige.

One cannot question his theoretical and psychological preparation for his career as a statesman. However, he had no practical preparation in the field of politics; no professional political background, nor practical political experience. He also had no professional political friends, nor did he belong to any professional political organization aside from being an ordinary member of the Democratic party. Yet he was being considered for important federal positions.

George Harvey, editor of Harper's Weekly, after describing the qualities of an ideal leader, remarked in his speech at Lotos Club of New York on 3 February 1906 "... such a man, it is my firm belief, and I venture earnestly to insist, is to be found in Woodrow Wilson of Virginia and New Jersey." He affirmed:

As one of a considerable number of Democrats who have become tired of voting Republican tickets, it is with a sense almost of rapture that I contemplate even the remotest possibility of casting a ballot for the President of Princeton University to become President of the United States. (61)

While Wilson was in England during the summer of 1906 George Harvey engineered a scheme to get Wilson into politics without his knowledge. Harvey secured the support of James Smith Jr., Democratic boss of Essex County, New Jersey, for Wilson's candidacy. The eleven Essex Democratic candidates

(61) Ibid., 197.
for the Assembly met in New York on 13 October and pledged themselves to vote for Wilson for senator if they were elected. (62) Wilson returned surprised to find his name for senator. He said:

The mention of my name was without any authority from me, and was a great surprise. . . . Although I am an old-line Democrat, and would do any service to restore the party to power, I cannot see that it would be any help for me to accept such an office. . . . Ly duty is to Princeton, and I should be reluctant to give up my work there. (63)

The Republicans won the election and it became quite apparent that they would easily control the legislature. Thus when Harvey suggested again that Wilson should run for senator, stating that the Democrats had "a rare and glorious opportunity" to pave the way for the re-establishment of the Democratic party by the nomination of Wilson, Wilson accepted this idea. He was convinced that there was no reason why he should not accept this empty honour because it would not interfere with his work at Princeton since the Republicans were going to win. Little did Wilson know that in accepting such "empty honours" he would be faced with the embarrassing situation of running against a close friend and class mate Edwin Stevens, who was supported by the New Jersey progressives. Stevens and the progressives offered to support Wilson. Stevens explained that Wilson's contest was no "empty honour"

(63) Ibid.
but a play for party control by the bosses. Now a
true situation Wilson withdrew his candidacy and wr
Fred Yates:
I have so far escaped actual entanglement in
politics, though the bosses were spread for
me by wireless telegraphy before I landed. An
effort more serious than I had anticipated was
made to induce me to become a candidate for
the Senate; but grace was given me and I declined.
I hope that that will quiet other dangers. (64)

This incident marks the first occasion on which Wilson
expressed his character in the field of professional politics.
The approach of non-alignment exemplified here was to be his
policy throughout his political career. The scholar-idealistic
was no longer completely politically naive. He had met his
first test honourably.

Wilson's withdrawal of his candidacy for the Senate did
not daunt Colonel Harvey's hope that his reluctant candidate
would come day receive the political honours that he thought
Wilson deserved. However, Harvey believed that before Wilson
could be made President he should be groomed for the Governor-
ship of New Jersey. Harvey was aware that the people were in
need of a leader and a new kind of leadership—a kind of
leadership different from that of Bryan and Roosevelt. Thus
Harvey sought to bring together Wilson and the powerful
conservatives of the Democratic party.

To clarify his position on economic and political affairs,
Wilson wrote a concise statement entitled "Credo" in which ho-

(64) Life and Letters, II, 209.
made known his political and economic views to the conservative group. He stated that the guarantee of American liberty lay in the constitution and, constitutional laws were sufficient to remedy the wrongs that had corrupted modern business. He believed that great trusts and corporations were necessary because they were the most convenient and efficient instruments of modern business. When business violated the laws they should be punished under the law which they violated. There should not, however, be any direct regulation of business by the government. Wilson declared that the constitution guaranteed to every man the right to sell his labour to whomsoever he pleased and for any price he was willing to accept. Because of this there was no need for labour unions. (65) Conservative Democrats could certainly find nothing objectionable in Wilson's "Credo."

Thus Wilson entered the political arena in 1906 an avowed conservative. However, before too long he began to perceive the validity of some of the criticisms of the "muckrakers" and progressive reformers of trends in politics and business. Soon Wilson began expressing the opinion that the trouble with American business was that economic power and property ownership had become concentrated in the hands of a few who thereby exercised great political power. Something had to be done, therefore, to restore political balance. In 1908 Wilson declared:

(65) Link, Wilson: The Road to the White House, Ill.
Half our present difficulties . . . arise from the fact that privileged interests have threatened to become too strong for the general interest, and that therefore the government has had to step in to restrain those who enjoyed the very privileges which it itself had granted. (66)

In the two years preceding his governorship of New Jersey and, hence, his direct entrance into politics, Wilson revealed more and more his transition from a conservative to a more progressive approach to problems. He became an active leader in the movement for municipal reform and felt that the manner of electing municipal leadership was of the utmost importance. He believed 'that the Short Ballot is the key to the whole question of the restoration of government by the people.' (67)

In 1910 Wilson wrote "Hide and Seek Politics," an article in the North American Review (66) showing concern about the state of American politics. He felt that the whole representative system was in the hands of the political machines. The people did not choose their representatives any longer. Their representatives did not serve the general interest. The processes of government were hazardous and the processes of popular control were ineffectual. He felt therefore that the

(66) Ibid., 122.

(67) Ibid., 125. The Short-Ballot Association was organized in New York under the direction of Richard S. Childs who became its executive secretary. Wilson was elected the first president of the association in October, 1909. William J. Ren, a progressive leader, was elected vice president. (Ibid., 124)

(68) Ibid., 126. Footnote.
country must devote itself once again to finding a means of making its governments—whether in cities, in states, or in the nation—representative, responsible and efficient. Wilson's evolving attitude on such issues widened the gap between him and the conservatives and brought him closer to the progressives. (69)

Wilson thus made certain deductions from his Princeton experiences. Firstly, the same forces that were attempting to corrupt Princeton were already at work corrupting American society. Secondly, the factor of expediency could not be ignored. Wilson wanted desperately to enter politics—to hold a high office in which he could lead. He must have recognized the political strength of the progressive movement in New Jersey and realized that he had to make a choice between conservatism and progressivism. The choice was inevitable and he moved in line with the progressives. (70)

During this period he wrote his last major work, Constitutional Government in the United States. (71) This book consisted of a series of lectures delivered at Colombia

(69) A. S. Link observes that "in the absence of documentary evidence any analysis of the causes for Wilson's progressive evolution must of necessity partake the nature of speculation." He says, first of all the graduate college controversy was important in effecting Wilson's change of mind; the bitterness of the controversy was instrumental in releasing Wilson's latent idealism. Rightly or wrongly he came to the conclusion that the forces of wealth were opposed to social and educational democracy.

(70) Ibid., 131-2.

(71) Woodrow Wilson, Constitutional Government in the United States (New York, 1917),
University in 1907, dealing with the problem of leadership in the United States. With this volume his career of academic writing ended. He never had a chance to complete his *Philosophy of Politics* for, in 1910 he was elected Governor of New Jersey and he set out on an entirely different road.

When Wilson became Governor of New Jersey social questions were being much discussed throughout the country. Writers like Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens and Jacob Riis were dealing with the problems of the accumulation of great wealth, social injustice, labour-management relations, and corruption in city government. As Governor, Wilson instituted a number of reforms, the main purposes of which were to take control of the Democratic party away from the machine and change election procedures. During his term as governor Wilson so distinguished himself that he became known throughout the country, and by 1911 he was being considered as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States by the Democratic party.

In 1912 Wilson met Louis D. Brandeis, one of the leading progressive lawyers in the country and an outstanding authority on monopoly control and railroad regulation. Brandeis helped Wilson clarify his thoughts on trust control. In 1906 Wilson had insisted that the problem of trust control could be solved only by making corporation officials personally
responsible for their monopolistic practices. Though his approach to the problem appeared simple it was not practical. Wilson's association with Brandeis clarified his thoughts on the trust problem and proved a great asset in his subsequent presidential campaign and the domestic reform policies initiated during his administration. Both Wilson and Brandeis believed that the fundamental objective was unhampered competition and the liberation of economic enterprise. Thus with the help of Brandeis, Wilson was able to outline a programme for the regulation of competition.

Wilson continued to denounce trusts and protective tariffs and demand the restoration of competition. However, it was Brandeis who realized that the main problem was to find a method by which monopoly could be prevented and thereby allow for free competition. Brandeis understood the problem thoroughly and had a definite plan. He became thus, the architect of Wilson's "New Freedom."

The election of Woodrow Wilson to the Presidency of the United States in 1912 brought an important shift in the geographical control of the federal government as well as a change of political party. Since the civil war, whether led by Democrats or Republicans, the government had represented the interests of industry, business and finance. Wilson, in spite of a conservative past and a rapid conversion to progressivism, emerged as a leader of the Populist tradition—
as a champion of America's faith in democracy, equality of opportunity, humanitarian reform and fair play. Wilson was a more cautious liberal than the Populists. He began his administration with no binding commitments nor promises to special interests.

Probably few men have entered the Presidency after such a lifetime of deliberate training for statesmanship. Wilson had cultivated the personal qualities he felt necessary for leadership, and had formulated his own conceptions of the nature of the state and government. His ideas were not entirely original. However, they are important ideas because Wilson became the President of the United States and in that capacity was able to influence the thinking of the times and implement many of his ideas.