Chapter III

DEMOCRACY AS COMMUNITY
In discussing definitions of the State Wilson felt it was more accurate to speak of the State as 'a community of persons living under a common system of laws....' (1) In all his writings on politics Wilson placed special emphasis on this idea of community. He defined community as a body of people who have "a distinct consciousness of common ties and interests, a common manner and standard of life and conduct, and a practised habit of union and concerted action in whatever affected it as a whole." (2) Common feeling, not common territory, he saw as the basis of the state. This preference indicates his acceptance of commonly accepted laws as the prime condition of any political organization.

As we have seen, in Wilson's view only a self-conscious, self-directing community can have a constitutional government. To him, democracy, the most radical form of 'constitutional' government, (3) requires an even more highly developed

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community. People in a democratic society must be in agreement on a majority of their basic goals. "If once you can see that a working majority is obtained ... for the feelings that draw us together, rather than for the feelings that separate us, then you have laid the foundation of a community and a free government." (4) Liberty cannot exist in the absence of broad agreement regarding the basic goals of society. Without such agreement, Wilson pointed out, liberty is impossible:

You cannot have liberty where men do not want the same liberty, you cannot have it where they are not in sympathy with one another, you cannot have it where they do not understand one another, you cannot have it when they are not seeking common things by common means, you simply cannot have it. ... (5)

One of the distinguishing characteristics of democracy, according to Wilson, is that all citizens have complete equality before the law. To him democracy is "a form of government which secures absolute equality of status before the law and under which the decision, final control of public affairs rests with the whole body of citizens adult males amongst whom the largest liberty of opinion, of discussion, and of political choice prevails." (6) Wilson first


(5) Ibid., 7.

wrote *citizens*, then crossed it out and substituted *adult males*. At this time women had no franchise and Wilson evidently accepted this *status quo*. However, it appears that later he changed his view, for he spoke continually of the rule of the whole without qualification as to sex. This change may be due to the fact that he did not at this time consider the franchise the essential element in democracy. Later he supported universal adult franchise.

Equality of status, he believed, also meant the exclusion of all hereditary right to rule whether by a single family, or a single class or even a combination of classes. Democracy, he said, is the antithesis of all government by privilege. "Its thought is of a society without castes or classes, of an equality of political birthright which is without bound or limitation. . . ." (7) Wilson here places class and caste in the same category and makes it clear that a democracy is classless and casteless in the sense that everybody inherits the same political rights. Later he uses class to mean economic groups. Thus modern democracy is not the rule of the many, but the rule of the "whole".

The whole, to Wilson, meant not just a political majority. Democratic ideas and ideals should find expression

in every aspect of life. He believed democracy to be not merely a form of government but also a way of life. Hence democracy, Wilson believed, can only exist in a community made up of mature individuals who have had some experience in self-conduct and are ever alert to maintain their independence and respect that of others. It is thus evident that democracy in government, as in other aspects of life, requires the co-operation of minorities and cannot be merely the rule of the many. Wilson emphasized that the rule by the majority in a democracy implies the co-operation, "active or passive," of the minority. "It is the peculiar beauty and characteristic strength of democracy that minorities do cooperate, their acquiescence is not a mere bowing to necessity or to force. It is a conscious act of the judgment nearly akin to actual agreement." (8)

Obviously if a government is to be truly democratic, all the citizens must have the opportunity to express their needs and interests and engage in a free exchange of opinion. To fulfill this need, Wilson believed there should be some sort of a forum and he stresses the "common council" as one of the fundamental democratic institutions. He sees society as composed of a great variety of interests and even levels of interest. Thus, if society is desirous of a democratic

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government it must work out some way whereby its individuals and groups of individuals may have the opportunity to make their desires, views or criticisms known. "The whole purpose of democracy is that we may hold council with one another, so as not to depend upon the understanding of one man, but to depend upon the counsel of all men." For, as Wilson put it, "only as men are brought into council and state their own needs and interests can the general interests of a great people be compounded into a policy that will be suitable to all." (9) Because society is a compound of a variety of interests, a democracy must have a mechanism to give each group an opportunity to make its views known. Representative councils serve as the forum. Wilson believed that through the activities of representative councils, representative government is ensured. Representative government and representative assemblies are necessary, not because their individual units are wise, but because their individual units are various; because, picked out of every class and condition, they speak the voice of all classes and conditions. (10) By representative council Wilson meant a body like the legislative body of his own government. He was not thinking of non-official agencies like trade unions nor of a corporate structure like that subsequently favoured by Mussolini.


(10) Ibid., 21-2.
Wilson did not develop a systematic theory of functional representation. His statements imply, however, that he felt that it was necessary for the pattern of representation to conform with the principles of democracy. Wilson is vague in what he means by representative council. How is a council made up of people from every "class and condition" of life to be brought into existence? It is hard to visualize any mechanism that would ensure such representation. However, it seems that Wilson is not attempting to suggest or analyze methods of representation. He is stressing rather that if a democracy is to function well, the goals to be achieved must be understood and accepted by its citizens. He does not say that they will be, but only that such understanding and acceptance constitute the basis of community and co-operation. "... the whole stability of democratic polity rests upon the fact that every interest is every man's interest. If it were not so, there could be no community; if it were not so, there could be no cooperation; ..." (11) In this view he is simply reiterating some of the democratic ideals that are practical, difficult to realize, but truly basic to an ideal democratic government.

In Wilson's opinion, the principle of a common council representing various groups in society is more basic to democracy than universal suffrage. "Universal suffrage," he

(11) Ibid., 268.
said, "may confirm a coup d'etat which destroys liberty." (12) On the other hand, Wilson said, "there can be freedom without the franchise." To him liberty is "simply the best and most enlightened adjustment practicable under the circumstances between public authority and individual privilege." (13) In other words, he saw self-government as compatible with non-democratic government but not with autocratic institutions. What is essential in self-government is "the participation, whether by election or by appointment, of free citizens (as contrasted with professional officials) representing either interests (classes) or localities. . . . An essential principle is that the lay element, as contrasted with the hereditary or professional, must control, if not in the locality, in the national councils, in the choice of all fundamental policy." (14)

Wilson did not develop his idea of representative council nor did he explain exactly how a government could be conducted on democratic principles without universal suffrage. It would seem that Wilson left the most challenging aspects of the problem unchallenged and chose merely to reiterate that


(13) "Spurious vs. Real Patriotism in Education," File III-A, Ibid.

(14) "Notes on Politics," File III-C, Ibid.
the basis of liberty lies in social harmony. While this is an important concept and needs to be continuously stressed, it is not original to Wilson. Perhaps one of the most serious criticisms of Wilson lies in the realm of popular representation about which he talks so much but so vaguely. Although he wants representation from all classes, it is relatively unimportant to him whether members of the council are elected or appointed as long as they really represent the people as a whole. He does not even explore the problems that appointed representation will give rise to. Who appoints whom? What are the forces or interest groups that control such appointments? Can any criteria be established to determine which persons really represent various classes?

A system under which members of the representative councils are appointed rather than elected would put a great deal of power in the hands of those who appoint and those whom they select. To Wilson such a system could be democratic if the appointed representatives were persons of the highest character and integrity. Wilson's use of terms is sometimes misleading. Evidently in the above context he is not using democracy in its usual sense of a government in which people elect their representatives. In fact, to Wilson a democratic government need not have universal suffrage. Thus, what his statement means is that democracy is compatible with institutions that would, in the usual sense of democracy, be considered non-democratic.
In later years Wilson found that these early ideas were not practical and continuously stressed that no single group however enlightened, could see the needs of the nation or guide its destinies without being biased in its own interests. Therefore the consent of the governed must at every turn check and determine the action of those who make and execute the law. (15) Each individual must exercise constant vigilance over his governors. It was Wilson's firm conviction that vigilance by the people is a necessity, for without it representatives ruling in the name of the people might become directly supreme. (16) "The rule of the people is no idle phrase; those who believe in it . . . believe that there can be no rule of right without it; that right in politics is made up of the interests of everybody, and everybody should take part in the action that is to determine it." (17)

Vigilance alone, without an established method of controlling what one observes, is ineffective. Therefore, Wilson regarded the initiative and referendum as a necessary aspect of representative government. He did not consider the possibility that the rule of the majority might sometimes lead to the negligence of the just interests of the minority.


He did not even consider that the demand for initiative and referendum, as devices by which abuse of power by representatives could be avoided, might also be used by a majority for the oppression of a minority. On the contrary, he regarded the initiative and referendum as methods of ensuring more truly representative government. "The most ardent and successful advocates of the initiative and referendum regard them as a sobering means of obtaining genuine representative action on the part of the legislative bodies. They do not mean to set anything aside. They mean to restore and reinvigorate, rather." (12)

As has been pointed out earlier, "Wilson was of the view that a society capable of forming a representative government and exercising a constant check upon it must have reached a high stage of development. He felt that constitutions by themselves cannot ensure a democracy's success. "While they determine forms, distinct purposes and powers of the state, on that account they do not make the forms workable or purposes feasible. This depends upon the men who govern and the people over whom they are set in authority." (19) A democratic society needs individuals willing to assent to the majority opinion, and capable of taking concerted action in

(12) Charles E. Merriam, American Political Ideas (New York, 1929) 121.

whatever concerns them as a whole. It requires individuals with self-discipline and character. Self-government cannot materialize merely by wishing for it or hoping for it. "It is a form of character," wrote Wilson. "It follows upon the long discipline which gives a people self-possession, self-mastery, the habit of order and peace and common counsel, and a reverence for law which will not fail when they themselves become the makers of law..." (20) Wilson consistently emphasized that democracy is a stage of development, one that can be reached only through long experience, conscious effort and transmitted aptitudes. (21)

To Wilson one of the main problems of democracy was "to devise and maintain in full efficiency the best means of intimate counsel between those who are to make and administer the laws and those who are to obey them, and yet not destroy leadership or render government less real or less authoritative." Above all "it is as important for the progress of the race that governments should retain their power as it is that they should be free--no tyranny, but merely the chief guiding force of a free people." (22) Because the citizens play such a large role in a democratic government, a highly self-conscious, articulate, and intelligent public opinion is essential.

(20) Constitutional Government, 52.

(21) Ibid.

Development and expression of such opinion requires leadership. Moreover, the conduct of the government requires men with ability to lead.

In Wilson's opinion, the role of the leader is complex. In some cases he merely formulates what is already in the mind of the people. In other cases he sees what is needed and helps to create opinion favourable to it. Wilson visualized the leader in a democracy as a dominant mind exercising 'persuasive power ... in the shaping of popular judgments.'(23) Although Wilson advocated the idea that the leader should shape public opinion as well as discover it, he cautioned that the role of the leader must always be limited by the government's purpose of serving the people instead of seeking to be their master.

... government may serve its people, not make itself their master,—may in its service heed both the wishes and the needs of those who obey it; that authority may be for leadership, not for aggrandizement; that the people may be the state. (24)

According to Wilson, the leader's tasks is seeing that the majority shall rule. His approach must always be one of persuasion. He has no right to impose a doctrine or a dogma which is not acceptable to the majority opinion. The small minority, "the instructed few, may not be safe leaders, ..."

(23) Wilson, An Old Master, and Other Political Essays, 130.

(24) PP77i: College and State, I, 414.
except insofar as they have transmuted their thought into a common, popular thought. (25) The capacity to do so is the mark of a statesman, according to Wilson.

Leadership, for the statesman, is interpretation. He must read the common thought; he must test and calculate very circumspectly the preparation of the nation for the next great move in the progress of politics. (26)

The leader must be thoughtful and sensitive enough to distinguish the passing, momentary impulses of the society from the permanent social forces. He must support the forces that move towards the strengthening of the whole society without prejudice to individual interests. He must "perceive the direction of the nation's permanent forces and must feel the speed of their operation." (27) The leader must be "quick to know and to do the things that the hour and his nation need," (28) not only for the present but for the future. Men of this mould, Wilson said, were simply "the more sensitive organs of society—the parts first awakened to consciousness of a situation." (29) There may be times when he sees needs to which the nation is yet blind. In order to adhere to his

(28) Ibid., 77.
(29) Ibid., 76.
own high ideals he may be forced to defy public opinion, to come forward as champion of a political or moral principle. (30) For embarking on such a course he may be attacked by enemies and deserted by friends. While society resents such leaders in the beginning, sooner or later "it will sorely meet the necessities of conduct revealed by the hour of its awakening." (31) Great reformers are thus born out of the very times that oppose them; "their success is the acknowledgment of their legitimacy." (32)

If a democratic society is to produce citizens with a capacity for self-government and leaders of vision and character, it must have a sound system of popular education and of liberal higher education, Wilson opined. Popular education is intended to develop a student's personality and to transmit a common cultural heritage while liberal education is to bring about the free development of the mind and spirit. In fact, to Wilson liberal education is one of the influences that help develop a society to the point where it is ready for democratic government.

... a kind of liberal education must underlie every wholesome political and social process, the kind of liberal education which connects the man's feeling and his comprehension with the general run of mankind, which disconnects him from the special interests and marries his thought to the

(30) Ibid., 75.
(31) Ibid., 76.
(32) Ibid.
common interests of great communities and of great cities and of great states and of great nations, and, if possible, with that brotherhood of man that transcends the boundaries of nations themselves. (33)

Similarly, popular education broadens the citizens' outlook. Through popular education, they "catch glimpses of the international relations of their trades, of the universal application of law, of the endless variety of life, of diversity of race, of a world teeming with men like themselves . . . with voices familiar and unfamiliar." (34) Education and the other influences "which scatter broadcast the world's thought and the world's news" are sure to put an end to the conditions under which the many will receive without question the thought of a ruling few and to create that democratic thought which is one presage of the democratic state." (35)

Though popular education must be open to all, in Wilson's view liberal higher education is intended for the minority who become leaders in society. He contended that there is nothing undemocratic about restricting the aim of higher education in this way.

The college is not for the majority who carry forward the common labour of the world, nor even for those who work at the skilled handicrafts which multiply the conveniences and the


(35) Ibid.
luxuries of the complex modern life. It is for the minority who plan, who conceive, who super-
intend, who mediate between group and group and must see the wide stage as a whole. Democratic
nations must be served in this wise no less than those whose leaders are chosen by birth and
privilege; and the college is no less democratic because it is for those who play a special
part. (35)

The purpose of the college is not merely to train
scholars and professional men, but to lead students to
"catholic enlightenment," a broad understanding of the inter-
relationships of knowledge. The college must endeavour to
educate men who are capable of self-sacrifice, men who
"comprehend their age and duty and know how to serve them
supremely well." (37) To Wilson, development of character
and spirit is the highest object of liberal education. "That
we should seek to impart in our colleges," he said, "is not
so much learning itself as the spirit of learning." (38)
Just what he meant by "the spirit of learning," we can best
understand from his description of an educated man.

The educated man is to be discovered by his point of
view, by the temper of his mind, by his attitude
towards life and his fair way of thinking. He can
see, he can discriminate, he can combine ideas and
perceive whither they lead; he has insight and
comprehension. His mind is a practiced instrument
of appreciation . . . he has the knowledge of the

(35) August Heckscher, ed., The Politics of Woodrow
Wilson, 132-3.

(37) PPWI, Colleges and State, II, 105.

(38) Ibid., 110.
world which no one can have who knows only his own generation or only his own task. (39)

Wilson felt that educated man must learn to think clearly, must develop the power to distinguish good reasoning from bad and to digest and interpret evidence from a broad, non-partisan viewpoint.

Development of the individual mind is, in Wilson's view, the primary purpose of education. But this development must not be for the sake of the individual alone; it must be for the society as a whole:

The object of education is not merely to draw out the powers of the individual mind; it is rather its object to draw all minds to a proper adjustment to the physical and social world in which they are to have their life and their development; to enlighten, strengthen, and make fit. The business of the world is not individual success, but its own betterment, strengthening, and growth in spiritual insight. (40)

One of the ways in which a college can prepare the student for his role in society is by schooling him in the nation's ideals and traditions. Wilson believed that a thorough education in national ideals would enable a student to find his role in society:

... Being thus prepared for their common life together by schooling in the same ideals of life and public action, they might the more safely be left to prepare for their individual and private functions separately and with undisturbed freedom. (41)

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(39) Ibid., 109-10.
(40) Ibid., I, 272.
(41) Ibid., 248.
This statement reflects Wilson's concept of social harmony: the idea that if individual and social interests are rightly understood there will be no fundamental conflict between them.

According to Wilson, the study of a nation's literature is the most effective way of inculcating the nation's ideals:

... a university should have, at the centre of all its training, courses of instruction in that literature which contains the ideals of its race and all the nice proofs and subtle inspirations of the character, spirit, and thought of the nation which it serves; and, besides that, instruction in the history and leading conceptions of those institutions which have served the nation's energies in the preservation of order and the maintenance of just standards of civil virtue and public purpose. (42)

Not only the curriculum but the life of the college should help to prepare students for their role in society. Wilson saw a college as a community which by its spirit and influence fits men for life in the larger communities of the nation and world. If the college is to become a community it must promote close association between students and teachers:

It is the duty of the university authorities to make of the college a society, of which the teacher will be as much, and as naturally, a member as the undergraduate. (43) College is not only a body of studies but a mode of association... It must become a community of scholars and pupils—a free community but

(42) Ibid.
(43) Ibid., II, 116.
a very real one, in which democracy may work its reasonable triumphs of accommodation, its vital processes of union. (44)

In addition to developing the individual's mind and preparing him for his place in society Wilson believed that higher education must also contribute to the advancement of civilization. Through the contribution of its educational institutions each nation will play "its special part in furthering the common advancement." (45) As we saw in the chapter on State, Wilson believed that progress, meaning growth and development, is indispensable for a healthy society. He attached great importance to the fact that universities are able to initiate ideas of change which grow directly out of past experience. This principle of gradual social progress, not violent upheaval, is central to Wilson's thought. "Every nation" he said "must constantly keep in touch with its past; it cannot run towards its ends around sharp corners." (46) In touch with the past, but concerned about the future, the universities are in a position to train the leaders needed in a democratic society. The leaders of higher education have a major role in preserving and developing the ideals and institutions of the nation.

(44) Ibid., 118.
(45) Ibid., I, 248.
This principle of "progress which conserves" is fundamental to Wilson's idea of political development. Wilson believed that societies evolve. Evolution implies that small changes occur over long periods of time and those of adaptive advantage are selected and cultivated. Thus for a society to progress it must preserve the many small adaptations, cultivate them and continue to search for others. Evolution never abruptly eliminates a total structure. To do so would bring an end to the evolving organism. To him the present democratic institutions are only one stage in the evolutionary process:

... the social organism, like the physical, has its order and its law of evolution—an order in which democracy may be seen to be but a single term. (47)

However, Wilson clearly maintains that democracy is not 'a universal deliverance, the single principle and crown of government.' Wilson is using the word democracy here in the general sense of popular sovereignty. He considered that democracy's, or popular sovereignty's greatest contribution to world politics had been to give people a great deal of political experience. The sovereignty of the people had proved excellent for many 'diseases of the body politic,' but it had been 'no panacea.' Even under proper conditions it had not proved a remedy suitable to be applied without

(47) "Notes on Philosophy of Politics," File III-C, Wilson Papers,
great caution. He accepted the fact that democracy had 'proved only a relative not an absolute good.' (48)

Even at the present stage, however, democratic institutions still lack the "thorough synthesis" which he thought possible. (49) Man has achieved political democracy and is beginning to realize economic and social democracy. Wilson sees further potential for the application of democratic thought. Thus he does not confine democracy to the fixed principles to which it has in fact given reality, but believes democracy to be a growing concept acquiring new meanings as man applies democratic thought to new areas. The democratic concept has been given a limited meaning not because of its own inherent limitations but the failure of man to apply his democratic thinking to all aspects of his life. (50)

One of the principles of democracy is equality. This implies that every adult should have the right to vote, that each should have one vote, and each vote should count equally. Votes should not be weighed in any way. In terms of representation, the belief in equal voting is expressed in the old saying 'representation by population,' or, in Bentham's formula regarding happiness, that 'everybody is to count for

(48) "Notes on Philosophy of Politics: The Modern Democratic State," Ibid.

(49) "Notes on Philosophy of Politics: Democracy, its Limitations and Foundations," Ibid.

(50) Ibid.
one, nobody for more than one.' In terms of control over
policy makers, every vote should have an equal share in that
control. Equality of voting is not enough, by itself, to
distinguish a democratic system from an elected dictatorship.
Voting alone does ensure the reality of popular control.
Equality must also mean equality before the law.

Wilson questioned how political equality could be at
all meaningful in the absence of at least opportunities for
social and economic equality. History had never revealed
such a situation. He thus began to re-examine the meaning
of democracy. How do unions, railroads, trusts and modern
business organizations fit into a democratic structure?
After popular sovereignty has been established, what is to be
the theoretical and practical programme of democracy? What is
the government's function regarding society and industry?

What do liberty and equality mean in the midst of the new and
strange social forces of the twentieth century? In this
environment, which had no precedent in history, how should
political and social justice be conceived? Should a democracy
be indifferent toward the struggles of its citizens and adopt
a policy of laissez-faire. In this case the ultimate solution
of all difficulties would be left to a beneficent competition.
Should a democracy establish a complete co-operative common-
wealth in the industrial sense of the term?

Wilson concluded that a democracy should find some
middle ground between unrestrained individualism and all
inclusive collectivism. He felt that answers to the above questions might explain why modern theorists had not been able to guide democracy to its goals. If the state is an evolving organism then "democracy's habits and achievements" must not be connected with "democracy's self." (51) Wilson felt that there are still large gaps in our knowledge of the actual working of democracies and therefore many of the generalizations in theory must be regarded as suggestive or tentative rather than well-established. He believed that these hypothetical generalizations could be better established by empirical studies and that there is much scope for such studies.

Wilson criticised the theorists for not recognizing that democracy is evolving. Although it is true that far-sighted leaders must guide the evolution of democracy, they cannot hope to accomplish more than is made possible by the present development of society. They must realistically assess social, economic and political conditions and attitudes. According to Wilson, the theorists were advocating ideal social principles without taking into account the fact that society can change only by a slow, organic growth:

By their very failures they have laid bare the invariable causes of failure in politics: in trying to hurry political development they have made plain why it must be slow. They have revealed its law and process. (52)

(51) Ibid.

(52) "Notes on Philosophy of Politics: Democracy," Ibid.
With his pragmatic approach Wilson stressed the need for practical statesmanship rather than theoretical philosophy:

The sort of political philosophy of which the world now stands in need is not the theoretical philosophy which already exists and which practical statesmen distrust but a businesslike philosophy suitable for plain men which as yet awaits creation, but which when created statesmen must accept. (53)

Though Wilson did not consider democracy as the final stage in political development, he still considered it "first among the few politics which are for the future." In his opinion it was "more than over a matter of deep moment to the world whether the democratic state prove a success or a failure." In one way or another, he felt, democracy must be "the foundation of the future structure of politics." The choice was between a democracy based on individual initiative or one based on communal initiative. If the first failed, nations would "be tempted to grope on, in the doubtful light of socialism." He declared, "Democracy in any case the future system must be." (54)

Wilson's own attempt to envision the next stage of political development is clearly an outgrowth of all his thinking on the nature and development of the state and government. Throughout his writing he saw the basis of statehood in community: all the conscious and unconscious

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(53) Ibid.
(54) Ibid.
factors of culture and tradition which help to unify people in their basic goals, and give them concern for their common welfare. Now, he observed, as "a result of the modern cheapness, ease and speed of intercommunication," there had developed in many spheres "an almost universal community of interests, conditions, and ideals." (55)

Evidently in the development of "a universal community of interests" he saw the laying of a foundation for an eventual international community.

Establishment of a "community of interests," however, is only one step in the development of the unity in point of view which is necessary for a community of thought. In discussing "nationality and humanity" he pointed out several of the factors that helped to produce the internationality of thought which is necessary for a community of nations. By nationality he meant "the thoughts and ideals peculiar to individual nations." By humanity, he meant "the thoughts and ideals common to mankind." (56)

National character, he pointed out, expresses itself in common ideals of conduct and manners drawn from shared experiences and conditions in meeting and observing life. It is expressed also in common attitudes towards institutions

(55) "Notes on Administration (International)," 7 May 1898, Ibid.

(56) "Notes on Politics: Nationality and Humanity (Internationality)," 7 May 1898, Ibid.
and political practices and toward foreign systems of
government and foreign ideals of conduct. Humanity, on the
other hand, is characterized by internationality of thought
and standard, a substitution of the broadly human for the
narrowly local sympathy and comprehension. (57)

Humanity, he stated, is bred of "intercourse and
sympathy and is killed by isolation and prejudices." (58)
Two of the main forces in fostering humanity are culture and
liberal education. "Scholarly culture," which is attained by
travel and interchange among men and books, "tends always to
donationalize,—at any rate to take away all intensities of
habit or prepossession." (59) He believed that liberal
education not only helps to universalize an individual's habit
of mind but that it creates a common culture:

... a body of international thought, a habit of
international intercourse and study among scholars—
an international literate class... such as would
eventually be prepared for the principles of
international right. (60)

In Wilson's opinion, six historical factors have been
of major importance in advancing universality of thought. (61)

(57) "Nationality and Internationality," 7 May 1898, Ibid.
(58) Ibid.
(59) Ibid.
(60) "Notes on International Law: International Community,"
26 March 1892, Ibid.
(61) "Notes on Politics: Nationality and Internationality,"
7 May 1898, Ibid.
He gives Christianity the first place in "the sweep and efficacy of its influence." A second factor is the idea of the Rights of Man—"the liberal, humanitarian politics which has transformed the political world since the American and French Revolutions." "The extension and liberalization of international law" and "intercourse of trade," the third and fourth factors, have both contributed to creating an internationality of thought. Wilson saw colonization as another universalizing force. Finally, immigration, interchange and transfer of population have contributed to the creation of common feeling and understanding of humanity as a whole. (62)

Despite the fact that a number of forces had tended to create a community of interests throughout the world, Wilson believed that only among the nations of European background was there sufficient basis for an international community for only in Europe was there a common cultural tradition promoting universality. This universality in European culture is evidenced by "correspondence of social structure, community of ethical jural standards, interchange of political institutions, and community of thought in all spheres." (63)

Wilson wrote in 1892 that the Christian states of Europe were in a position to form "a community of nations."

(62) Ibid.

He quoted Henry Maine who pointed out that the Christian states of Europe were studying and recognizing the same writers and systems of public law in order to form a community of nations united by religion, manners, morals, humanity, and science, and united also by the mutual advantages of commercial intercourse, by the habit of family alliances and treaties with each other, and interchanging ambassadors. (64) Wilson had pointed out as early as 1887 that there was "a tendency as yet dim, but already steadily impulsive and clearly destined to prevail, towards, first the confederation of parts of empires like the British, and finally of great states themselves." (65)

Wilson did not limit his idea of community to a group of people, or a nation of people who are united by common feelings. Neither did he limit it to the nations of Europe which he saw shared a common culture. Rather he saw democratic community encompassing the world. However, he saw dangers not in democracy itself but in the short sighted view of democracy held by the democratic western nations. These short sighted views found dangerous expression in business. He wrote in 1923 that the Russian Revolution had been "against 'capitalism' . . . and it is against capitalism under one name or another that the discontented classes everywhere

(64) "Notes on International Community," Ibid.

draw their indictment." (66) He asks if capitalism is truly indispensable to the growth of modern industry. Certainly in view of the widespread and serious condemnation of it this question should receive candid consideration. He wrote, "Is it not . . . too true that capitalists have often seemed to regard the men whom they used as mere instruments of profit, whose physical and mental powers it was legitimate to exploit with as slight cost to themselves as possible, either of money or sympathy? Have not many fine men who were actuated by the highest principles in every other relationship of life seemed to hold that generosity and humane feeling were not among the imperative mandates of conscience in the conduct of a banking business, or in the development of an industrial or commercial enterprise?" (67)

Since democracy is a way of thinking applied to the various aspects of man's life Wilson would be the first to state that political democracy or any other aspect of democracy cannot be imposed on people. However, he sees the ultimate world community democratic. The first world war supposedly made the world "safe for democracy. . . . But democracy has not yet made the world safe against irrational revolution." (68)

(67) Ibid., 146.
(68) Ibid.
Why? He firmly believed that the fault lies in the absence of man's true dedication to these principles of justice that are a part of the Christian concept. Man must be sympathetic and helpful and willing to "forego self-interest in order to promote the welfare, happiness, and contentment of others and of the community as a whole. This is what our age is blindly feeling after in its reaction against what it deems the too great selfishness of the capitalistic system." (69)

Wilson concludes that the western democratic civilizations cannot survive and certainly will not become universal unless man begins to live according to the highest Christian ideals. (70) A world democratic community will evolve only out of the universal belief in and application of the principles which are basic to the Christian faith--and this is the "challenge to our . . . political organizations, to our capitalists--to everyone who fears God or loves his country." (71)

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(69) Ibid.
(70) Ibid.
(71) Ibid.