

of "political leader as librarian" flies in the face of deep sentiments about the gender of politics and the rhetoric of power, such a change in governmental ideology or practice may well not occur even if warranted.

MOBILIZING CAPABILITIES

Capabilities are necessary for effective action, but they are not sufficient. Action also requires activation and attention. Since attention is a scarce resource, political systems are responsive not only to the distribution of resources, competencies, rights, and authorities, but also to their mobilization. As a consequence, the management of attention is a major activity of governance.

The Organization of Attention

Research on both the private and public sectors has emphasized the allocation of attention and the organization of time as essential to understanding management (Carlsson, 1951; Mintzberg, 1973; Cohen and March, 1986; Hannaway, 1989). Time and attention are scarce resources in decision-making (March, 1988a). Each individual faces more claims on attention than can be satisfied. The various demands of life intrude upon each other (Cohen, March, and Olsen, 1972). An increase in attention to one thing reduces attention to others. The claims of attention from employment and family intrude upon those from citizenship. The claims of attention from constituents intrude upon those of colleagues. The claims of attention from one crisis intrude upon those of other crises. Attention to problems of crime are limited by attention to problems of economic health and international security. Attending more to energy policy means attending less to tax policy. The distribution of attention in a political system is an aggregation of individual allocations. The attention given to any particular political issue, therefore, depends not only on attributes of the issue but also on the distribution of alternative claims on attention.

The idea of attention scarcity requires some emendation that recognizes the extent to which it is possible to attend to more than one thing at a time and the extent to which the attention of any one indi-

vidual may be augmented through purchase, barter, representation, or threat, but it is a central feature of modern political life. Since not everyone can attend to everything all the time, capabilities mobilized at one time in one place are likely to lead to actions that are inconsistent with those produced by capabilities activated at another time or place. Policies created in the context of one pattern of attention are implemented in the context of another. One pattern of attention results in outcomes that stimulate mobilization of a new set of capabilities. Problems are solved at one time or in one part of a political system in ways that create problems at another time or in another part, which in turn are solved in ways that create problems in yet another time or part.

Garbage can models of temporal sorting illustrate the effects of those constraints on attention (March and Olsen, 1986a). In theories of temporal sorting, problems are defined by the demands of activated actors. Solutions are linked to problems by virtue of their simultaneous evocation (rather than their causal connection). Choices are made by participants who are present. Choices are implemented by actors mobilized at the time and place of implementation, attending to interpretations and issues evoked in that context. The issues, options, decisions, and interpretations are all dependent on patterns of attention. When access of problems and participants to choice opportunities is specialized, or when choices, problems, and participants are each arranged in hierarchical order, the effectiveness of the process in bringing problems to the attention of political actors or in resolving problems is affected (Cohen, March, and Olsen, 1972; Anderson and Fischer, 1986). Empirical observations of garbage can processes also confirm that structural constraints on attention make a difference (March and Olsen, 1976; Powell, 1978; Levitt and Nass, 1989).

Attention scarcity underlies some of the mysteries and opportunities of power. In political competition, attention is a resource that can be used to compensate for disadvantages in the other resources of political power. If less powerful people have narrower concerns than more powerful people, the "weak" can mobilize their capabilities in their own domains and exploit the scarce time and more diffuse interests of the "strong" (March and Romelaer, 1976). This possibility has led to frequent proposals for increasing the political

activation of citizens whose position is otherwise disadvantaged by limitations in the other resources of political competition. The strategy is effective, and there is a substantial tradeoff between activation and power, but the effectiveness of the strategy is constrained by the possibility that increasing one group's activation may stimulate the activation of another group sufficiently to result in a net decrement in influence for the first.

Those flows of attention affect not only the mobilization of capabilities but also their development. Attention leads to experience, and experience leads to learning. Skills for dealing with activities or concerns that do not attract attention tend to be lost. When political life goes, well, citizens attend to their private concerns and political skills are degraded. When most problems are solved within the legal system, other systems atrophy.

Perversities of Attention

It is fairly easy for individual attention allocation decisions to result in aggregate patterns of attention and uses of capabilities that are collectively perverse. Individuals, problems, and solutions are found in choice arenas that are (from a collective point of view) less than optimal. Problems and solutions are overlooked because they do not have access to choice situations in which they might become salient, or because their timing is poor. Individuals with talents and values particularly relevant to one set of problems find themselves busy with another set. We mention here two important perversities in the allocation of attention.

GRESHAM'S LAW OF PLANNING

It is frequently observed in both individual and organizational studies of decision-making that search and change are stimulated by failure. In political arenas, it is not hard to observe situations in which economic, social, or military reversals produce demands that are translated into political change. Those observations have led to a number of "demand" theories of individual, social, and political change. Such theories are useful, but they require considerable qualification. Performance crises are neither necessary nor sufficient for

change. Failure is subjective, and adaptive aspiration levels make it difficult to predict reactions to particular levels of performance without knowing the history of previous experience. Change is often driven not by demand but by supply, by the existence of an alternative that attracts attention and support and thereby stimulates a perception of a problem to which it is a possible solution (Cyert and March, 1963; March, 1981a, 1994b).

The problems of mobilization are a further complication. If, on average, the ease of mobilization of capabilities were positively correlated with the magnitude of the problem, there would be only some more or less random errors in fitting attention to problems. But the ease of mobilization seems to depend rather heavily on some factors that are actually negatively correlated with the magnitude or difficulty of the problem. Simple problems require less organizational capability than more complex ones. Familiar problems require less organizational capability than novel ones. The easier the problem, the easier it is to organize to deal with it. In general, the likelihood of attending to a problem depends on the time pressure, the clarity of goals, the familiarity of procedures associated with the problem, and the ease of solving it (March and Simon, 1958, p. 185). Deadlines and alarms direct attention to some problems and thereby divert attention from others. Problems that have clear goals and are approached through well-defined programs attract more attention than those for which an approach is poorly specified and the objectives unclear.

There is no particular reason to expect that decisions associated with long time horizons and ill-defined goals and procedures are systematically less important than those with short deadlines and clear performance programs, but the latter clearly divert attention from the latter. This tendency, sometimes called "Gresham's Law of Planning," makes the mobilization of attention surprisingly independent of the importance or magnitude of the performance problems faced. Political systems are continuously exposed to dissatisfaction and desires for reform. Response to those desires depends on the capability to mobilize attention. That capability, in turn, depends not only on the reality of the problem but also on the existence of organizational capabilities for giving meaning and direction to the reforms, mobilizing resources, and creating public support. This allocation of atten-

tion makes a certain kind of sense. It focuses effort on things that are known to be achievable. Such a focus, however, is likely to lead politics away from large problems toward solvable ones, away from new problems toward familiar ones.

WRONG PEOPLE, PROBLEMS, AND SOLUTIONS

A second source of possible perversity in the allocation of time and capabilities is a variation on problems that are usually called "externalities" in the social welfare literature of economics. The local allocation decisions of individuals are presumably driven by local calculation of preferences and consequences or local determinations of appropriateness. The aggregate consequences of attention allocation, however, may give these local decisions much more global consequences. The social advantages to having a particular individual, problem, or solution attached to a particular choice situation may not be in line with local incentives and conceptions of identity. From the standpoint of the overall system, a process involving decentralized attention allocation may result in bringing the wrong individuals, problems, or solutions to the decision arena.

A common complaint in this vein is one that points out that those people, problems, and solutions with time to spare are likely to be the people, problems, and solution for which there is relatively little demand. And those people who are most desired are likely to be least available (Olsen, 1976). Busy people are busy, in part, because they have talents and values that put them in high demand. Available people are available, in part, because they do not. Available problems are available, in part, because they represent problems without solutions. Available solutions are available, in part, because they represent solutions that do not solve problems. The result can be perverse. For example, one study of school desegregation in a large U.S. city showed that a relatively sudden increase in official desire to have ethnic minority leader representation on all (rather than a few) public committees resulted in such a load on ethnic minority leaders that their participation in each committee became ephemeral (Weiner, 1976). It is unreasonable to expect that a socially useful allocation of attention will automatically arise from a system in which individuals, problems, and solutions make decentralized attention decisions. In

particular, it is likely that the tradeoff between attention relevance and attention availability will be made in a way that is socially undesirable.

The natural market solution to the allocation problem is the introduction of prices, and some kinds of price systems function in some parts of government—for example in the employment of consultants. The natural rule solution to the problem is a system of rights and duties of participation, and such systems are common in government, indeed are the bases of most modern political orders. People with particular useful talents or values are obligated to participate in civic activities for which their talents make them appropriate.

MATCHING CAPABILITIES TO DEMOCRATIC HOPES

Democratic theory presumes that capabilities follow obligations, that the distribution of rights and resources is constructed around, and is designed to serve, the structure of identities. Inconsistencies between rules of appropriateness and capabilities for political action are notable features of contemporary political life. The distributions of political and economic capabilities are often inconsistent with the distributions of rights and authorities. A political system can suffer from assigning too many resources to a particular individual, group, or institution or from assigning too few. It can suffer from having some individuals with too much competence, as well as from having some with too little. Capability corrupts as well as empowers. As a result, societies not only create institutional capacities for action, they also create constraints on the use of those capacities. They specify the time and occasion for the legitimate use of political capability. They restrict the use of physical strength, military capability, economic resources, expertise, and organization. Moderation in using individual, group, and institutional capabilities is a part of the political culture of a democratic, well-ordered civil society.

Capabilities and Democracy

Organized capabilities are a necessity for democracy, and also a threat to it (Dahl, 1989). The contributions of officials to democratic aspirations depend on their capabilities, that is, the degree to which

citizens are willing to authorize their use of resources such as coercive power, bureaucratic time and talent, and public funds while linking those capabilities to the will of the people (Schumpeter, 1942, p. 269). Similarly, the contributions of citizens depend on their capabilities, on their ability to control officials, to make them responsible, to hold them accountable, and to keep their authority revocable. Democratic ideals describe how political capabilities, based on rights, authority, power, and other resources, should be constituted, used, regulated, and transferred. Both citizens and officials are supposed to have rights, resources, and capabilities adequate for acting appropriately according to their identities and roles. Individuals and private groups are supposed to have resources adequate to resist illegitimate use of public power, but they are not supposed to be strong enough to disregard or pervert democratic processes.

THE GEOGRAPHY AND GENEALOGY OF CAPABILITY

Political systems grant formal power to adult individuals by virtue of their citizenship. Citizenship is defined, for the most part, in a geographic and genealogical way, linking the capability to function within a polity primarily to residence and parentage. As a result, for the most part the citizenship mapping of individuals onto states is a one-to-one mapping. Each individual is a citizen of precisely one state. Civic rights and freedoms are community and boundary specific and do not extend beyond the polity. The capabilities of citizens are derived from the capabilities of the state, which in legal theory at least are derived from the sovereignty of the state.

A simple threefold division of the domains of governance is implicit or explicit in the idea of a sovereign nation-state. The first domain could be called the domain of administration. It involves the implementation of rules, principles, and policies adopted by a sovereign state. It is a domain of expertise and problem-solving in which there are problems of incomplete information but not of conflict of interest. The second domain could be called the domain of politics. It involves establishing the rules, principles, and policies of a sovereign state. It is a domain of constitutional procedures by which diverse interests and beliefs are translated into rules, principles, and

policies that are binding within the state. The third domain could be called the domain of international relations. It involves dealings among sovereign states. It is a domain of war, competition, voluntary cooperation, and negotiation among sovereign states pursuing their own rules, principles, and policies.

Since the capabilities conferred on individuals through citizenship depend on the ability of the nation to enact its claim of sovereignty, democratic theory is compromised by any disparity between the legal fiction of national sovereignty and the realities of political conditions. Such a disparity clearly exists in the contemporary world. The realities of governance seem to escape the boundaries of the nation-state. Modern nation-states are neither all-powerful internally nor autonomous externally; the domains of administration, politics, and international relations are intertwined in ways that considerably complicate their description and effective governance within them. Strong functional interdependencies among states undermine any idea of a congruence between national political capabilities and national political desires (Held, 1991). Crucial decisions have escaped the control of the nation-state as currently constituted. National sovereignty and autonomy have been eroded. Many political units have the legal status of sovereignty without adequate capabilities to give the legal fiction any substantive significance (Jackson, 1990), and even powerful nation-based polities have only modest ability to control several things that are of great concern to their citizens: employment, peace, financial markets, health, environmental quality.

Modern democracy probably requires a conception of political rights, resources, and capabilities that is less dominated by ideas of state sovereignty and the linking of capabilities to geography and genealogy. It cannot be taken for granted that the nation-state is the exclusive framework for democracy, that the fate of a national political community lies in its own hands, and that democracy can be understood in relation to actors and forces within national borders (Held, 1991; Rogowski, 1993, p. 435). This suggests a return to older concerns with how the interaction of interstate and intrastate relations affects political capabilities and political success (Hinze, 1968). It also suggests that students of democratic governance might attend to both the development of capabilities for action in democratic political institutions that are not co-terminus with the nation-

state and the development of capabilities for holding such institutions accountable. Such students might, in particular, consider ways of describing and improving the democratic qualities of the global and regional institutions and cooperative arrangements that have developed since World War II (Held, 1991; Wendt, 1994).

To imagine leaping from the current international system to a totally new one in easy steps is undoubtedly romantic. Even modest steps in such a direction face several conspicuous problems: First, geography and genealogy are not only traditional bases of citizenship, they are also deeply embedded bases of feelings of solidarity. Those feelings of solidarity are important elements of effective democratic governance, and it is not clear that democracy is viable without them. Second, every extension of democratic capabilities and rights across national boundaries has to confront the twin reality that the spirit of political equality is clearly redistributive and the current locale of democracy is in relatively rich, economically well developed countries (Burkhardt and Lewis-Beck, 1994). The history of expansion of democratic rights suggests that the moral force of equality is typically balanced by the reluctance of the favored few to surrender advantages needlessly. Third, modern networks of international connections are complicated, overlapping, and incomplete. Although most contemporary democracies have some experience (some considerably more than others) with political organization in which different constituencies exist for different purposes and at different times, traditional democratic procedures seem ill-designed for *ad hoc* "virtual" communities.

POLITICAL EQUALITY AND POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

The dominant conception of legitimate political capability in modern political thought is one based on political equality and popular sovereignty. A necessary condition for democracy in a modern society is the election of governors on the basis of free and equal voting by citizens. Indeed, the history of democracy can be written in terms of the gradual granting of participation and voting rights to an ever more inclusive set of individuals (Bendix and Rokkan, 1964; Rokkan, 1970). In most Western democracies, that process has reached a stage in which almost all adult citizens have a right to vote.

The principal political actors without formal voting rights are resident noncitizens, nonresidents who are substantially affected by the decisions of the polity, children, and the unborn. Contemporary struggles over the rights of resident noncitizens (immigrants or guest workers), the responsibilities of democratic states to nonresidents who are affected by the actions of the state (and vice versa), the political and legal rights of children, and the representation of future generations suggest that the process of extending the franchise has not yet reached its conclusion.

Voting rights are not enough, however. Differences in such resources as wealth and competence translate routinely into political advantages and disadvantages and make equality in formal voting rights inadequate by itself to satisfy democratic ideals (Dahl, 1985; 1986; Held, 1987, p. 290). If the distributions of informational, intellectual, social, and economic resources allow the well-informed, educated, high-status, well-organized, and rich to oppress the uninformed, uneducated, low-status, unorganized, and poor, formal political equality is a sham (Moore, 1966, pp. 498, 501). Political philosophers from Aristotle to Marx have seen political equality as depending not only on an equal distribution of the formal right to vote but also on the equal distribution and effective regulation of economic and social resources.

Democratic traditions make it a responsibility of government to detect and counteract distributions and uses of economic and organizational resources, knowledge and skills, and organizational capabilities that move society away from democratic ideals. Through social policies of taxation, education, and welfare, all democratic societies have tried (some with more vigor and success than others) to moderate differences in the rights, resources, and competencies of different citizens. Complementing formal rules of political equality with a distribution of economic resources that supports them, however, has proved difficult (Dahl, 1985). In the contemporary world, democracies typically have a more equal distribution of nonpolitical resources than do other political systems, but they nevertheless exhibit very substantial differences among individual citizens and groups. The fact that in many contemporary democracies poor people are a minority, rather than the majority that is implicitly assumed in some democratic theories, makes significant redistribution of eco-

nomie resources to them, rather than to the middle classes, an improbable result of democratic competition for voters.

THE RULES OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

A constitutional democracy is a form of government that is ultimately rooted in popular sovereignty and majority rule, but democratic ideals call for a community bound together by constitutive rules and roles, identities, shared accounts, and laws (Elster and Slagstad, 1988). Resources, rights, and discretion over their use are embedded in institutions and rules. Those instruments define how agents of authority and power (including citizens) are to be constituted, regulated, controlled, and made accountable and responsible. Constitutional and institutional rules organize political competition. They set out the ends, purposes, and responsibilities of the organs of government, how they originate, their mutual relations, and the relations between governors and citizens.

Constitutive rules specify procedures for making collective decisions and rules for transcending and transforming those procedures in an orderly way. They civilize policy-making and political transformations, minimizing the risk of destructive conflicts. They make certain transformations of resources across institutional spheres illegitimate, thus creating deliberate barriers to free trade in resources. For example, the right to vote is ordinarily made inalienable; it cannot be sold. Rules define spheres of privacy and autonomy from public authorities. Majority rule is tempered by constitutional protections of life, liberty, and property. Attempts have been made to extend the privileged position of civic and political rights to social and economic rights (Marshall, 1950), and regimes that define "democracy" to include constitutionally protected social and economic as well as political rights are common in Northern Europe (Allardt *et al.*, 1981; Olsen, 1990).

Rules turn rulers into officeholders by replacing authority based on power with authority based on office legitimately obtained (Skinner, 1989). They define how authority is created, exercised, transferred, and made responsible. They limit power and authority by the law (Wolfin, 1989). They define the proper jurisdictions, procedures, and performance criteria for institutions and institutional roles, for

example what it means to function as a proper parliamentarian, bureaucrat, or judge. The pursuit of personal or group advantage, of justice, and of practical solutions to the practical problems of community life are all framed within procedural rules that are taken for granted and not subject in the short run to discretionary political processes. Special majorities are required for special actions.

Even beyond specific rules, democracy presumes an ethic of voluntary self-restraint on the part of legitimate authority, a residual rule of democratic humility. It presumes self-imposed limitations on the arbitrary exercise of power, including legitimate political power, in the name of freedom, privacy, and a vigorous civil society. Majorities voluntarily yield to minorities in some circumstances. Not all possible political advantages within the rules are supposed to be taken, or are actually taken. Political authorities moderate the demands of their contemporaneous interests with an awareness of their roles as trustees for the community. Normally included in this requirement is the understanding that individuals, minorities, and the disfranchised—including the unborn—shall be protected against actions that make it impossible for them to act effectively as citizens in the future. The future is protected against the imperium of the present. The weak are protected against the imperium of the strong. Strangers are protected against the imperium of the self.

THE TENSION BETWEEN RULES AND POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

As numerous writers on democracy have observed, democratic ideals with respect to political capabilities are clearly contradictory. The contradictions are reflected in the way philosophical treatises on political capabilities mix an emphasis on individual liberty and rights with an emphasis on the rights of majorities and governors. Locke (1690), among others, insisted that the personal rights and property of individuals were prior to all social and political organization and therefore inviolable. The role of the state was to protect the personal rights and property bases of the capabilities of individuals. For that purpose, the state and its officials needed certain capabilities. But the legitimacy of the government depended on its ability and willingness to respect and protect individual rights.

Such a perspective, built exclusively on a conception of inherent

individual rights, became less dominant during the long period of state- and nation-building, particularly during the development of welfare states with comprehensive agendas for redistribution of resources and significant institutionalized capacities. This view of the state as justified primarily as a defender of individual civil and political rights and property has nonetheless received renewed support in many Western countries in recent decades (Hayek, 1960; Friedman, 1962; Nozick, 1974). Even in states where welfare state ideology has had a firm hold, individual-centered, as opposed to collective- or society-centered, arguments are familiar and legitimate (Olson, 1990).

For most of the history of democratic thought, however, the democratic ambivalence between liberty and constitutionalism has been maintained by imagining the achievement of various balances of power. Majorities are to rule, but they are to be subject to restraint. Officials are to be provided with adequate freedom and resources to act efficiently, and yet they are not to be made so strong that an accountable and popularly responsible government is threatened. Individuals should have the freedom and resources that allow them to flourish and exercise their rights, yet the exercise of those rights should not be allowed to endanger the democratic process or the rights of others. Autonomous and resourceful voluntary organizations are to be sustained as a precondition for a democratic society, yet they are not to be allowed to become a threat to democracy (Mill, 1956; Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, 1964; Berg, 1965; Dahl, 1982).

Achieving this democratic ideal of balanced power is difficult, particularly in the face of two fundamental facts of democratic life: (1) The same political capabilities that are used to protect against tyranny can often also be used to establish it, and (2) most individuals judge the encroachments by others on their own liberty more negatively than they do comparable encroachments by themselves on others. Thus, the classical conundrums of democracy are how to achieve majority rule in a way that is consistent with the maintenance of a community of free citizens that protects and elaborates differences and endures over time, and how inconsistencies among subjective judgments of collective and individual needs can be recon-

ciled in a way that offends neither the demands for community coherence nor the demands for individual liberty.

As we have seen, the democratic reaction to such facts and their associated conundrums is to distribute power as nearly equally as possible, and at the same time to create a consistent bias toward maintaining the status quo, toward requiring more political power to achieve change than to prevent it, toward attending more to claims of individual hurt than to claims of needs to hurt. The distribution of power is implemented through the allocation of equal voting rights and through the redistribution of political and economic resources. The bias against change is implemented by a set of relatively inviolate constitutive norms and rules that secure liberties for all members of the political community and that constrain and protect citizens as well as governors.

Every rule is a constraint and its acceptance an act of faith. There are frequent occasions on which individuals or majorities are frustrated by the rules. In order for democratic constitutions to thwart individual and majoritarian instincts of greed, they must also become the bane of individual and majoritarian visions of virtue. The tension between the capabilities defined by political equality and the authority of the majority, on the one hand, and the capabilities defined by constitutive rules, on the other, is a central tension of modern democratic governance. Democracy presumes that some vital rules are taken for granted. They are not subject to continuous calculative considerations of self-interest. Significant opportunities to secure advantage by violating or changing the rules are forgone. And though all contemporary democratic systems have experienced occasions on which fundamental rules have been violated, democratic aspirations require that those occasions must be few and those few must be sources of subsequent shame.

Problems of Capabilities

Democracy presumes political capability. It cannot succeed without it. In particular, it cannot succeed unless citizens are capable of being citizens and officials are capable of being officials. At the same time, however, political capabilities pose problems. The capabilities of po-

litical actors and institutions that are precious to effective governance are, at the same time, a threat to democratic political control.

INEFFICIENCY AND TYRANNY

Individuals want freedom to acquire resources and to enjoy the benefits of their resources. They want to be free from government and rules (often including those they impose on themselves). At the same time they want protection against the adverse consequences of the use of resources by others and to enjoy the predictability that follows from stable rules and expertise. Citizens look to governors and experts for solutions to individual and collective problems. At the same time they fear the power of governors and experts and seek to limit their power (Cerny, 1990, p. 143). Elected representatives want the knowledge that comes from staff expertise, but they fear the loss of control when their staffs become too large or too important (Olson, 1983). In short, effective political actors and institutions are characteristic of enduring democracies; yet efficient political institutions are potential threats to democracy. Democratic governance requires delicate balances between public power and individual power, between majority power and minority rights, between central guidance and institutional autonomy. Avoiding tyranny while pursuing capability and developing capability while preventing tyranny are central problems (Dahl and Lindblom, 1953).

It is a part of democratic traditions to be willing to err on the side of inefficiency in government in order to protect politics from the powerful. Intentions to bring efficiency to government are invariably supported as a matter of rhetoric but often resisted as a matter of practice. Insistence that capabilities should follow obligations is a canon of organizational and democratic rhetoric, but it is routinely ignored in practice. Resistance to tyranny lies at the heart of democratic resistance to new technologies for information gathering and sharing by governmental agencies, monitoring of the activities of individuals and groups, observation of conformity to laws and regulations, adjudication of disputes, consideration of proposed legislation, and implementation of enacted rules. The benefits of efficacy stimulate the creation of powerful authorities and rights. Fears of tyranny lead to providing less than commensurate capabilities.

To protect against the dangers of political capabilities, most democracies try to counterbalance one organized capacity with another. They encourage competitions among political agencies and offices and among political jurisdictions. Armies confront navies; treasuries confront welfare agencies; ministries of education confront ministries of trade; journalists of television confront journalists of newspapers; regional authorities confront central authorities. To the extent to which well-endowed individuals and groups compete with each other for political control, the effects of the endowments of each tend to be controlled by the endowments of the others.

The conditions for effectiveness of competition in controlling the political capabilities of private endowments are so restrictive, however, that few democracies imagine that it is adequate by itself. At various times and places, the well-endowed have been educated (taught the principles of democracy), bribed (provided with incentives), and coerced (threatened with incarceration) into not using their full resource capabilities. Since none of those efforts has ever entirely succeeded, nor seems likely to, the struggle to regulate political capabilities derived from inequalities in wealth and other endowments is a constant feature of democracy (Walzer, 1983, p. 10). Political rules are enacted to regulate the pursuit, delegation, exercise, justification, criticism, and transfer of authority and power. Procedural aspects of democracy are emphasized, particularly those regulating encroachment on rights (Gutman, 1985, p. 315). Citizens look for a stable political structure and process, for rights and rules, and for legal guarantees against others and the state (Roper, 1989, p. 216).

The balance between individual freedom and governmental action has been strained by rapid expansions of demands for each (Hinsley, 1986, p. 128). The modern citizen and modern instruments of opinion formation seem to complain with equal fervor about the misuse of authority and about the failure to exercise it. On the one hand, democratic citizens increasingly ask that power be dispersed and limited in order to avoid excessive interference in their lives. They seek to constrain the capabilities of the state and of central authorities out of concern that those capabilities will restrict individual autonomy and effective participation in collective choices (Gould, 1988). They see the potential for tyranny that lies in governmental capabilities.

For instance, after a long period during which the public sector grew in response to demands for welfare services, a reaction gained strength during the 1980s. Although it has been argued that the turnaround in public policy may not always have reflected a change in public opinion (Bennett and Bennett, 1990; Stehmo, 1993), elections were won on the basis of programs calling for shortening the public agenda, reducing the power of public agencies, and relying more on competitive markets and private property. Definitions of appropriate capabilities changed. Concerns about constraining governmental capabilities became much more conspicuous in theories of governance than concern over creating adequate governmental capabilities. Such definitions and concerns could change again if the public mood were to find the threats of market competition and private concentrations of power more serious than the threats of public power, or if fundamentalist religious movements placed the maintenance of religious orthodoxy on the public agenda.

On the other hand, impatience with the ungovernability and inefficiency of democratic regimes leads citizens to demand more potent governance, less dispersion of power, and more concentration of authority (Bobbio, 1990, p. 88). They demand central intervention when institutional autonomy makes popular control difficult or impossible (March and Olsen, 1989, p. 166). They complain that society is fragmented into powerful veto groups that prevent a consistent, positive policy for the society as a whole (Willike, 1989, p. 229). They ask that the separate interests of a society take into account the needs of the whole society (Füst, 1989, p. 221), restrict their own personal opportunities in order to benefit the society (Willike, 1989, p. 243), and exhibit a "new ethic of responsibility" (Henke and Füst, 1989, p. 537). The escalation of pressures has accentuated the dilemmas of political capability, making democratic authority at the same time more circumscribed and more in demand.

The balance between inefficiency and tyranny is made particularly unstable by the tendency for the issues to be seen through personal glasses. Individuals and groups often seem to see the dangers of tyranny more clearly when they are out of power than when they are in power, seem to see the dangers of inefficiency more clearly when they are in power than when they are out of power. Majorities seem to find limitations on government and minority rights much less

compelling than minorities do. These self-interested biases in assessments are only part of the story of instability, however. Individuals do not reliably see the world in terms of calculated tradeoffs. They are inclined to see their desires as absolutes rather than as goods subject to marginal rates of substitution. Rather than exhibit some kind of steady exchange rate, their attention to inefficiency and tyranny oscillates as their focus of attention does. Cycles from an emphasis on granting authority to an emphasis on enforcing accountability seem endemic to democracy, although established democracies seem to exhibit somewhat shorter and less dramatic cycles than do societies in which democratic experience is more limited.

The difficulties of striking a good balance are accentuated by the economic context of modern political life. The demands of democracy seem to conflict with the demands of international financial markets. The rules of law and equity seem to conflict with the rules of supply and demand. The capabilities of political actors to fulfill expectations of their political identities seem to restrict the capabilities of economic actors to fulfill theirs. The legitimation of multiple cultural identities within a single nation-state weakens the link between national identities and the state. Such conflicts are of long standing, but the stakes have grown larger. The European Union and the efforts of Western democratic polities to define relations within the former Soviet Union are modern experiments in developing and utilizing political capabilities.

As the stakes increase, so also do the dangers. Building political capabilities increases the risks of political action. Capabilities make the effects of action greater and more variable. Such risks are conspicuous in the technology of warfare and genetic engineering and in the application of rationality to decision-making, but they are observable throughout modern governance. For example, democratic institutions have traditionally been sustained by mechanisms that assure that most citizens experience domains and periods of being in power as well as domains and periods of being out of power. Rotation in power and specialization in power facilitate an appreciation of both sides of the inefficiency/tyranny dilemma. Sequential bouts of experience with the exercise of power and with powerlessness discourage citizens from embracing unconditionally the beauties of either efficiency or inefficiency in governance. It is essential to such a