The Development of Political Theory in Colonial Massachusetts, 1688-1740

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL THEORY IN COLONIAL MASSACHUSETTS

1688 - 1740

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Ronald P. Dufour

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment
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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation into the appropriateness of the social, political, and intellectual conditions of early provincial Massachusetts for the reception of the ideas of the English opposition press of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The English legacy is reviewed briefly, emphasizing the fears of power and corruption and the defensive stand taken in relation to the English constitution and English rights. A short overview is given of the division between court and country in the period under study in Massachusetts, based largely on political and financial connections. An interpretation of the Andros government under the Dominion in terms of this court vs. country split is offered, and the strong and lasting impact of the Dominion of New England is noted, stressing political polarization, disruption of an established life pattern, and importance for future ideological developments.

A discussion of the quarrels between royal governors and the House follows, concentrating particularly on the salary and other financial issues. The results again indicate increasing political dualism and a growing fear of the House in terms of corruption of the English constitution, disruption of mixed government, and betrayal of the Charter, with a growing imperial assertiveness serving as the catalyst.

Intellectual currents in Puritan thought reveal similar trends. An intense investigation reveals a dominating trend: the duties of the ruler, the ends of society, and the views of religion and human nature were all becoming secularized, thus leading to greater polarization, aided by an unresponsive governor.

The final consolidating issue was the fear of a Popish plot, traceable throughout English history and originating with particular intensity in Massachusetts under the Andros regime. Adding to this fear was the apparent spread of both political and moral corruption. This bleak situation was contrasted, in colonial minds, with an Anglo-Saxon ideal.

The conclusion reached is that the Massachusetts environment was indeed similar to that described by the English opposition press. By the 1740 Land Bank crisis, only an astute Governor Shirley could prevent major disruption.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL THEORY
IN COLONIAL MASSACHUSETTS,
1638-1740
INTRODUCTION

The relationship between ideas and politics is a subject of perpetual heated discussion among intellectual historians. Richard Bushman, in a recent review of Bernard Bailyn's *Origins of American Politics*, stated the particular problem of colonial intellectual history more specifically; in Bushman's view, the key factor underlying the structure of ideas which Bailyn has unearthed for American colonial politics is the interaction of the conditions of eighteenth century political life with a general colonial temperament. In other words, what were the reasons for the colonists accepting a certain group of ideas and not another? Bailyn himself has done some work in this area on Massachusetts, in particular in a brief essay in *Origins*. It is the purpose of this study, however, to define and delineate more precisely the appropriateness of the political, social, and intellectual conditions of early provincial Massachusetts for the reception of the ideas of the English opposition press. The nature of these ideas themselves is first of all worthy of extensive consideration; their acceptability is further clarified by the impact of the Andros interlude, the political and social divisions within the colony, and the nature of the continual

squabbles between the governor and the House. Other specific issues, such as the appointment of the Speaker of the House, the financial condition of the colony, and the land bank controversy, add to the apparently realistic situation traced by the English opposition press. There were, finally, certain underlying currents of thought sweeping Massachusetts society. Puritanism was undergoing a vast secularization of outlook in its adaptation to the American situation. Puritan concepts of the ruler, the nature of man, and the purpose of society were likewise undergoing significant transitions, and the rise of rational religion provided a further stimulus towards a growing concern for reason, natural light, and the welfare of the people in physical terms. The colonists themselves, finally, feared a worldwide plot against English liberties, a plot exemplified by corruption and the growing arbitrary power of rulers - a situation which they saw as very real in their own immediate surroundings.
CHAPTER I

THE ENGLISH LEGACY

The English ideological background of the "patriot" ideas has been thoroughly investigated by several prominent scholars, but it is well worth our while to review them closely here, in light of their immediate application to the colonial situation. The body from which the colonists drew their inspiration traced its background to the seventeenth century commonwealthman and the emergence of the "country" ideology. These ideas were based upon a fear for the security of English liberties and the English constitution, with the crucial projection of a basic division between court and country. The court represented the administration, the country the men of independent property. The business of Parliament was to preserve the independence of property, upon which was founded all human liberty and excellence. Problems, however, inevitably arise. To govern is to wield power, and it was believed that power had a natural tendency to corrupt and encroach; 

anced between its organs; the Commonwealthmen believed in a separation of powers and hoped that each of the three parts of the government would balance or check the others.\textsuperscript{3} and the function of Parliament was to supervise closely the executive,\textsuperscript{4} for "Power is naturally active, vigilant, and distrustful...\textsuperscript{5} The nature of power is such that it turns Men that have it into Monsters; and therefore the most amiable and unexceptionable Man upon Earth is not to be trusted with it.\textsuperscript{6} If the executive should fall victim to the temptations of power, however, he does indeed have the means at hand to distract Parliament from its proper function; by retaining them to follow ministers and ministers' rivals, by persuading them to support measures - standing armies, national debts, excise schemes - whereby the activities of the administration would grow beyond Parliamentary control. Collectively, these measures are called corruption.\textsuperscript{7} Such corruption, logically, would be labelled as a conspiracy to overthrow the English constitution and to blot out English liberties. There were, of course, ways to prevent such a thing from happening - government in a free country must be made by laws to which a people have consented, through free elections,\textsuperscript{8} and proper education is of the utmost importance in this defensive battle.\textsuperscript{9} The people themselves were held to be entirely capable of taking part

\textsuperscript{3} Caroline Robbins, The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman... (Cambridge, 1959), 8.
\textsuperscript{4} Pocock, "English Political Ideologies," Wm. and Mary Qtly., 3rd Ser., XXII (Oct., 1965), 565.
\textsuperscript{5} Jacobson, English Libertarian Heritage, 85.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 203
\textsuperscript{7} Pocock, "English Political Ideologies," Wm. and Mary Qtly., 3rd Ser., XXII (Oct., 1965), 565.
\textsuperscript{8} Pocock, "English Political Ideologies," Wm. and Mary Qtly., 3rd Ser., XXII (Oct., 1965), 565.
\textsuperscript{9} Robbins, Commonwealthman, 99.
in their own government, and they were to be instilled with a deep public spirit and love of country to help them wage the struggle. 10

So much, then, for the inherited English structure of ideas. The important thing to be noted is that the situation they described did in fact fit rather aptly the actual situation in the Bay Colony, or at least it seemed so to contemporaries; we cannot deny the definite similarity of circumstance. As Caroline Robbins has noted of the ideas of James Harrington, author of Oceana and a leading seventeenth century Commonwealthman, "the smooth working of the system depended upon measure of equality between a number of persons with a stake in the country.... His suggested limitations upon property, his agrarian system or hierarchy, were designed for a rural, not an urban economy." 11 Recent research has indicated that this rural, agrarian hierarchy was the basic situation in Massachusetts, 12 and any attempt to upset it would very likely be seen in terms of an encroaching power. The similarities, however, go far beyond this. Bailyn has noted the division between the governor and the merchants on the one hand and the assembly on the other, 13 a division which both he and George Billias claim is superbly illustrated by the land bank controversy. 14 The division in Massachusetts, though, went even deeper. The arguments between the governor and the House were continual and illuminating, particularly the salary squabbles, the struggle for control of the finances, and the battle over the governor's right to negate the House Speaker. The financial

situation of the colony, culminated by the Land Bank attempt of 1740, was deeply polarizing in its effects upon the political and social life of the colony. What the colonists saw and feared was the encroachment of power by the royal executive, a corruption of their English rights and liberties. In reaction, they drew together and asserted with greater strength the duties of the ruler to his society and the innate capabilities possessed by man himself. The trends of the Enlightenment, of course, had already begun to make inroads in these areas, but the currents were now greatly accelerated. The expanding plot to sabotage English rights and the English constitution had now become a frightening reality. The Massachusetts past had prepared the people for self-government, and the lack of actual power by the governors in the colonies had further consolidated them into a powerful body of resistance, represented through the House. The "de facto" absence of an aristocracy only accentuated the face to face confrontation between the ruler and the ruled, between the usurper and the defenders.  

As a final remark on the immediate relevance of the English ideas to the Massachusetts situation, it would be wise to discuss in outline terms the division between court and country. The administration was consolidated by its very nature, and the patronage available to Massachusetts governors grew at an extremely rapid pace; while the size of the House less than doubled, the Governor's patronage multiplied six times between 1700 and 1761. Those merchants who had an eye out for their financial betterment spent most of their time on the side of this administration; the Council was their outlet, and business connections

with England were conducive to a conservative stand, eager to preserve the status quo. The majority of merchants made their profits through British commercial connections; it was only natural that they should support the representative of the Crown and the royal prerogative, since this was the establishment which possessed the power to disrupt their financial well-being. Their opposition to Andros was based on his under-cutting of their positions of power; their calculation of the extent of the threat to their civil liberties varied with their proximity to the sources of privilege and power, as they rebelled against a rash curtailment of this proximity. The Belcher family itself illustrated "the pattern of mercantile ascent through British society with classic perfection." We have already noted the lack of a balancing aristocracy, and we shall further see the House coalescing its power through the struggles with the governors and emphasizing its likeness to the British House of Commons; the people, too, were gathering their strength together, at the same time raising their respect for their own abilities, powers, and dues. The two were evidently solidly welded together, as relations between towns and their representatives to the House were close indeed, and their feelings were similar in such issues as the governor's salary. The towns themselves worked through a system of consensus, presenting a solid local front. Though the colonists were generally not conspicuously aware

18. Ibid., 176, 191-2.
19. Ibid., 195.
of the division in terms of court and country, they were aware of some kind of split. In late 1740, the Post-Boy printed a letter telling of a local debate as to who was the more valuable to the community, the merchant or the countryman. The answer, of course, was the countryman, because his labor and industry supplied the necessities of life, while many merchants just dumped luxurious goods upon an unsuspecting community. The Weekly Journal printed a piece from the London Magazine in late 1738 entitled "A Praise of Agriculture"; it lauded the farmers' vocation because "it conducts to Morality and every social virtue..." The implication was, naturally, that every other livelihood did not. It is also evident, finally, that these loose strands were woven together at various times by such political geniuses as the Cookes, who developed political alliances which depended heavily on church, professional, and militia groups, as well as family relations, financial partnerships, and social clubs. Elisha Cooke, Sr., a prominent House politician, had formed a coalition of patriotic opposition to Andros, and succeeded at the turn of the century in temporarily gaining the support of the merchants on a patriotic, anti-prerogative platform. His son, Elisha, Jr., with monopolies on salt production and land development on Boston neck, was able to organize political coalitions based on financial partnerships; his methods varied from manipulation of tax assessments to drawing prospective voters through an abundance of liquid refreshment. The Boston caucus which he directed was the perfect example of an effort to direct the power of the people into the proper channels, so that their (and his) interests would prevail in the government. The effectiveness

of this Caucus is indicated by the lengthy continuation of certain members in office; at the same time, though, "the Caucus' leaders knew full well that their power rested ultimately on the people's enjoyment of traditional rights and privileges." 24

The situation in Massachusetts, then, did indeed have much in common with the ideas expressed in the English libertarian heritage. As we have already noted and shall see in further detail, fears of corruption and of a plot against English liberty were indeed widespread, and the division between court and country was certainly to develop into a real enough problem. The catalyst which spurred these forces into action, though, was an outside force representing a serious threat to an already precarious situation in Massachusetts. Sir Edmund Andros was to become a vivid living embodiment of all the colonists' fears.

Chapter II

Andros

The political and social situation of seventeenth century Massachusetts prior to the onslaught of the Andros regime is of crucial significance to the understanding of developments in early provincial Massachusetts. The Bay Colony had a long tradition of self-government; recent research has shown the provincial requirement for the franchise to be less onerous than previously thought,¹ and the contractual nature of Puritan political theory provided a firm foundation for balanced popular rule.² The democratic tendencies of the town and the emphasis on communal consensus made the governmental base even more firm. We have already seen that provincial representation was characterized by a close correspondence between the wishes of the people and their representatives in the assembly.⁴ Thus English imperial policy, or the lack of it, had allowed the inner tendencies of Puritan political thought to blossom forth into an Americanized reality, conditioned by an economic and social equality far surpassing any European counter-

part. With the advent of the Restoration, however, a new policy of imperial concern, originating with the Cromwellian Navigation Acts of 1651, became more forceful and extensive. By April 1678, the Lords of Trade agreed that only a revocation of the Massachusetts charter and the establishment of a royal government would bring the colony into a proper relation with England. Edward Randolph was one symptom of the new system, and however well-intentioned he may have been for the well-being of the Empire, New Englanders found little or nothing to appreciate in his conduct. It was his reports, after all, that brought out the paucity of imperial control in the Bay Colony, and it was partly his doing that the Dominion of New England was to be imposed with such devastating effects. Thus the inhabitants of Massachusetts were already sufficiently disturbed when news of the creation of the Dominion arrived; they were to be even more upset by the man in control and the measures he was to take.

In general, what Andros and the Dominion asserted was that legislation was a privilege and not the right that the people had become accustomed to look upon it as. In other terms, Michael G. Hall has seen it as a contest over who should rule - the Puritans or England. Perhaps even the implications of a "contest" are wrong, for the Puritans saw no reason to even admit the right of the home government to encroach upon what they considered to be their own sacred territory. To

Jeremiah Durmer, Spokesman for a later generation, it was nothing less than an evil and arbitrary reign; as one writer was to remark, "we were chiefly squeezed by a crew of abject Persons fetched, from New York to be the tools of the adversary... [and] we have been treated with multiplied contradictions to Magna Carta...." Andros and his henchmen, corresponding to the true usurping and corrupting rulers, had invaded the liberty and property of the English Protestants, "to destroy the fundamentals of the English & erect a French govt." Based on the actions of Andros in relation to the New England past, these near-paranoiac reactions were almost predictably logival. The interlude of the Dominion was enough to "stimulate and crystalize a defensive colonial theory of the Constitution." The first official act of Andros upon his arrival was to hold an Anglican ceremony; this politically inept beginning was to be characteristically indicative of his entire rein. His first professions were of high regard for the public good; former taxes and laws were to continue for at least a brief period, and most of his council were men who sincerely wished for the public interest. Yet the need for reform, at least from the English point of view, was admittedly vast. Again, however, Andros's methods were seemingly designed to corrupt and to destroy completely the ancient liberties of the colonists. His instruc-

10. Increase Mether, The Declaration of the Gentlemen... (Boston, 1689), 3.
11. The Revolution in New England Justified... (Boston, 1691), 12.
tions detailed the establishment of a court system as much like that of England as possible; the only problem was that the system evolved by Massachusetts herself was as much unlike that of England as possible. His manner of raising money was particularly objectionable; when it appeared that lively discussion on his tax measure would continue for some time, he simply signed it into law without bothering to take a vote. The Reverend John Wise and the members of his parish in Ipswich were particularly incensed, so much so that Wise soon found himself in jail for his actions in protest. This act of "levying monies without the consent of the people either by themselves or by an assembly..." was not to be forgotten; Wise's anger was to be vehemently expressed in his later pamphlet, *The Church's Quarrel Espoused.* To the colonists, the simple fact of the matter was that the fundamentals of English government, which they had of course established in New England, "doth not allow their imposition of taxes without a Parliament." The colonists were already likening their governmental structure to that of England in their defense of English liberties. The quarrel was further enhanced when Councillor Joseph Dudley, the future royal governor, pointedly instructed John Wise during his trial for tax evasion that the colonists must not think that the privileges of Englishmen would follow them to the ends of the world; after all, the only difference between them and slaves was that they were given the

18. Osgood, III, 404.
20. Revolution Justified, 44.
privilege of not being bound in captivity. To an Englishman, as one of Cato's Letters illustrated, slavery meant the loss of all freedom and English rights.

Andros proceeded to license the press, and his strict enforcement of the laws of trade worsened the condition of an already depressed economy. Necessary defenses irked the people because of their expense. The Puritans, then, readily believed the Indians who "declared they were encouraged by Sir Edmund Androsses [sic] to make war upon the English ...." Town meetings, the backbone of New England "democracy," were restricted to one a year for the sole purpose of electing town officers. Land grants were to be revoked and reissued under more stringent conditions, and writs of instruction were even brought against some of those who refused to petition for new grants. Thus the revolution of 1689 was understandably accepted with only too much joy; a way of life, based on a hallowed constitution and ancient liberties, had been shattered by a Popish intruder.

The important points of this disastrous imperial escapade are the constitutional and ideological impacts. Throughout the early years of the Colony, the Massachusetts settlers had developed their own governmental balance, drawing from both their English and American experiences. The colonists gained the right to elect their own deputies and

24. Hall, Edward Randolph, 111.
27. B. K. Brown, passim.
29. Ibid., II, 9.
eventually, in 1644, the assistants agreed to sit apart as a separate body. The recent research previously mentioned on the extent of the franchise and the nature of town government would seem to indicate that a natural system of checks and balances was in operation. As we shall see, Puritan political theory was extremely conducive to this sort of situation. Thus Andros, inevitably cast in the role of the evil, encroaching ruler, upset that balance; there was no House, the governor was essentially arbitrary, and the Council was hardly responsible to the will of the people, being composed largely of merchants and strangers. In terms of country ideology, there could not have been a more perfect split between court and country.

CHAPTER III
THE GOVERNOR VS. THE HOUSE

After the overthrow of Andros, the colony reverted to its old way of government for the time being.\(^1\) Then the 1691 charter arrived - a diplomatic coup, to say the least, for the hard working Increase Mather. Yet even at this early date, the colony was plagued by a prophetic clash of interests. The "patriot" faction of Elisha Cooke was holding out stubbornly for the retention of the old charter; they were strongly opposed to any encroachment of English control on their home government.\(^2\) Mather, on the other hand, was willing to come to terms with the English government, largely because of the practical demands of the situation.\(^3\) Yet he, too, had been no lover of the Andros regime, and to him the new charter was a welcome protector of the English liberties of the colony.\(^4\) Despite their differences over the acceptability of English rule, then, both sides were agreed on what had to be protected - the ancient rights and liberties of Englishmen.

The Charter itself was sufficiently unique and telling in its future import to warrant examination in at least some detail. On the more positive side, an expressly legal basis was given to both the legislature and the judiciary, with the general court gaining the right  

\(^1\) Hall, Edward Randolph, 123.
\(^2\) Hutchinson, History of the Province, I, 348.
\(^3\) Hall, Edward Randolph, 125.
\(^4\) Increase Mather, The Declaration of the Gentlemen..., passim.
to elect all judicial tribunals, the Assistants became the Council, elected by the General Court as a whole (Council & House) and subject to the governor's veto. The religious qualification for the franchise was suspended. Without the governor's warrant, no money could be issued from the Treasury; judges, sheriffs, and justices of the peace were all to be appointed by the governor with the advice of the Council. In essence, it was a judicious compromise on control of the government, but one which would prove satisfactory to neither party. At the time, however, it was generally received by New Englanders as a divine blessing. Andros had been more than they could take, a true visitation of the devil.

Politically, the period from 1689-1702 witnessed developments significant in their import for future conflicts. The first royal governor, Sir William Phips, assured the colonists that he was God's instrument for the preservation of their ancient privileges, an assurance which tells much of the development of political thinking of the period. Phips was generally lax in asserting the prerogative, and the inhabitants lapsed into the sad delusion that the "good old days" had returned once more. Apparent stability also reigned during the period from 1694-1699, when a group of gentlemen managed the government for themselves, thus assuring the continued absence of royal

6. Osgood, American Colonies in the Seventeenth Cent., III, 442.
9. Dunn, Puritans and Yankees, 269.
interference. Stoughton's first term as governor appeared harmless, and he was generally well liked. Bellomont, too, was popular, and illness and wars, the latter a crucial factor which kept the governors occupied even through Dudley's term (1702-1714), kept him either isolated from the public or enmeshed in essential and non-controversial business. At the same time, though, indications of future conflict were readily visible to those vigilant enough to recognize them. Until now, towns could elect as their deputy a man who was not an inhabitant of the town he represented. A new act, however, stated that a representative must be a resident and a freeholder of the town he sat for. In the words of Marcus Jernegan, "While this reduced the standard of ability in the house, it brought the deputies nearer the people of a town, and got rid of excess of representatives from Boston or vicinity. Most of these were friends of the old order and opponents of Phips." It was passed by a small majority despite stubborn opposition, and it was clearly a measure designed to regain executive power. Phips had vetoed Elisha Cooke's election to the Council and was also opposed to the new charter; his frontier background, further, made him unacceptable to the Boston elite. Thus he was losing support from all sides. Stoughton's second term was also somewhat turbulent; the governor sent a report to Parliament complaining of laws being passed which were repugnant to those of England and destructive of trade, of the refusal to transmit acts to England or allow repeal, and of the continued ex-

11. Ibid., 84 ff.
ploitations of pirates. He advised that the Massachusetts charter be resumed. It should also be noted that the colonists had previously passed laws dealing with general liberties, individual legal privileges and legal policy in general, and land policy - only to have them all disallowed in England on technical grounds. Thus Stoughton's proposed measures must have called to mind the days of Randolph, and the future actions of the colony were to prove an eagerness to counter this subversive thrust against the ancient rights.

Despite outward calm, then, the situation which Dudley inherited was a potentially explosive one, and very likely it was only his constant preoccupation with wars with the French and Indians which prevented it from developing into something more serious. As it was, the situation was extremely unstable during his administration. As Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of Wight and as a member of Parliament in 1701, Dudley had become enthralled with the concept of a royal governor; perhaps equally significant, he had become an active supporter of the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, a body passionately despised in New England Puritan circles. What his years in office accomplished, in essence, was the widening of the ideological, political, and social divisions between court and country; he kept the support of Boston merchants through military contracting, and sent to the House endless messages and instructions, challenging its

15. Osgood, 303-4.
17. Susan M. Reed, Church and State in Massachusetts Bay, 1691-1740. (Urbana, Ill., 1914), 164.
18. Dunn, Puritans and Yankees, 280.
authority and continually criticizing its performance. He refused a total of five councillors, while only one had been negatived in the previous ten years. In his early years, he became extremely interested in efforts to recall the charter. When he asked for a permanent salary, then, the House committee reported back in complete surprise that the subject was indeed altogether new to them, as indeed they had not taken such measures previously. The case against the governor was closed when he was charged with correspondence and trade with the French and Indians of Canada. Though both Council and House exonerated him at first, a pamphlet printed in London accused him of forcing their hands. The same pamphlet saw his government as a return to the evils of the Dominion, with Dudley enriching himself all the while. He had promoted bribery and corruption; his son was attorney-general, he had trampled upon the assembly, and he was in collusion with pirates and the French. The crowning accusation was a reference to a letter of Dudley's in which he stated that the removal of the charter was the only method of making the country safe for lawyers and gentlemen. Dudley represented the hand of the intruder, attempting to upset the delicate balance of Massachusetts government. Thomas Dudley, Joseph's grandfather and occasional Massachusetts governor, had been a defender of localism and government by law against the arbitrary Winthrop; he would

24. Ibid., 303.
have shuddered to see those principles so completely betrayed.

The salary dispute in provincial Massachusetts was the most sig-
nificant of the numerous disagreements between the governor and the
House, and it is within this dispute in particular that we can attain
a clear glimpse of the relationship between intellectual currents and
actual political conditions. In the past, Massachusetts had become
accustomed to governors who were perfectly willing and were expected
to serve the commonwealth gratis, as part of their duty. Thus the
shock was necessarily great when Andros commanded for himself alone a
salary which exceeded the entire budget for the preceding year. This
act in itself established a necessary and logical connection between
salary demands and the usurpation of power; the situation was a com-
pletely unfamiliar one, and coupled with the other arbitrary actions
of the governor, the salary became a matter of grave concern to the
House in particular. After the 1689 revolution, however, there was
little real immediate disagreement or concern over this issue; the
House became accustomed to voting £1000 Sterling to both Phips and
Bellomont, as non-permanent grants, and they were accepted with only
slight grumbling by the governors. Again, the war situations helped
postpone the problem. Even these seemingly generous sums, however, were
undercut by the rising inflationary problem which was to characterize
the colony's finances for the entire period under investigation; they
were not, further, the permanent salaries which the royal administra-
tion had in mind. Thus in September, 1704, the House refused to pro-

27. Hall, Edward Randolph, 111.
vide Dudley with a permanent salary, 29 and greater conflict arose when Dudley, instilled with the concept of Parliamentary supremacy over the colony, (he was himself well off), continued the attempt to achieve the imperial aim of a permanent salary. In the end, the only concrete thing he did achieve was getting his salary reduced to a non-permanent £500. 30 As we shall see, the fears of corruption of the House were very real, and the actions of Dudley we have previously discussed added to the impact of these fears.

The imperial government, though, was far from discouraged by such defeats. Governor Samuel Shute's first message called for fixed salaries for both the governor and the Lieutenant-Governor, 31 but the House voted a mere £300 for his support at the time — with the governor cautiously thanking them. 32 The matter was not pursued much further under Shute's administration. Governor Burnet, however, proved to be more stubborn, and his demands, coupled with the refusals of the House to be coerced, produced a long and bitter quarrel filling the pages of the House Journals. 33 His instructions ordered him to insist upon a permanent salary of at least £1000 per annum; 34 the demand was, of course, refused. 35 Eventually, the House offered him £1700, and then a lump sum of £6000, to take care of all of his expenses. 36

30. Ibid., 26; Osgood, Eighteenth Century, II, 139.
32. Ibid., 172, 174.
34. Ibid., 247.
35. Ibid., 298.
received secret instructions to accept this amount, provided he was accorded a fixed salary for the rest of his term. He died, however, before he could broach the offer to the House. This sketch, though, presents only a brief synopsis of what actually happened, and the contentions developed by either side are extremely significant in their constitutional and ideological implications.

The House, of course, defended their grants as sufficient and timely enough. They argued that the House and Council were both very dependent upon the governor, giving numerous examples of this dependence, and that consequently, in this single instance, the governor should have some dependence on the House. Their contention was that the two great ends of the Charter, support of the government and the protection and preservation of the inhabitants, were best served by grants from time to time. Indeed, they noted that a permanent salary would be dangerous to the inhabitants. In their explanation of their actions given to the people, the House gave four reasons for their stand: a permanent salary was an untrodden path beset by danger and never taken by them or their ancestors; the Magna Carta had established the right of all Englishmen to raise and dispose of moneys for the public good of their own free accord; any other policy would lessen the dignity of the House and destroy the balance of the constitution; and, finally, under the provincial charter the General Court retained the right to appropriate fully the moneys. There are several things worthy of note in

37. Ibid.
38. Journals, VIII, 279
39. Ibid., 280
40. Ibid., 280-1.
41. Ibid., 287
42. Journals, VIII, 318.
these contentions. The fear of constitutional imbalance as a sign of the destruction of the English way of life is notable; significant also are the assumption of the possession of all English rights by the people and the House, and the references to the practices of their forefathers. Shute replied once again a few weeks after this House statement with an extensive argument, claiming that he did accord and acknowledge each branch sufficiently in its own dignity and freedom. The two sides were obviously in some agreement about the issue in question, but their ways of looking at it were entirely different.

The new governor, Belcher, also had instructions which called for a fixed salary of at least £1000. He received instead a present for that amount, as the House was completely unwilling to give up what it saw to be its only restraint on an over-powerful monarch. The salary quarrel thus continued for the first four years of Belcher's governorship, ending only when he received the modified instructions he desired, allowing him to accept annual grants. In April, 1735, he signed four engrossed bills, the first of which gave him a grant of £3200. For the time being, at least, the House could rest assured that they had gained sufficient control over an encroaching prerogative.

There were, of course, many other serious points of contention between the two bodies, and while none of them bear the import the salary quarrel does, they do deserve some consideration. The first of these, and undoubtedly the most important, was the struggle over the right of the governor to negate the House's choice of their Speaker. The English

43. Ibid., 324-330.
44. Journals, IX, 243-244.
45. Ibid., 261.
47. Journals, XIII, viii.
House of Commons had won this right by refusing Charles II's nominee in 1679. Until the explanatory charter of 1725 gave this right completely and without question to the governor, the actual right of the Massachusetts executive to control the appointment was hotly contested. The House claimed, of course, that it alone had the right to choose its own speaker. The governor, on the other hand, fixed his argument on the clause in the Charter which gave him the right to veto all appointments of the General Court, consisting of both the House and the Council. Dudley had earlier attempted to negate Councillor Thomas Oakes, but the extreme unpopularity of the measure caused him to have second thoughts, and Oakes eventually took his seat. The next significant move in the battle came on May 25, 1720, when Shute negatived the popular leader of what may be considered the "country" faction, Elisha Cooke, Jr. He claimed the power of the Charter and gave previous personal affronts as the reason. Cooke, who had caused previous stirs by being negatived to the Council as well, defended the right of the House to choose its speaker also upon the grounds of the Charter; a key part of his defense lies in his assertion that if the House would grant the Governor this power, then he would logically gain the power to negative committees, allowances of money, and all votes and bills of the House even before they went to the Council.

51. *Journals*, XII, 229.
This would be disastrous, of course, for the English tradition of government. At any rate, the House insisted upon their choice, claiming they had an ancient right to elect their Speaker; once again, we can trace this struggle throughout the development of English parliamentary history, as well as finding its causes in the native roots and habits of Massachusetts itself. On May 30, Shute dissolved the General Court; in the next session, the House notified the Governor of their choice for the speakership "for Information only, and not Approval." Shute continued to insist upon his powers of non-concurrence, but to no avail, as Cooke took his seat as Speaker on May 31, 1721. The situation continued in the same manner (Witness, for example, John Clarke whom the House chose as Speaker in 1722, simply informing the Governor that he "is now sitting in the Chair," until the Explanatory Charter of 1725 arrived.

Several other matters of dispute between the House and governor deserve at least cursory attention. The fight over the control of the distribution of finances was significant because of the importance of finances in controlling the actions of the court section of the government. We have already seen the import of this situation in Harrington's ideas; one can also trace it back through English history, as the power of the Commons to vote tax money went a long way towards assuring their Parliamentary independence. One might further add that they, too,

56. Ibid., 233.
58. Ibid., 3.
were extremely jealous of this right once they had garnered it, though not with precisely the same import. The House insisted, then, on the right to control such disbursement; their stand was "That all Accompts should be examined by the House of Representatives before any Order be passed for Payment...."60 The import of the entire situation can best be seen, however, in another House statement: regarding a previous Council message on the subject, which "looks as tho' it could aim at a little short of a Dissolution of the very Foundations of our happy Constitution, and to lay aside one essential part of the Legislature ev'n the Representative Body of the People; For if the Council really have such an unlimited and despotick Power over the Treasury, ad Libitum, to dispose of what is therein, which they may seem to Challenge and Defend, they may as well take upon them to Supply the Treasury, by Rating and Taxing the Inhabitants, 7 c. if they apprehend it for the Service and Defence of the Province, and what not."61 The House was indeed on the defensive seeking to consolidate its powers for it felt that "It is likewise new and unusual, for the Honourable Board, to Intermeddle so much with the Grants and Funds, which this House takes to be their peculiar Province."62

There was also continuous controversy over the fortification of Pemaquid, a crucial outpost against the Indians in Maine, with the House occasionally using it as a wedge in their financial wars.63 The House also attempted to pass an Impost Bill on English goods, causing serious controversy again with the Governor and the Council64 (possibly over the

60. Journals, V, 295.
63. Ibid., 171.
64. Ibid., 155 ff.
financial disruption it would bring to the merchants). There was a running controversy over the use of the Maine woods by Elisha Cooke, Jr., with the surveyor-general of the colony making incessant accusations against Cooke. Cooke himself was an inheritor of the popular, anti-British cause from his father, was continually embroiled in quarrels with the governor (witness the Speaker question), and seized this issue in particular to join it with the cry for English rights. In this case, he and his associates had purchased hundreds of acres in Maine and offered them for sale, with the understanding that they would fix the local courts against conviction of poachers on the King's Woods. Cooke claimed the timber belonged to Massachusetts, and in the course of the argument he obtained popular support for his position by merging it with "patriotic" opposition to the royal prerogative.

The House even attempted to gain an entrance into the management of the Indian Wars, most notably by their repeated calls for the investigation of the activities of Samuel Moody and one Colonel Walton; they further proposed a House committee of eleven to discuss war affairs. All this, of course, was strictly illegal according to both the Charter and the designs of the imperial government; the governor was, after all, primarily a military officer. Shute's Memorial perhaps summarizes the grievances of the imperial side best. He complained of the continual encroachments on the governor's power and violation of the King's prerogative and accused the House of seeking to assume functions

65. Ibid., 148-9, 219-225.
69. Ibid., 132, 136.
not given to them by the Charter.\textsuperscript{70} The problem was, though, that the House saw the governors corruptly attempting to upset the constitutional balance intended by the Charter and inherent in both their English and American pasts, thus bringing about a disastrous and total destruction of English liberties.

Another situation helping to create a split between court and country was that concerning the bills of credit. Inflationist policies had necessarily resulted from the £40,000 debt of the Quebec expedition, and after 1715, the problem became particularly acute.\textsuperscript{71} Continual exportation of specie expanded the serious financial problem, and as a result, counterfeiting and forgery were serious additional problems.\textsuperscript{72} There were abortive attempts to set up banks both in 1714 and 1720, and particularly beginning with Shute, the governors took constant care to warn of the "swarm of evils" accompanying paper money.\textsuperscript{73} By 1738, the House had set up a special joint committee to prepare a draft asking George II to withdraw a notice forbidding the issuance of bills of credit;\textsuperscript{74} they were well aware of the difficulties of correcting the confused state into which public finances had fallen, and were almost able to convince even Belcher of the dire need to continue emissions of the bills.\textsuperscript{75} The governor recanted his initial promise, however, and the House's answer noted the great difficulties the province would be subjected to if the bill were not passed.\textsuperscript{76} In past years taxes

\textsuperscript{70} Journals, V, xii.
\textsuperscript{71} Cole, Rise of Legislative Assembly, 180.
\textsuperscript{72} Acts and Resolves, I, 723, 741.
\textsuperscript{73} Journals, II, 4, 359; XIII, 106.
\textsuperscript{74} Journals, XVI, 71.
\textsuperscript{75} Journals, XVI, 223.
\textsuperscript{76} Journals, XVII, 213.
had been paid for wholly in bills of credit, and the House asserted that disaster would result if the bills were to be recalled by 1741 (as a Parliamentary order stipulated) and nothing substituted for them. So significant was the financial situation in general that Cotton Mather himself had gotten involved in 1705, publishing a pamphlet on the just rules of commerce. Another popular polemic, one of the vast number spawned by the money and bank question, was one instructing the populace of the way to keep out of debt, in three sermons. In 1721, Benjamin Gray noted that the scarcity of money was the great source of all miseries and calamities, and that it was impossible to carry on any trade without a proper medium. Without money, there could be no justice in New England; even in 1720, the medium of exchange in Boston was completely exhausted. The divisions and factions among the people were attributed to the want of a medium, and even for the clergy, money became "the sinews of trade." The banks of 1714 and 1720 had been serious attempts at solving the problem, and another try was made through a private bank in 1740. More important than these attempts themselves, however, is the interesting divisions among the populace they reveal. It may be noted, first of all, that there was no

77. Ibid., 218
79. see Andrew Davis, Ed., Colonial Currency Reprints. 4 vols. (Boston, 1911).
81. Benjamin Gray, A Letter to an Eminent Clergy-man... (Boston, 1721), 7.
82. A Memorial of the Present Deplorable State of New England (Boston, 1707), 43.
84. More News From Robinson Crusoe's Island...(Boston, 1720, ibid.), II, 112.
85. John Wise, A Word of Comfort... (Boston, 1720), ibid., 176.
debtor conflict along class lines involved, as many wealthy persons supported the establishment of the banks. The chief early proponents of the land bank, in fact, were all businessmen, politicians, and professionals residing in Boston. In 1720, strong efforts were made to attract the support of the farmers, and by 1740, a vast base of popular support had emerged. It may be noted that John Colman, co-promoter of the 1740 scheme, was an earlier associate of Cooke and the Caucus. Land speculation, furthermore, had encouraged the politicians in their efforts, as well as providing further incentive for some of the smaller landowners (Massachusetts had changed her land policy in the thirties to encourage both speculators and settlers in order to strengthen her border claims in conflicts with New Hampshire. Opposed to the establishment of a land bank, however, and indeed they went so far as to propose their own silver bank, were many of the wealthier merchants of the colony. At the same time, they happened to be on the side of the governor in this issue as he too, prodded by royal instructions, opposed the establishment of the bank. Thus the conceptual division between court and country appeared to be very much of a reality to the colonists; it took all of the political skills of Shirley to calm the populace when the bank was finally suppressed permanently.

87. Ibid., 5.
88. Warden, "Caucus and Democracy," 27.
89. Ibid., 7.
90. Ibid., 10.
91. Ibid., 8 ff.
92. Ibid., 37 ff.; Murrin, 268, 271.
That the people of Massachusetts had become internally united in various ways is evident in more than one area, and the intellectual currents sweeping Puritan thought contributed substantially to this unity. Again, we should remember the emphasis of the "country" ideology on the unity and capabilities of the people. We have already witnessed a coalescing of the Assembly against what was seen as an encroaching executive power, through a long and bitter series of struggles with the governor. Puritan ministers still held a great deal of influence over the colonists, however, and religion still occupied a significant part of the colonists' lives, both in terms of influence and as a reflection of developing trends. Changes in the Puritan concept of the ruler, in the role of society and the government, in the view of human nature, and in the nature of religion itself are all significant in their contributions to the development of political thought in the period. Inevitably, the people of Massachusetts gradually became more concerned with the problems of the secular world; in a sense, Puritanism had succeeded too well and the colony, despite the difficulties of finance, had become relatively prosperous. Combined with the intellectual currents of the early Enlightenment period, this factor forms an explanatory backdrop for the changes mentioned above.

A few words should be said, first, on the nature of seventeenth century Puritan society. Recent research has indicated that the church
as a unifying force began dissolving relatively early in the seventeenth century, and that in fact, it had often had a minor role even in the early stages of development. Yet recent work has also shown that there was indeed a strong element of cohesion within the towns, that there really was a sense of communal "l'esprit" which pervaded local transactions. Thus the people, if one follows this thesis, had always been united to some extent, at least on a local level. It has also been shown conclusively that the towns were very closely attached to their representatives, and that the latter were under a compelling necessity to pay close heed to the instructions they were given. We must not forget, too, that the federal covenant theology was part of the change of social relationships from status to contract. Any ruler imposed from the outside was thus likely to face a formidable opponent dedicated to preserving a cherished heritage.

Drawing heavily from a common English background, Puritan thought had brought into renewed emphasis the concept of the ruler as the servant of the people; it was part of his "calling" to care for the needs of his state and to see true religion established and protected, two desires practically inseparable during the early years of Massachusetts. Church and state had always been separate, though, and the ruler had always been the guardian, and not the actual propagator, of the true

1. Darrett Rutman, Winthrop's Boston... (Chapel Hill, 1965), passim.
2. Sumner C. Powell, Puritan Village... (Middletown, Conn., 1963.) passim.
religion. In a sense, then, as secularization overtook both Puritan society and religion, it was practically inevitable that the secular aspects of the duties of the Puritan ruler should become more and more important. Timothy Breen asserts that after 1689, the good ruler was first and foremost a defender of civil rights, and secondarily of the Congregational faith—a statement a bit exaggerated, perhaps, but certainly not beyond the point of usefulness. All we need to do is bear in mind the thought of John Wise, who throughout his life pictured the ideal ruler as primarily a defender of civil rights. For here again society was roughly divided between court and country; in the Andros regime, Gershom Bulkeley had shown himself to be an arch-conservative, and Breen asserts that this trend continued throughout the period, with a number of ministers remaining faithful to the governor. The Brattle Street group, for all of their liberal religious doctrines, certainly qualify for this label, as does Solomon Stoddard. As one writer has noted, "Colman was a Tory in his sympathetic attitude toward English intrusions into provincial life." Cotton Mather, as in so many other things, is something of a transitional figure here, preaching submissive obedience to rulers while at the same time stressing English liberties and quarreling with Dudley. Certain standards


7. see Wise's works, passim; also, Perry Miller, The New England Mind: From Colony to Province (Boston, 1961), 288-302.


9. Breen, 3941-A.


11. Cotton Mather, The Present State of New England... (Boston, 1690), passim.
for rulers remained constant, of course, throughout the period - the "beauty of their order," their "wisdom of conduct," their "unity of council," and their "strength of courage and resolution." In the seventeenth century, the characteristic view was that "the sword of civil power is put into their hands by divine appointment...." The belief remained, but the purposes of the divine appointment were to undergo drastic revisions.

Perhaps a hint of what was to come was suggested by Cotton Mather in his *The Serviceable Man*. For Mather, "the God of Heaven has Good Thoughts for those Men, whose Good Works render them Serviceable to His People." This was written not long after the Andros experience, and not long after the attainment of a charter which was seen to guarantee the colonists their English rights forever. It is not too difficult to guess as to what those "Good Works" may be applied to. Civil rulers were still "Gods Viceregents here upon Earth...," but the prime concern of rulers has become the happiness of the people, and as early as 1694 this included the people's enjoying "their liberties and Rights without molestation or oppression...." The rulers' duties as stewards of God and consultants of Scripture remained, but the groundwork upon which these duties stood was shifting dramatically. Above all, civil privileges and a good government were now the greatest benefits.

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16. Ibid., 16.
to a people. In the writings of Jeremiah Wise, the three tradition-
al tasks of a ruler have reversed themselves astonishingly: rulers must
now promote the people's good first of all by securing for them their
liberties and privileges, second by making good laws, and third and
last by encouraging virtues, supporting ministers, and suppressing
vice. The trusts which Thomas Prince places in the hands of the rul-
ers are "our present Privileges...as well as the Royal Prerogative
...". The ultimate glory of all administrators became now not the
greater glory of God, but rather the peace, wealth, strength, and honor
of their people. The strength of a people now lay in their outward
wealth and prosperity, and it became the prime duty of these rulers to
promote this wealth and prosperity.

At the same time, there was a great awareness of the encroaching
power of the ruler. Ebenezer Pemberton could quote Paschal to stress
the awareness the ruler must have of his own frailty and susceptibility
to power. As John Bulkeley noted, "God has not Subjected the lives,
& Liberty's [sic] of the Ruled, to the Arbitrary Will and Pleasure of
Rulers." The weaknesses of men in power had to be continually kept
in mind; in William Cooper's opinion, "They are but Men; of the same
Make and Constitution with Others, of like Passions and Appetites, under

17. Peter Thacher, *Wise and Good Civil Rulers...* (Boston, 1726,
22.
18. Jeremiah Wise, *Rulers the Ministers of God...* (Boston, 1729),
24.
19. Thomas Prince, *Civil Rulers Raised up by God to feed his
people...* (Boston, 1723), 22.
20. John Woodward, *Civil Rulers are God's Ministers...* (Boston,
1712), 6.
21. Ebenezer Pemberton, *The Divine Original and Dignity of Gov-
ernment Asserted...* (Boston, 1710), 1-2.
(Boston, 1713), 27.
all the Weaknesses and Corruptions of human Nature since the Fall, and beset with the like and with some peculiar temptations. We should not therefore place an undue confidence in them, now expect too much from them"  

We have already seen the reactions to the Andros government, and the newspapers of the day were prolific in their warnings of usurpation of arbitrary power by the governors and rulers of society in general. More immediately, the ruler of Massachusetts was now an outsider who was attempting to extend his powers beyond the realm of almost anything the people had ever known; even the arbitrary John Winthrop had paid more heed to their warnings. Their reaction was one typically represented by the mind of the seventeenth century Commonwealthman and the authors of Cato's Letters - the important thing for the people was now to be "a mortal enemy to arbitrary government & unlimited Power." The ruler, in turn, had to be reminded constantly of his responsibility to the people, of his duty not to go too far in the use of the prerogative.

Another important change in Puritan thought involved the goals and ends of society and government. Society had always been seen, of course, as a necessary evil resulting from the Fall, and as such its general purpose had largely been negative, except for the all-important ultimate end of the worship and glory of God. We have already seen, however, how the ruler had come to be looked upon as an instrument of peace and

23. William Cooper, The Honours of Christ Demanded of the Magistrate... (Boston, 1740), 9.
24. For example, New England Courant (Boston, Mass.), April 9-16, 1722, p.1 col.2; April 30-May 7, 1722, p.1 col.1.
27. Prince, Civil Rulers, 22.
material prosperity, and it necessarily follows that the purpose of society should undergo a similar change. As early as 1676 we begin to see a change of emphasis in the works of William Hubbard, who saw the end of all societies as peace and prosperity, with the people the foundation and most important part of the state. Here we see something of the court vs. country split, for many ministers, such as Ebenezer Pemberton, continued to see the ruler as the foundation of the state. For Samuel Willard, the ordinance of Civil government became an article of the law of Nature, and society acquired a tint of goodness, as Willard asserts that a natural obedience to superiors would have been present even before the Fall. The importance of government is borne out by the anarchy resulting from the 1689 revolution: the role of the state is both to cure such disorder "and to promote the civil peace and prosperity of such a people, as well as to suppress impiety, and nourish Religion." Benjamin Colman was even more specific: "GOVERNMENT is ordained for the good of Mankind. The People are not made for the Prince, to make him Great; so much as the Prince for his People, to do them Good and make them Happy: That under his wise and just Administration his Dominions may enjoy Tranquillity and Peace, their due Rights and Liberties, both as men and Christians; That Vertue and Religion, Learning and Arts, Trade and the Kingdom grow Wise and Rich, Potent and Renowned...." This certainly represents a distinctly different version, at least theoretically, from the original city upon a hill. Perhaps society had begun to change much earlier or had even been essentially secular from

29. Hubbard, Happiness of a People, 18, 26.
32. Benjamin Colman, A Sermon... (Boston, 1716), 23.
the beginning, but what can be regarded as a somewhat normal lag in thought patterns had prevented its open expression until now. For John Hancock, Puritan minister, the end of all rule and government was the advantage of those under the authority of the ruler, and the public interests of the country were far too precious to be put into the hands of unskilled or unfaithful men. For Reverend John Woodward, the flourishing of civil interests took precedence over that of sacred interests; the ruler must make every subject "securely sitting under his Vine & Fig-tree, in the free and undisturbed Injoyment [sic] of all things contributing to the Comfort of this Life or a better... and when it is otherwise, the work of God they are ingaged [sic] in, is left undone and the End of their Office not answered." A people's prosperity, and not their holiness, depended on whether or not a ruler was good or bad. Society, furthermore, was now the natural result of reason; there had even been a government among the angels. Perhaps the sum result of all these trends is best expressed in the words of John Wise, again the best example of secular, "liberal" trends: "the end of all good Government is to cultivate Humanity, and Promote the happiness of all...." Once again, then, the situation in Massachusetts coincided astonishingly with that predicted by the English opposition press; the concern of Harrington was for the landed wealth and

prosperity of the people as a whole, and this was exactly what was becoming the constant preoccupation of Massachusetts. If the ruler should fail, then, the reaction would necessarily be a violent one.

The Puritan estimate of human nature was likewise becoming drastically revised. Much work has already been done in this area, of course, but it would benefit our study to review the situation in a new light. The first signs of this transition were hinted at in the preaching of William Hubbard, for whom the people were the foundation and the most important part of society. Earlier Puritan thought had stressed the negative aspect of human nature, a trend to be revived in the work of Jonathan Edwards. During our period, however, the currents of the Enlightenment appear to be dominant. As society became more and more geared to the temporal happiness and well-being of the people, these same people began to be regarded in a more rational, secular manner; the feeling was growing that they were indeed capable of participating in their own actual government. Perhaps the concrete practices of the town meeting made this change inevitable, but it was only now that Puritan thinking began to catch up with reality. Samuel Willard made the first ground-breaking statement in 1694: "Man is a Reasonable Creature, and of the same order of being with them that Govern him, and ought to be managed accordingly." Here, perhaps, the ruler and the people are becoming more and more equalized. Jeremiah Dummer, as early as 1704, could assert that men know the essential difference be-

38. see in particular Morgan, ed., Puritan Political Ideas, and Perry Miller, New England Mind: From Colony to Province.
40. Willard, Character of a Good Ruler, 7.
tween good and evil by nature; no longer was the help of God in the conversion experience necessary: "there is a law in every man's breast, which dictates to him his moral duty." John Rogers held that "God has put a certain law into the Creatures, which we call the Law of Nature, in the due observance of which they attain their End, and Glorify God." The end is still conventional, and the law, of course, had been effaced by the Fall, but Rogers nevertheless asserts that the hearts of men are naturally inclined to obedience, though as of yet, God alone can change them completely. Benjamin Colman emphasized God's dealings with men as rational creatures, and further held that "RIGHT reason is a Divine Law to Man: the Law of GOD to us. It is the eternal and immutable rule of truth, goodness, and righteousness....It is the law and light of Nature: the Law that Angels act by, the Rule of all GOD's perfect Acts and Works." The moral force of natural reason, of course, cannot discover all or cause repentance, but the process is obviously slowly revolving to that point. Again, the emphasis is on man and his capabilities. Men are rational free agents; God has always treated man as a creature "capable of understanding his own Duty," and God instructs man in mysteries which only rational beings can understand.

41. Jeremiah Dummer, A Discourse on the Holiness of the Sabbath Day... (Boston, 1704), 20.
42. Ibid., 21.
43. John Rogers, A Sermon Preached Before His Excellency... (Boston, 1706), 16.
44. Ibid., 17, 19, 20.
45. Benjamin Colman, God Deals with Us as Rational Creatures... (Boston, 1723), 8.
46. Charles Chauncey, The Only Compulsion Proper... (Boston, 1739), 10.
47. Experience Mayhew, A Discourse Shewing that God Dealeth with Men as with Reasonable Creatures... (Boston, 1720), 2.
48. Ibid., 4.
"GOD considereth Men as Reasonable Creatures, and therefore affordeth them sufficient Means for the Ends He obligeth them to pursue and prosecute." All of these things, of course, had been implicit in the slow evolution of Puritanism throughout the seventeenth century, but they are just now creeping into doctrinal respectability. In essence, human nature has become ennobled with excellent powers.

Concurrent with this emphasis on man as a rational and reasonable creature is the growing emphasis on the same type of religion. The Brattle Street Church was a direct outgrowth of this movement, emphasizing a simple and rational piety. We need not go into very much detail on their beliefs here; we have already seen much in the growing emphasis on man as a rational creature, and it would suffice to say that this quality of reason extended throughout their religious thinking. The Church was intended to be as inclusive as possible, and the only requirement for Communion was visible sanctity. Solomon Stoddard follows somewhat in the same line of thinking, though with many glaring differences. Autocratic and pro-court in his leanings, Stoddard nevertheless represents an excellent example of adaptation to the American environment and experience. He saw that the church had lost the political support that it had once thrived upon, that toleration was becoming more and more a fact of life, and that it was thus necessary to broaden the membership of the church as much as possible. He saw the sacrament as a means of conversion, and for him too, visible sanctity was the sole requirement. At the same time, how-

49. Ibid., 13.
51. Brattle Street Church, A Manifesto... (Boston, 1699), 2.
ever, Stoddard was anti-intellectual and preached a cataclysmic conversion as opposed to the gradualness of Colman. It remains his singular achievement, though, to argue that Americans were not inferior to their progenitors.

Cotton Mather represents another aspect of this trend, most obviously in his increasingly heavy emphasis upon action and good works. Mather set himself the task of establishing a sect of men whose sole purpose would be to do good upon earth; personal piety became his guideline, and the conversion experience was drifting more and more into the background. Ejaculatory prayers should be "darted up to Heaven" all day long; as early as 1692 he was calling to the citizens to wake up and be continually on the watch, for the Philistines were upon them and it was a time of Reformation. The Andros experience had spurred the Mathers into a defensive grappling with environmental dangers, a protection of English liberties being the object of all their activity. Cotton was, in fact, more reflective of popular feeling than has generally been assumed, as his attitude is best summarized by his eternal enemy and popular counterpart, the New England Courant: "He is the Honourable Man who is Influenced and Acted by a Publick Spirit, and fir'd with a Generous Love to Mankind in the worst of Times; who lays aside his private Views, and foregoes his own Interest, when it comes in competition with the Publick." The active, unselfish citizen has become a hallmark of the religious experience.

53. Ibid., 282.
54. Ibid., 285.
55. Cotton Mather, Essays to do Good... (Boston, 1710), viii.
56. Cotton Mather, A Christian at His Calling... (Boston, 1701), 27.
57. Cotton Mather, A Midnight Cry... (Boston, 1692), 22, 46, 62-64.
John Wise based his religious beliefs upon Whig principles as well, a stand conditioned largely by his own experiences and by the effect of the American situation on his thinking. Wise was a religious conservative who defended the old Congregational system against the encroaching Presbyterianism of the Proposals of 1705, but he defended it largely upon grounds of right reason and natural light. His political activities were also significant; as a minister in rural Ipswich, Wise was closely connected with his farmer-communicants and was even renowned far and wide for his wrestling abilities. He had been involved in the tax incident under Andros and was arrested and temporarily deprived of his ministerial duties. The impact of this experience upon his thinking is notable, as his writings show a distinct preference for compact government and an obvious dislike of arbitrary power. Despite his preference for a mixed government, we find him stressing the democratic side of the structure in order to shield the people and the constitution with its English liberties from an encroaching executive. Perhaps his temperament was deeply affected by his religious views, stressing as they did the inherently democratic principles of Congregational theory. In church affairs he hearkened back to the simplicity of the ancient churches and stressed the role of reason, a platform remarkably similar, though still basically Puritan in its democratic and doctrinal emphasis, to the Brattle Street Church. Yet the Wise who de-
fended English liberties against the dangers of Popish and Anglican plots remains the most remarkable; he was touched by a growing concern for the material well-being of the people, illustrated by his activity in the Land Bank arguments of 1720. As Alan Heimert has noted, he had something of the populist in him. He proposed settling the wilderness and increasing the manufactures and variety of products; his concern was for the good of the people and their homeland.

In effect, then, there was a general and widespread attempt to adapt pious political premises to empirical and impious facts. In place of seventeenth century authority, a regime had come to be established upon Whig principles; both reason and fear for civil liberties were the motivating forces. The attempt was to equate piety with civil liberties, and religion was forced to jump on the bandwagon for several reasons; the defense of English liberties had become imperative, and the Cooke party, in their political dealings and squabbles, had captured the watchword most important to the people - "happiness." A secularized heaven was now the end result of a combative stance against encroaching powers. As Dummer's Defence indicates, the colony had been transformed from a religious outpost to an economic and financial asset to the empire and a vigilant guardian of English rights.

67. Ibid., 122-3 & passim.
68. Wise, A Word of Comfort, passim.
70. Miller, From Colony to Province, 329.
71. Ibid., 381-382.
72. Ibid., 379.
73. Jeremiah Dummer, A Defense of the New England Charters (Boston, 1721), passim.
CHAPTER V

THE PLOT

We have seen, then, how a great many aspects of the "country" ideology were in effectual operation in Massachusetts. The financial struggles of the House with the governor illustrate a way of defensive thinking characteristic of almost a sustained paranoia but one with a strong base in the seventeenth century experiences of the colony. At the same time, concepts of society and government were changing, secularizing a consolidated people and thereby strengthening their demands for protection of their constitution and rights. One final point, however, serves to consolidate the entire structure of events into a cohesive whole remarkably similar to that predicated by the country ideology: the dread of a world-wide plot against the English constitution and the liberties it safeguarded.

A considerable part of this fear was directed to political and moral corruption apparently undermining the English character. In an earlier section, we discussed the ideas of the English Libertarians on this subject; more important, though, was the promulgation of similar views by the colonists themselves. The general fear of political corruption has been obvious throughout this investigation; it further includes the spectre of bribes to representatives and others,¹ a danger

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perhaps best illustrated by Dudley's involvements and the increasing patronage available to the governors. Again as we have previously noted, these conditions contributed significantly to the increasing split between court and country. Moral degeneration was emphasized as well. The *Weekly-Journal* stressed the vices corrupting England - horse racing, gaming, musick, taverns, and sensuality. The typical New England jeremiads dealt severely with such pastimes; the newspapers were constantly reminding their readers of the dangers of pride and the virtues of humility, and the Dogood letters make the most sense when seen in this light. Drunkenness was of particular concern, Boston after all being a seaport. The *Evening-Post* even received a letter asking for the reprinting of an act of 1651 against extravagance of apparel. The *Weekly Rehearsal* lamented the passing away of the simple and frugal way of life in Holland. One feels that there is more to these fears than the normal Puritan jeremiad, particularly when such an anti-Puritan paper as the *Courant* was in the vanguard of the warnings.

The most important consolidating issue, though, was the near-paranoiac reaction to which the colonists were susceptible when confronted with a threat to their English liberties; more specifically, the fear of a Popish plot against English Protestantism and liberty. This fear was a constant one in later English history, particularly in the years prior to the sailing of the Armada; in Elizabeth's reign the fears were

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3. *for example, New England Courant* (Boston, Mass.), June 4-11, p.1, col.1; July 26, 1722, 1,1; Feb. 1-8, 1725, 1,1.
4. *all newspapers, passim.*
further borne out by the constant activities of Mary Queen of Scots. In essence, French activity in Scotland, the Spanish Armada, and Papal backing of the Spanish efforts produced a very cautious attitude in the British Isles. The temerity was further intensified by the French intrigues of James II and the culminating phenomenon of the original Popish Plot in England, a supposed Jesuit intrigue to wreak havoc upon the country. Thus the world view was one of tremendous importance in the colonial temperament; by the early eighteenth century, the colonists were beginning to think that the onslaught had grown to a universal battle of imminent importance. The reign of James II had been an evil omen; the works of Guicciardini and Machiavelli, pointing out as they did the demise of the Republican virtues of Florence, were popular works in Massachusetts. Even the autocratic government of Turkey did not escape notice, and the decline of liberty in Poland, Denmark, and Holland was lamented. Perhaps this concern with the world situation explains the tremendous concern of the colonial newspapers with foreign news; the News-Letter, after all, was founded in 1704, and the others in the teens, twenties, and thirties. Perhaps it was not merely curiosity, but interest in a battle for life and death. It was feared that the Andros government was sent to establish a French government - after all, he raised money arbitrarily, prohibited town meetings, and engaged in taxation without representation, all attributes of the dreaded Popish French. We have also seen that Andros himself was accused of Popery and of being in league with both the French and the Indians. Thus both

Puritan worship and English civil liberties were being threatened at the same time, and the fears of Massachusetts were therefore considerably stronger; once again we see religious and civil causes being welded together. The main accomplishment of the Prince of Orange was "his Glorious Enterprise of Rescuing the Church of God from the Bloody Altar..."¹⁰ he was now the "Phenix of this Age...."¹¹ Great Britain, in the eyes of Cotton Mather, had miraculously escaped from becoming slaves of the French empire,¹² and God had delivered the English nation "from the Spiritual Mischiefs of popery."¹³

Adding to these beliefs were the continual ravagings of the French and Indians on the northern frontier; the colonists were consistently eager to raise troops for Canadian invasions, though undoubtedly the desire for plunder did play a role. The point which Cotton Mather found most to praise in Governor Shute were his years in the armies which fought "rescuing the Liberties of Europe and of mankind...."¹⁴ A favorite piece was "Cato's Vision"; in it, a young man dreams of a takeover of the English nation by a Popish Pretender and the miseries accompanying the change of government.¹⁵ There were constant reminders of the cruelties of Popish rule,¹⁶ and any misfortunes in the Protestant Church could be attributed to "the Popish Plots & Arms...."¹⁷

¹⁰ Cotton Mather, The Wonderful Works of God Commemorated... (Boston, 1690), 34.
¹¹ Ibid., 36.
¹² Cotton Mather, Things for a Distressed People to Think Upon... (Boston, 1696), 69.
¹³ Cotton Mather, A Pillar of Gratitude... (Boston, 1700), 19.
¹⁴ Journals, III, 175.
could only represent tyranny, and under the Popish tyrant James, the only possible recourse of the Protestant dissenters was rebellion. There still existed, indeed, a French design to enslave the whole of Europe with the most dreadful machine of Popery; it was a plot "against human Nature, against Freedom, and against Reason..." We cannot forget the Anglican service of Andros and the connections with the S.P.G. of Dudley and Shute, which added their own particular tinges of conspiracy to the Massachusetts situation. While governor of the Isle of Wight, Dudley had become a communicant of the Church of England; in 1701, he was made correspondent of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge for that province, and later became a member of the S.P.G., strongly supporting its work. Shute, though a member of a nonconforming family, became a member of the S.P.G. and pledged himself to support its missionaries.

At the same time, the defense of English liberties and the Constitution against an encroaching power and corruption is equally evident. One of the earliest defenders of New England's English rights had been Cotton Mather in his attacks upon the intrusions of the Andros government. Benjamin Colman, despite his pro-Court stand, could also refer to Cato the Younger and Cicero as lovers of liberty and as patriots; his view of the situation was simple: "Let the Invaluable Privileges which we enjoy by the Royal Favour, and the CHARTER in which, they are granted and secured to us by the best of Princes, be a special Object of your watchful care." Even further, "he that estimates not our Charter Privi-
leges must be either very ignorant of the Interests of this People, or very unfriendly to them." As late as 1741, William Williams was warning Belcher that "we conclude that your Excellency has the same just and good sentiments concerning our CHARTER..." The charter thus represented to the colonists their specific claim to the ancient rights of Englishmen. It had been so in the seventeenth century, and it was expected to continue. The rights of the House to determine the salary of the governor found their roots in both the Magna Carta and the Charter; the days of King Alfred were also a handy reference point. H. Trevor Colbourn has noted that "there seemed general agreement on Saxon virtues in the histories Americans most often consulted." Henry Care's English Liberties, for example, praised Saxon ancestors for the wisdom of their government, provisions for individual liberties, and precautions against oppression. William Atwood, a contemporary of Care, stressed the elective nature and concern for the people of the Anglo-Saxon king. Algernon Sidney also praised the Saxons as lovers of liberty, and Molesworth and Bolingbroke concurred. The inhabitants were defending, then, ancient English traditions crystallized in their own charter.

Equally significant is the defense of mixed government, a hallmark of the British constitution. As Cooke noted, the result of the powers the governor would garner in gaining the right to negate the Speaker

24. Ibid., 37.
25. William Williams, A Discourse on Saving Faith... (Boston, 1741), 40.
would be that the House, as part of the Legislature, would become useless - and this, of course, could not have been the intention of the Charter. In the salary controversy, the House insisted that it could not give up the only thing that gave it weight, the grants of monies: "whereas if we resemble the British Constitution, as Your Excellency has done us the Honour to declare, We humbly apprehend that no other part of the Legislature should be so independent...." Governor Burnet himself, ironically the son of Whig exile and confidant of William and Mary, Bishop Burnet, stated the case most aptly in an address to the Legislature: "The three distinct Branches of the Legislature, preserved in a due Ballance, form the Excellency of the British Constitution: If anyone of these Branches should become less able to support its own dignity and Freedom the Whole must inevitably suffer by the Alteration." The colonists agreed wholeheartedly.

32. Journals, VIII, 279.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

Thus a variety of events and social and intellectual transformations combined to create an environment remarkably similar to that described by the English opposition press. According to the Evening Post, seats of power were supposed to be filled by patrons of liberty;¹ according to the House, this was just not so in Massachusetts, and corruption, usurpation of power, and constitutional imbalance abounded. At the same time, the lower level of the mixed government was becoming stronger and stronger and was extremely well-prepared to react to the dangers it faced. The division between court and country was reasonably realistic, and the fear of a conspiracy against English liberties was strong. Perhaps we can gain a further insight into these occurrences from a statement by the Evening Post: "The Rights of the People, (for the sake of securing which all Government was instituted) consist in framing their own Constitution, and chusing their own Governors. When the Constitution is broke through, or dissolved, then the power which was originally derived from the people, reverts to them...."² The Post was actually rejecting everything that had happened since 1686, and was calling for a return to the idyllic situation of ancient days, which in Massachusetts was the undisturbed seventeenth century, the pre-Andros

² Ibid., March 20, 1733, p.1, col.1.
paradise. When John Adams said that the suppression of the Land Bank by Parliament in 1741 caused more controversy than even the Stamp Act,\(^3\) he was possibly closer to the truth than we may suspect. This action, in addition to its financial implications, represented the culmination of what was seen as a continuous repression of secular rights by the court party in Massachusetts. Only the shrewd moves of William Shirley prevented serious trouble.

\(^{3}\) Billias, *Mass. Land Bankers*, 16.
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