

Study Outline

Chapter 22: Who Governs? To What Ends?

- I. Introduction
 - A. Assumption the president and Congress are to address social and economic problems
 1. Limited concern of government as recently as the Eisenhower administration
 2. The Founders and the role of the federal government
 - B. Constitutional hurdles to effective federal action
 1. Separation of powers and checks and balances
 2. Federalism
 3. Bicameralism
- II. Restraints on the growth of government
 - A. For first 150 years government grew slowly
 1. Supreme Court defined government authority narrowly
 2. Popular opinion supported a limited governmental role
 3. The political system was designed to limit government
 - B. System limiting government makes it difficult to abolish programs
 1. Under Reagan spending increased for many programs
 2. Bush has also proposed programs that would increase spending
- III. Relaxing the Restraints
 - A. Changes in Constitutional interpretation
 1. Bill of Rights incorporated to the states
 2. Special protection of property rights reduced, business regulation increased
 3. Congress allowed to give broad discretionary powers to administrative agencies
 - B. Changes in public opinion
 1. Public demand for government action during Great Depression
 2. Opinions of political elites changed even faster
 3. Some programs have been popular with the masses
 - C. Changes in the distribution of political resources
 1. Number and variety of interest groups have increased
 2. Funds from organization pursuing causes have grown
 3. Greater access to the federal courts
 4. Technological advances have enhanced the power to communicate ideas
 - D. The Old System v. the New System
- IV. Consequences of activist government
 - A. Need to assess costs and benefits of programs
 - B. General political consequences of the enlarged scope of activity
 1. Bureaucratization of all organizations
 2. Rise of competing policies
 3. Less control by the electorate through the decline of parties and turnout and of public confidence
 4. Greater risk of government failure
- V. The influence of structure
 - A. Parliamentary model; if adopted here, would do the following:
 1. Fewer legislative restraints on the executive
 2. More bureaucratic centralization
 3. Less citizen participation to challenge or block policies
 4. Higher taxes and more secrecy
 - B. U.S. model
 1. More local authority
 2. Greater citizen participation
- VI. The influence of ideas
 - A. Preoccupation with rights
 1. Assumption that affected groups have a right to participate in policy formation
 2. Willingness to resort to courts
 - B. Effects of rights on government functions
 1. Harder to make government decisions
 2. More red tape
 - C. Elite opinion influences which rights have priority
 1. Favors freedom of expression over management of property

- 2. Mass opinion less committed to freedom of expression
- D. Freedom versus equality an enduring tension
 - 1. Advantages of freedom are remote
 - 2. Advantages of equality are obvious
- E. Fragmentation of political system increases role of ideas
 - 1. Widespread enthusiasm for an idea can lead to rapid adoption of new programs
 - 2. Competing ideas make change difficult; change today may require the persuading of thousands of special interests
- F. Fundamental challenge: to restore confidence in the legitimacy of government itself