

POLICY MAKERS OF TOMORROW: CASE STUDIES
OF ADOLESCENTS*

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The character of policy makers and how they perceive their political worlds is important if we are to understand fully how policy decisions are reached. Persons elected or appointed to policy making positions, or those aiding the achievements of others, are not randomly selected but are chosen from a pool of individuals who have offered themselves as policy making elites. The character, motivational, and experiential differences between those wishing to enter the political sphere and those wishing to remain outside of it provides the focus for this investigation.

Research has revealed much about the political behavior of members of the American public--about their voting behavior and attitudes, how those attitudes arise, and about those persons (parents, siblings, peers) who are most influential during various formative periods. More specifically, inquiries into political socialization have indicated that political attitudes and dispositions toward many aspects of political life are acquired during childhood and that

*Read at a meeting of the Ohio Association of Economists and Political Scientists, Columbus, 1975.

by adolescence those individuals who are politically aspiring and those who are nonaspiring are distinguishable.

Research has been lacking in important respects, however, in that much of it has involved survey results and variable analysis based on cross sections of the American public. Consequently, there has been little concentration on the person as a whole and little inquiry into the ways in which the political world is integrated in individual lives. Stated methodologically, there has been a one-sided emphasis on findings emanating from the extensive standpoint to the detriment of those insights that can be gained from a perspective that is more intensive (Brown, 1974; Stephenson, 1974).

From the intensive standpoint, the most penetrating analysis of political life is to be found in the writings of Lasswell (1930) whose developmental formula for the political personality (P) states that private motives (p) are displaced (d) onto public objects and that subsequent actions are then rationalized (r) in terms of more widely accepted community values--briefly, $p \} d \} r = P$. In terms of psychodynamic theory, the fact that private motives are displaced into the secondary world is unexceptional and may be regarded as virtually universal. What distinguishes the political personality is the disproportionate tendency to choose objects of political significance as targets of displaced affect and to rationalize this activity in terms of a more common good. Consequently, unresolved affectionate ties or hatreds generated in the primary circle "may be turned against kings or capitalists" (Lasswell, 1930:75) in an effort to achieve gratification for feelings denied earlier. The mark of the political personality is that he tends to give political reasons for his actions and to associate his own welfare with symbols more comprehensive than the self. Hence, "I don't like Candidate X" is transformed into "Candidate X is bad for America (or humanity, taxpayers, the working class, etc.)."

Which objects are selected as recipients of displaced affect is determined largely by the symbols

that are brought to the individual's focus of attention at crucial points in the developmental sequence, i.e., by "the 'historical' accident of the patterns offered by the personal environment of the individual at critical phases of growth" (Lasswell, 1930:79). The young child who seeks to please his parents not only adopts their standards of right and wrong, but also accepts their friends and enemies, proximal or distal, as his own on grounds short of proof. Similarly, the child in an attitude of rebellion not only rejects his parents, but all that they stand for, the entire constellation of symbols with which he sees the parents as being associated. If the symbols to which the child is exposed include references to political figures, groups, and concepts (the President, politicians, communists, Arab oil producers, America, etc.), then the psychological fate of these symbols will depend in large measure on events occurring in interpersonal relations.

In adolescence, the unconscious drives and defenses are more integrated with conscious processes to form an overall personal style (Little, 1973) in which political considerations may play a greater or lesser role depending on the previous experiences of the individual. By this point, many individuals may have already developed an interest in leading a public life in order to compensate for previous deprivations or to provide an outlet for creative and altruistic motivations. Others may have already reached the conclusion that "politics is not for me," and in more extreme cases the reaction may be even more negative, i.e., the idea of politics may have come to represent the most negative aspects of the self from which the individual wishes to disassociate himself.

In either case, we hypothesize that the individual has given over some aspect of his self to the political arena: In the case of the political aspirant, the ego ideal has been split off and projected into the political process, and a public life offers the opportunity to recover a portion of one's self; in the case of the actively nonaspiring, negative components of self and others have been projected into the political sphere, and efforts will be made to

avoid or oppose those activities that might bring the individual in closer contact with those unwanted parts of the self.

The purpose of this study is to compare in relative detail the diverse experiences, values, and images that distinguish politically aspiring from nonaspiring adolescents. During the course of this examination, the following questions will be addressed: (1) What is valued by political and non-political men (i.e., by aspiring policy makers and those not so aspiring)? What is important in their lives? (2) In what types of patterns are images of the political world associated in their minds? How is the political world related to the private world? (3) Are there salient interpersonal relationships which might motivate or constrain entrance into the political sphere? If so, what are they in the individuals' lives?

DESIGN OF INTENSIVE ANALYSIS

The intensive orientation of this study necessitated the selection for more detailed examination of a small number of subjects distinguished by their differing aspiration for a political career. Briefly, the procedure employed was as follows. To determine adolescent perspectives, 38 high school juniors wrote essays in which they characterized the kinds of persons who actively sought to enter or to avoid entrance into a political life. From these essays, $N = 40$ statements were selected, rewritten so as to be self-descriptive, and returned to the students who were then instructed to rank-order these statements from "most characteristic of me" (+4) to "most uncharacteristic of me" (-4). The rank-orderings which resulted were then correlated and factor analyzed, resulting in four factors, indicating that there were only four different self concepts expressed by the 38 students tested. Factor scores were then estimated for the statements in each of the four factors.

Although four different self concepts were in evidence, two groups of students emerged as obviously the more aspiring and nonaspiring in outlook. As the

following scores indicate, the second group of students wish to avoid the very kind of public life to which the first group aspires (factor scores to the right for aspiring and nonaspiring students respectively):

I like to talk to the public about my my beliefs.	+4	-2
I have an eagerness to work with and for the people.	+4	-1
My goals are for the good of all.	+3	0
I won't always strive for a higher goal but will be happy where I am.	-1	+4
I am not interested in holding public office.	-1	+4
I feel my private life is my own.	-3	+3

From the group of students who described themselves as politically aspiring, two of them, who will be referred to as Amy and Bill, were chosen for more detailed study. Similarly, one of the nonaspiring students, Nathan, was chosen for comparative purposes.

In an effort to gain some insight into the psychological worlds of Amy, Bill and Nathan, each was given a sample of 40 adjectives to use in describing various objects and images. The adjectives, representing Lasswell's eight value categories (Lasswell & Kaplan, 1950), were as follows:

1. *Power*: dominant, aggressive, absolute, strong, powerful
2. *Respect*: proud, aristocratic, humble, honorable, snobbish
3. *Affection*: loving, warm, friendly, affectionate, compassionate
4. *Rectitude*: good, righteous, principled, just, conscientious
5. *Well-being*: safe, considerate, secure, protec-

tive, kind

6. *Wealth*: prosperous, successful, independent, affluent, wealthy
7. *Enlightenment*: rational, sophisticated, scholarly, intelligent, enlightened
8. *Skill*: shrewd, creative, resourceful, skillful, efficient

Over a period of four weeks, each of the three subjects was presented with a set of objects representing various self and other figures from the primary world, and various political figures and concepts from the secondary world. These objects are as follows:

PERSONAL OBJECTS

1. *self*: describe yourself as you usually are by ranking the adjectives from "most like me" (+4) to "most unlike me" (-4)
2. *ideal self*: describe yourself as you would ideally like to be
3. *conscience*: describe yourself as your parents taught you to be
4. *social self*: describe yourself as you feel others think you are like
5. *father*: describe your father as he usually is
6. *bad father*: think of a time when you were angry with your father; describe him then
7. *mother*: describe your mother as she usually is (Amy also described her stepmother)
8. *bad mother*: think of a time when you were angry with your mother; describe her then (Amy also described her stepmother)
9. *best friend*: describe your best friend
10. *most admired person*: think of the person you are acquainted with (relative, classmate, etc.) of whom you think most highly; describe him/her
11. *most distrusted person*: think of the person you are acquainted with who you most distrust; describe him/her

POLITICAL OBJECTS

12. *America*: describe America as it really is

13. *ideal America*: describe America as you would ideally like it to be
14. *politics*: describe what the concept "politics" means to you
15. *most politicians*: describe how you feel most politicians are like
16. *self as politician*: if you were to be a politician, describe what you would be like
17. *woman politician*: describe what you would expect a woman politician to be like
18. *good public policy makers*: what characteristics are needed to make good public policy decisions?
19. *self as judge*: if you were a judge, what would you be like?
20. *most public policy makers*: describe what you feel most public policy makers are like
21. *President Kennedy*: describe what you think President Kennedy was like
22. *President Nixon*: describe President Nixon
23. *President Ford*: describe President Ford
24. *most admired politician*: think of the national politician you most like; describe him/her
25. *most distrusted politician*: think of a national politician you most distrust; describe him/her
26. *ideal politician*: describe the ideal politician

These descriptions by Amy, Bill, and Nathan were separately correlated, producing a correlation matrix for each of them. The correlation matrices were then factor analyzed with factors indicating which objects were described in a similar fashion. The complex configurations of data are useful in helping to determine differences in the image worlds of aspiring and nonaspiring adolescents, and may appear more comprehensible when considered within the context of the individual cases.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POLITICAL ASPIRATION

The Case of Amy

Amy is on the brink of setting professional goals for herself: "I haven't really decided on a career yet, but I might become a political lawyer representing the public, but even if I don't go into politics I'm sure that I'll try to stay abreast of what's going on in our country's politics. I doubt, though, that I would ever run for a major office such as Senator, Congressman, or President." Amy lives with her father and stepmother in an upper middle class neighborhood near a small town in northeast Ohio. Her father and stepmother are both realtors; her natural mother is still living. Amy does not claim any party identification and considers herself an agnostic. As shown in Table 1, Amy's description of the various objects tended to fall into four readily-definable categories which serve to indicate which primary and secondary figures in her life are seen by her as being associated with one another.

Factor A1 is Amy's self factor, and is purely defined by two of her four self concepts and the image of the person whom she most admires, in this case her stepmother. The factor scores associated with this grouping of conceptions (her self, her social self, and her stepmother) indicate that she considers these objects as friendly, warm, strong, independent, and considerate, a benign and affectionate image. As shown in Table 1, Amy identifies with her stepmother (factor A1) rather than her mother (factor A4).

Factor A2 contains four political objects as well as Amy's description of the person in her life, a female-peer acquaintance, whom she most distrusts. This category of objects is characterized as proud, aggressive, and intelligent, but unkind and unprincipled, yet friendly on the surface. Factor A2 therefore gives us a glimpse of the political world from Amy's vantagepoint, the image being of the scheming politician--friendly on the outside, yet devoid of principles, not unlike the image of her distrusted acquaintance, on the basis of which the political

Table 1
OPERANT STRUCTURES OF FUTURE POLICY MAKERS^a

Conditions of Instruction	Amy				Bill				Nathan		
	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	N1	N2	N3
1 self	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	-X	.
2 ideal self	X	.	X	-X	X	X	.	.	X	-X	.
3 conscience	X	.	X	-X	X	.	.	.	X	.	.
4 social self	X	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	X
5 father	.	.	X	.	.	X	.	X	.	.	X
6 bad father	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
7 mother	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	X	.	.
stepmother (Amy only)	X	.	X	.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8 bad mother	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	X	.
bad stepmother (Amy only)	.	.	X	.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9 best friend	X	.	.	-X	X	.	.	.	.	-X	X
10 most admired person	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	-	-	-
11 most distrusted person	.	X	.	.	.	-X	.	.	.	X	.
12 America	.	.	X	.	X	X	.	.	-	-	-
13 ideal America	.	.	X	.	X	.	.	.	-	-	-
14 politics	.	X	X	.	.	.	X	.	-X	X	.
15 most politicians	.	X	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	X	.

Table 1 (cont'd)

Conditions	Amy				Bill				Nathan		
	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	N1	N2	N3
16 self as politician	.	.	X	.	X	.	X	.	X	.	.
17 woman politician	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
18 good public policy makers	.	.	X	.	X	.	X	.	.	.	X
19 self as judge	.	.	X	.	.	X	X	.	.	X	X
20 most public policy makers	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	X	.
21 President Kennedy	.	.	X	.	X	.	.	.	-	-	-
22 President Nixon	.	X	.	.	-	-	-	-	.	X	.
23 President Ford	.	.	.	-X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24 most admired politician ^b	X	.	X	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
25 most distrusted politician ^c	.	X	.	.	-X	.	.	.	.	X	.
26 ideal politician	X	.	X	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	X

^a X=significant loading, -X=negatively significant (all others insignificant),
 -=condition not performed

	<i>Amy</i>	<i>Bill</i>	<i>Nathan</i>
^b admired	Abraham Lincoln	Sen. Henry Jackson	Nelson Rockefeller
^c distrusted	George McGovern	Spiro Agnew	Gov. James Rhodes

image may have been fashioned.

Factor A3 represents a merger of certain aspects of Amy's personal and political worlds--her image of what she would be like as a judge or as a politician. Of considerable theoretical importance is the fact that Amy's image of her father is highly associated with this factor, indicating that for Amy becoming political means becoming more like her father (factor A3) and less like she is now (factor A1). The factor represents an idealization, apparently, since her conceptions of an ideal America and of good public policy makers are also on this factor. Of additional interest is the fact that America-as-it-is-now is highly correlated with what an ideal America would be: For Amy, America is already ideal. Therefore, no change is required; one simply joins up and does one's part.

Factor A4 appears to represent an image from which Amy desires to disassociate herself. Central to this category of objects is Amy's image of her mother, an individual against whom Amy has rebelled in favor of her stepmother. The statements characterizing this group of objects include dominant, snobbish, independent, and unaffectionate. As Table 1 shows, women politicians as a class are associated, through extension, with mother. Amy will not be one of those; she will be like father (factor A3), proud and powerful, but just.

Space precludes a more detailed examination of other aspects of Amy's personal-political field, especially the more ambiguous objects with mixed loadings, i.e., with loadings on two or more factors. But the main features of her responses are apparent and can be summarized as follows: Amy has identified with the concept of a good America; she feels it is a good, strong, powerful country, much like her father is a good, strong, powerful man. Amy is skeptical of most politicians and feels they cannot be trusted. Her aspirations with respect to politics are to better the country; to be the politician it needs requires a merger of warmth, affection, power and rectitude.

The Case of Bill

Bill, like Amy, plans for politics to be an important part of his life: "I feel I would like to go into politics as a sidelight instead of a full career. Maybe after getting along in life I would be able to devote my full time to politics. I will always be interested in it, but not always actively." Bill lives with the parents of one of his friends in the same area as Amy. Bill's own parents recently moved, but due to his sports interests and activities, they permitted him to remain and finish school. Bill is Protestant, claims independent party status and is interested in chemistry. As shown in Table 1, his descriptions of his objects formed four categories which show the relationship of his primary and political objects in his life.

Factor B1 is Bill's self factor, purely defined by five self and personal objects, but also by five political objects, indicating a merger of his political and personal worlds. The factor scores for this category of objects show that Bill collectively has characterized them as friendly, intelligent, just and affectionate, and not as dominant, strong, or powerful. As shown in Table 1, Bill identifies with his mother (factor B1) and has internalized what his parents have taught him (conscience). In some respects, this factor is feminine in nature: not only does it contain two feminine objects, mother and woman politician, but it also is characterized by traditionally feminine traits such as affectionate and nurturant.

Factor B2 is bi-polar and is purely defined by only two objects--Bill's ideal politician and his most distrusted person, in this case a school acquaintance. Bill's ideal politician is very enlightened, respected and just, but almost devoid of power. Almost exactly opposite of Bill's political ideal is the person he most distrusts. This person is powerful without principles or respect. Bill's image of his ideal self shows him becoming more like his political ideal (factor B2) and less like he presently is (factor B1).

Factor B3 contains Bill's image of politics and most politicians. The factor scores associated with these two objects portray them as intelligent, powerful, unaffectionate and unprotective. Politicians in Bill's mind have one resource that he does not have, power; however, they do not have the warm and nurturant qualities which he does have and which he proposes to take into politics.

Factor B4 describes the person Bill most admires (a teammate), Bill's mother when he is angry with her, and most public policy makers. The factor scores associated with these objects indicate that they are dominant, unfriendly and shrewd. Bill apparently admires these qualities although this factor does not describe any acknowledged aspect of his own self.

Further examination of Table 1, including those objects with mixed loadings, would reveal the following about Bill's personal and political worlds: Bill, like Amy, has identified with the image of America as a good and friendly place in which to live. America is much like he is himself, as well as like he aspires to be. He does not see most politicians as being good, however: they are strong, powerful men who are not to be trusted, and will likely not be good for the country. On the other hand, Bill expects that he would be a good politician: like his mother, he would be affectionate and just, which would serve to counteract the effects of the bad politicians.

The Case of Nathan

Nathan views politics very differently from the aspiring students. He demonstrates no desire for personal entrance into the political world but is aware of its influence on his life: "Politics will play a very big part. First, my income. The government will take taxes out of my earnings; my freedom to do as I please; my recreation...: altogether, my life." Nathan lives and goes to school in the same community as Amy and Bill. His father is an elected county official and active politically within the county. Nathan identifies himself as a Christian and

a Democrat, like his parents. Three categories emerged from his descriptions of the objects, as shown in Table 1. These groupings will facilitate investigation of Nathan's political sentiments and how they relate to his personal life.

Factor N1 contains Nathan's descriptions of his mother, his self as he was taught to be (conscience), and his self as a politician. The factor scores for this category show these objects to have been characterized as just and intelligent, but as lacking in power. There is missing in this factor any sign of affection. Nathan's conception of his mother and of how he thinks his parents want him to be is pictured as just and compassionate, but as somewhat cold and devoid of affection. If Nathan were to enter politics, this is apparently the type of person he would be.

Factor N2 is Nathan's distrusted factor which contains four political objects as well as his most distrusted personal acquaintance (a cousin) and his mother when he is angry with her. These objects are described as being powerful, skillful, unaffectionate, and unjust. Nathan considers politicians and public policy makers in general to be similar to both the politician and the person he most distrusts; clearly, power, skill and lack of affection is a bad combination from this standpoint. Nathan's self and ideal self are described as opposite these distrusted figures (factor N2) while being much like his mother and his conscience (factor N1).

Factor N3 shows how Nathan's father, who is a politician, fits into Nathan's life. Nathan's father (both normally and bad) is classified along with Nathan's most liked politician and his social self. These objects are described as powerful, successful, just, but as unaffectionate. The most obvious difference between Nathan's father and good politicians (factor N3) and bad politicians (factor N2) is the rectitude that is attributed to good politicians. These politicians may be powerful but they are just in their use of that power. In short, Nathan does not reject his father and politicians linked to him on factor N3--at least not like he rejects politicians

of the factor N2 variety--nevertheless he does not aspire to be like his father.

Continued evaluation of Table 1 shows that for Nathan most politicians and politics in general are bad; both are very different from what he is like, and he wants no part of them. Nathan does feel that there are good politicians, like his father, but they are not particularly idealized and there is no apparent emulation of them on his part. Nathan's identification is with his mother, not his father. If Nathan sees himself facilitating any change in America, with which he is not satisfied, it will not be through politics.

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The examinations of Amy, Bill, and Nathan allow the questions stated at the beginning again to be addressed. If it can be assumed that each individual's behavior is not unique in the universe, but that there are others who are similar to them, then we can begin to identify patterns and differences in behavior. Turning back to the original questions:

1. *What is valued by political and non-political men?* Amy values strength, intelligence and affection (shown by her ideals). She also appears to desire power and values it when shown in others. Bill also values intelligence and affection, but is very negative toward power. Nathan values intelligence and well-being, but is not particularly drawn toward power or shows of affection. These relationships can be summarized as follows:

<i>Amy</i>	<i>Bill</i>	<i>Nathan</i>
affection	affection	well-being
intelligence	intelligence	intelligence
+ power	- power	0 power

This initial examination suggests that political aspirants are concerned with affection and power. Although power is viewed differently by Amy and Bill, it is important to both; Nathan, however, is not concerned with it. The aspirants recognize and come

to terms with power in one way or another, whereas the non-aspirant apparently draws away from it.

2. *In what types of patterns are images of the political world associated in their minds?* Amy sees herself and personal objects with which she identifies (factor A1) as separate from political objects (factors A2, A3, A4), but she does mix the personal and political in every other way: when she distrusts politicians she describes them in the same way that she describes the personal objects she distrusts. She does merge her personal and political, therefore, although not with her own self image. The change that must occur in her if she is to reach her ideal self, however, is in the political direction.

Bill clearly mixes his political and personal from the beginning. He describes himself like many of his good political objects and his ideal self is clearly associated with his concept of the ideal politician.

Nathan does not show patterns similar to those of Amy and Bill. Nathan merges his bad political objects and bad primary objects and sees himself as quite opposite of these. He also merges his good political space with good primary objects (factor N3) but does not identify them with his self and ideal self. There is a rejection of bad politicians, but no positive identification with good politicians. Both Amy and Bill identify with who they consider to be good politicians, and neither clearly rejects bad politicians.

3. *Are there salient interpersonal relationships which might motivate or constrain entrance into the political sphere?* These relationships obviously exist. Amy sees herself-as-politician as similar to her father, of whom she thinks highly. Bill shows a similar identification with his mother: he associates her with women politicians and wants to be like her. Nathan, on the other hand, does not want to be like his father and his father is political, hence Nathan does not want to be political. In such ways do interpersonal relationships promote and constrain political activity.

This analysis has reiterated the following: Political man has a preoccupation with power that non-

political man does not have and different attachments are valued in their lives. Aspirants merge their political and personal spheres, whereas non-aspirants tend to separate them, sometimes counter-identifying with the political.

Consideration can now be given to the implications of each individual's political/personal style.

Examining Amy and Bill, it is found that although they both plan to become politically involved, they have very different political styles. They have both accepted America as a good place, have generally accepted some of their parents' values, and although possibly the same process has encouraged them to go into politics, they will be very different once they become involved.

It is important to note that the qualities Amy values are typically masculine traits (i.e., stereotypically so) of strength and dominance, and as a politician Amy would presumably emphasize these characteristics. The literature on political socialization has found that politics is generally considered to be a masculine enterprise with lower involvement and aspiration on the part of women. Politics has traditionally been considered this way: strong, domineering, not soft or protective, what Little (1973: 113) terms "tough-minded," as the "ultra-masculine political style, father identified...the dominant style, suited to and constructed by men modeled on their fathers cut to a severe pattern of masculinity." Amy, remember, does not identify with women politicians, but does identify with her father. She may see her method of breaking into politics as absorbing the masculine style.

Bill has a totally different political style. There is little dominance or power exhibited by Bill although he will be intelligent and just. He feels he is affectionate and describes his political self as just and conscientious, not strong. America is seen in much the same feminine way. Following Little, this can be termed the feminine and mother-identified style.

Nathan, on the other hand, views authority, either in the figures of America or father, as different

than himself and has tended to withdraw and avoid involvement. He has not accepted either America or his father and has withdrawn to establish his own identity. This is congruent with his feelings toward power: a general withdrawal, of not dealing with power.

Projecting present aspirations into the future, we can surmise that Amy and Bill will join others like themselves to form the psycho-genetic pool of future policy makers and system supporters. By way of contrast, Nathan's type will be non-supportive of the political system: he will not strongly oppose, but he will not lend support to the political system either. It can be speculated that it is not only the purely political which determines political activity and aspiration; the non-political and interpersonal also have great influence. Even once involvement is established it is seen that it takes on different styles to yield different ends.

What may be found of politics in the future is a general dissatisfaction with the current "tough-minded" political style and tactics. This dissatisfaction may manifest itself in various ways. One such would be the withdrawal of support (Nathan). This withdrawal does not necessarily replace the current style, only weakens its support. It may also be found that an alternative for some individuals may be like Bill's style--to work through the current system only to initiate a new "tender-minded" feminine political style.

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Frontispiece: Gustave Le Bon,
The Psychology of Revolution

The trouble with most analyses of political behavior by political scientists is that they attribute a reasoned working out of things which are not worked out reasonably. (A Massachusetts Politician)