Strauss, Notes on Tocqueville (from transcript Autumn 1962, *Natural Right*)

Tocqueville, living two generations after Burke, accepted modern democracy on a Burkian basis, without accepting all the [?] of natural religion. That is the starting point of Tocqueville. Tocqueville was here for a very short time, making some inquiries for the French Government. The result of his observations was these remarkable two volumes I believe that no book comparable in breadth and depth has ever been produced afterwards. I believe in no other case in regard to any other country; that a man after such a short sojourn in a country could give such a comprehensive and profound analysis. Tocqueville had, of course, an excellent teacher, Montesquieu. Those familiar with Montesquieu's turn of phrase recognize the master immediately in the work of the pupil. I think the next great book of this kind was Lord Bryce's Modern Democracy. But that is not comparable in depth to Tocqueville's book though it may be correct in many points where Tocqueville was wrong. But Tocqueville still has the heritage of a great eighteenth century philosophic analysis. Now Tocqueville accepts the verdict of providence. Providence has decided in favor of democracy. He makes an important distinction between the sane and moderate democracy which we find in the United States and the revolutionary extremist democracy which justly aroused the ire of Edmund Burke. In other words, America shows to Europe its own future. And therefore for a respectable possibility for Europe we have to understand America. I cannot touch on Tocqueville's analysis of American institutions. They are very important, even if obsolete in particulars; the fundamental principles are still of utmost interest. I must forego all this and turn to his analysis of democracy.

By the way, one great difficulty in studying Tocqueville is that he speaks of democracy in America, and he thinks, of course, of democracy in general. Sometimes the features are absolutely American and not exportable. In other cases he speaks of [?] things and the reader himself must make the distinction between the typically democratic and the peculiarly America. Now what is his analysis of the democratic spirit?

"In democratic ages (?) men rarely sacrifice themselves for one another, but they have general compassion for the members of the human race. They inflict no useless ills, and are happy to relieve the griefs of others when they can do so without much hurting themselves. They are not disinterested, but they are humane. Although the Americans (meaning the typically democratic nation) have in a manner reduced egotism to a social and philosophical theory, they are nevertheless extremely open to compassion...
"When an American asks for the cooperation of his fellow citizen, it is seldom refused, and I have oft seen it afforded spontaneously and with great [?]. All this is not in contradiction to what I have said before, but [?] individualism. The two things are so far from contradicting each other that I can see how they agree. Equality of conditions, that means democracy. While it makes men feel their independence, shows them their

own weakness. They are free, but exposed to accidents. Experience soon teaches them that though they do not habitually require the assistance of others, a time almost always comes that they cannot do without it. In democracies no great benefits are conferred, but good offices are constantly rendered. A man seldom [?] self-devotion, but all men are ready to be of service to one another.

Now what does that mean? What he finds characteristic of the democratic temper is a combination of systematic egotism, as he calls it, with compassion. Now systematic egotism means individuals pursuing their own version of happiness. This is a very remarkable remark (this doctrine which presents to interpret American democracy and actually restates the doctrine of Jean Jacques Rousseau.) In other words, that is a very interesting problem for this kind of book. Tocqueville came here, obviously an excellent observer. And at the same time, he had in his head a certain notion of what democracy is from the French democratic tradition, especially Rousseau.

It is important to find out whether he was not sometimes misled by his preconceived notions of democracy in his observations. It was stated by Rousseau from the very beginning that it is a fundamental structure of man's nature: systematic egotism plus compassion. Self-preservation mitigated by compassion. And this leads to a softening of manners, to general human sympathy, compassion, but not to great devotion, or self?sacrifice. The reason is this: democracy means equality, equality of condition, i.e. there are no castes, or aristocracy. Equality means independence of the individuals. He is not bound by status, but family, etc. And therefore, he is also not protected by them. The individuals are aware of their weakness, and that makes them compassionate. Equality means everyone is the judge. Everyone is the judge of the need for self-preservation. In practical terms that means that the father ceases to have authority.

That struck Tocqueville very much in this country, great familiarity between parents and children. Now you have this fully developed psychological doctrine, the autocratic and the democratic father, therefore, greater warmth of natural feelings than in aristocratic families. Also equality of the children among themselves, which you would not find in societies of primogeniture, because there the oldest son would be a kind of tyrant eating up his young brothers and sisters. So democracy strengthens the natural sentiments, whereas it weakens those sentiments which originate in convention.

It would be a [?] analysis to determine what is really observation and what is inference from Rousseau. Equality furthermore means higher status of women. They become more independent, more reasonable, but the Frenchman adds, lose charm and imagination. Furthermore, everyone has a higher opinion of his personal worth and that leads to a gravity and seriousness which he finds altogether alien to the old World. That, I

believe, is an observation that is no longer so. Gravity impressed him (he meant all the sturdy citizen virtues, e.g. the town hall and responsibility of the individual citizen), but it has also a certain defect.
In democracies men are never stationary. A thousand [?] waft them to and fro and their life is always the sport of unforeseen circumstances, but they are often obliged to do things which they had imperfectly learned, to say things they imperfectly understand, and to devote themselves to work for which they are unprepared by long apprenticeship. In aristocracies every man has one sole object which he unceasingly pursues, but

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It means a leveling, but this is not just a disposal, a caste distinction, but a leveling of the whole of the human aspiration. The first thing that strikes the traveler in the United States is the innumerable multitude of those who seek to throw off their original condition; in other words, the enormous mobility. The second is the rarity of lofty ambition to be observed in the midst of the universally ambitious stir of society. An enormous mobility and therefore a much greater prevalence of ambition than in an aristocratic society, but, on the other hand, a leveling of lofty ambition. This is connected with the preoccupation with the present which is inevitable in such a society, such as the family lose their cohesion. Therefore with satisfaction with the present, meaning present small families, parents and children, not the prospect of many generations, as in the older form of society, leading to a kind of absorption in the present, lack of prospective, lack of lofty ambition. What is the prospect? "Amid the ruins which surround me," meaning in Europe, 11848, "shall I dare to say that revolutions are not what I most fear? . . . . . that humanity will cease to advance." (p. 526; all page references to Tocqueville are to Democracy in America, in trans. H. Reeve, The World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 1946). I don't want to bore you with quotations all the time, but it is of course simply necessary to read Tocqueville's work by every student of political science. We can also state what Tocqueville feels in regard to democracy was the rule of mediocrity, or the substitution of quantity for quality, which then became on the political level a stock topic for European criticism of America, but is here meant not as a criticism, but of democracy. There is one section, however, to which I should like to call your attention, because it is is of some interest to us as students of the sciences. "The greater part of the men who constitute the democratic nation . . . . . which is necessary to those who make such applications." (pp. 318-9) And he sees in that a very grave danger for the human mind.

Now, this whole analysis, of which I could give you only some specimens, and others might be equally as those which I have selected, shows us that - and that is why he is so important to us in our present

context - Tocqueville's analysis is guided, as every analysis must be, by an awareness of alternatives, but whereas in present-day analyses of democracy the alternatives considered are usually communism and fascism, that is to say, to put it mildly most unattractive alternatives from which we learn nothing except self-complacency, Tocqueville's contrasts democracy with a respectable alternative, and that is what makes him so valuable. The respectable alternative is called by him aristocracy and is in practice, the ancient regime, the pre-revolutionary regime at its best. Without considering these passages, one simply can't understand what Tocqueville means. I believe also that these passages will show to you the persistence of identically the same problem throughout the times, so that the fundamental point of view of Tocqueville is one which we can easily understand and with which we are familiar. I have already shown by what means the democratic people almost always . . . . . " - and to repeat, the United States never means in these passages America; it means democractic nation - "hardly anybody talks of the beauty of virtue . . . . . for whose sake they are made." "The Americans, on the contrary, are fond of explaining almost all the actions of their lives by the principle of interest rightly understood" - that is, the principle of enlightened selfishness - "they show . . . . . they are more anxious to do honour to their philosophy than to themselves." "The principle of interest rightly understood . . . the same instrument which excites it." (pp. 392-4**) By the way, you will see that the themes which Tocqueville brings up as observed in practice are all familiar from theory for centuries prior to Tocqueville's visit to the United States. IN other words, the least one would have to say is that certain principles theoretically developed in the 17th century were actualized in the United States in the 19th century and the late 18th century, which, by the way, is not fantastic, if you think of enlightened self-interest, we think of Benjamin Franklin. There is a very clear line from Europe to some of the American founding fathers, whereas Tocqueville is constantly inclined to minimized the importance of theory and to explain the prevalence of these feelings entirely as a consequence of equality of conditions, what we may call the sociological character (?); he thinks a fundamental change in social conditions has occurred, that leads to certain theories, and the theories are mere by-products of the social change; whereas it is in this case equally demonstrable that the theories are older than the conditions of which Tocqueville speaks and may be said to have brought about these conditions. But this only in passing**. Now, what then is the principle with which Tocqueville, is concerned, the distinguishing principle distinguishing democracy from aristocracy. **Enlightened self-interest versus virtue. That is a theme which goes through the whole book. Enlightened self-interest, that means of course, concern with comfort, with reasonable comfort**. That means furthermore a love of material pleasures, but wisely tempered. In other words, in America this does not lead, as it does in corrupt Europe, to dissoluteness, and Tocqueville has many words of high praise for the great moral restraint, especially in sexual matters, by Americans. "Some physical gratifications cannot be indulged in without crime. . . . and noiselessly unbend its

springs of action." (p. 403). What he fears is this: "a kind of virtuous materialism may ultimately be established in the world, which would not corrupt, but enervate the soul, and noiselessly unbend its spring of action." (p. 403) **We may that what he is afraid of is, that it certainly does not lead to dissoluteness in the vulgar sense of the term, but the principle of enlightened self-interest might lead to an obfuscation of the highest things in human life, or to what we call colloquially philistinism.** Love of material pleasures, a necessary consequence of the principle of enlightened self-interest, leads to restlessness, a secret restlessness, and to that seriousness which I have mentioned before. However, it has also its other side; the love of material pleasures is the spur to commerce and industry, and there is the necessary connection observed before Tocqueville, by Montesquieu especially, between commerce and industry on the one hand and political liberty, on the other. Yet even here when we see the greatest virtue of this new temper we see a danger, because there is a possible conflict between liberty and the desire for riches, as Tocqueville calls it in a somewhat old-fashioned language, namely the desire for riches in itself leads much more naturally to the demand for order at every price, in other words, to political apathy, than to political liberty. **Tocqueville, reflecting very carefully about this mater and giving a sketch of the possible danger, namely the new despotism, not a despotism of the kind of Nero; he does not believe would come, but a kind of paternalistic welfare state**. That was the great nightmare in which there would be no longer any spirit of liberty and of true rugged individualism.

What is the corrective? The corrective to political apathy and to the moral vices which political apathy has as its roots are to realize the inadequacy of the principle of enlightened self-interest. Tocqueville uses very simple and old-fashioned language; if people don't believe in life after death, or in the immortality of the soul, they are bound to fall victims to that materialism, and it is that very materialism which is bound to be fatal to democracy. In other words, **what Tocqueville says, an a-religious or irreligious democracy is bound to perish. And he meant by this not that vague religion, or what is sometimes called vague religion, namely that enthusiasm for fine things, but a specific dogma, the crucial point is the immortality of the soul; spiritualism is the term which he uses.** That is answered by scrupulous practice of religious morality in public affairs. But he sees also the other side, that the age of democracy is also necessarily the age of incredulity and skepticism. There is another point which Tocqueville makes, which perhaps is better known than anything else in Tocqueville at the present day, another consequence of the principle of equality. I must read to you this passage; it is one of the earliest /not greatest/ observations of its kind. "Equality means that everyone is the judge. But we can't leave it at that because men obviously need intellectual authority. "Men living in aristocratic periods are naturally induced to shape their opinions . . . to the general will of the greatest number." (pp. 297-9**). In other words, everyone is independent in a democratic society, in the sense defined by Tocqueville, but weak. All are omnipotent; the mass becomes**

the intellectual authority. That he regards as the greatest danger. In this connection I mention also his reference to the fact that in a mobile or dynamic society, lack of leisure is the normal situation; which means little time for thinking about subjects which are not of a practical nature. I think that you will recognize a number of contemporary facts not only in America, but in modern democracy in general, which Tocqueville discerns by contrasting modern democracy with its immediate antecedent, the European aristocracy of the 17th and 18th centuries. We have to subject Tocqueville's general position, -- I am not concerned with the details here - to a searching criticism. I will do that next time. I would like to find out whether I made clear the main points. I remind you of the simple scheme with which I started which I believe is helpful for the present understanding of the present problems, of the problems discussed now in political science, the problem in the "Isms" course. You have a clear distinction between positions taken by Burke and Paine. I remind you of that. Conservative aristocracy versus revolutionary democracy. Tocqueville is, we can say, the greatest, the classic of a conservative democracy**. He accepts democracy, democratic institutions, the democratic temper, but combines that with the spirit of moderate, conservative, evolutionist, however you might call it, and definitely anti-revolutionary democracy. All of what we call liberal democracy today has never been so soberly analyzed, and so sympathetically, as it was by Tocqueville**. **When we take the extreme position of revolutionary democracy, which is presented by Marxism, and then we take the alternative, radical or extremist aristocracy, of course that is a contradiction in terms, that is presented by Nietzsche. These are the two positions which we have to discuss after we have seen what is the real difficulty in Tocqueville's position**. I must leave it to your own work, and also to other course in this department, to see whether more recent developments of democratic theory have successfully disposed of the difficulties of which Tocqueville has been aware. I would only say this, that when I turn to such a theorist of democracy as John Dewey, I believe that so far from disposing of Tocqueville's criticisms of the dangers inherent in modern democracy, he is only a striking exponent of these difficulties. I could develop this more fully next time, but for now I only want to know whether I made clear the main points which I think in the first place is not proper for this course, but **which students of Tocqueville must consider, the enormous power of the tradition of democratic theory over the mind of Tocqueville, which tradition guided and perhaps misdirected in important points, Tocqueville's observation of what happened in this country, and the second point which is connected with the first is a criticism of Tocqueville's explicit position. It is the notion that democratic temper, the democratic principles-as indicated-is a consequence of the social change effected and not the other way around, that the democratic temper, the democratic principles, really antedate the existence of democratic societies by generations**. I would put it this way: at the present time where we have a vogue of conservatism, as you probably know. Conservatism is now the fashion, which doesn't say that it is wrong; I personally have always been conservative, but I begin to

loathe after to see the nonsense which is frequently written about that. Burke, of course, is really now presented, owing to this fasion, as the conservative, and he is a conservative alright, but everyone was, so to speak, conservative until 1700 or 1600, and even after that for a lone time, so that does not quite suffice-is certainly an adequate description of Burke. One has to say at least conservative aristocracy, at least, but even that is not distinguishing because Cicero or Plato or Aristotle and many others were the same. The real thing in Burke, the characteristic thing I believe is - and to that extent I agree with the older opinion about Burke which emphasized the connection between Burke and the historical school. That is the novel thing. The emphasis on growth as opposed to making, that was something radically new.

(Tape inaudible here. The following supplied from typist's class notes: Did Tocqueville, with Marx and/or Nietzsche, give an adequate solution of the natural right problem? The deficiency of this course is that I have not given an analysis of the pre-modern natural right teaching, although I Have supplied for that deficiency by advising you to read Cicero and St. Thomas Aquinas, and to read my analysis in my book, Natural Right and History; those of you who have done this reading and the required reading for the course in Burke and Paine have sufficient understanding of the problem for our purposes.)

First I should like to make some remarks that will include my discussion of Tocqueville of last time. **Tocqueville confronts democracy with aristocracy in order to bring the dangers to which democracy is exposed. This confrontation implies, of course, considerable criticism of democracy. The principle of democracy is equality, and there is a potential conflict between equality and freedom, and the freedom of the individual. Freedom is a higher good than equality because it is more directly connected with human excellence. What are the specific dangers of democracy? There is first the danger to political freedom, the growing power of the state contrary to the unfounded expectations of Tom Paine, among others. That means of course the growing power of the majority, that is to say, of the mass. The puny individual is in danger of being crushed or overawed**. What is the problem? I read from Tocqueville, towards the end of the book: "It would seem that if despotism were to be established among democratic nations of our days . . . without tormenting them." "When I consider the petty passions of our contemporaries. . . to keep them in perpetual childhood." (pp. 577-80). (pp. 577-80) In other words, the paternalistic welfare state, in language of the present day. There is another observation which is connected with the one which I just read to you, and that concerns the problem of war because the connection between a strong state and war is I think obvious. Tocqueville speaks of the extreme difficulties in democratic ages to draw nations into war because of the predominance of enlightened self-interest and the other things which we have discussed last time; "but, on the other hand, it is almost impossible that any two of them should go to war without embroiling the

rest. The interests of all are interlaced, their opinions and their wants so much alike, that none can remain quiet when the others stir. Wars, therefore, became more rare, but when they break out they spread over a larger field." (p. 544) Now whether wars are really more rare in the democratic age than before is another question, but that they spread out more is, I think, evident to everyone; the very term "World War" being coined in 1914 proves that. Tocqueville doesn't link up the two things, the new despotism and world wards, but we, I think, don't go considerably beyond what he intended if we see a link-up there. Now this is then the first grave danger, state power surpassing all previous power. And of course he was not thinking of totalitarianism; he regarded this as a danger for democracy itself.

The second grave danger I have mentioned before, but I must repeat
it, is to intellectual freedom, and he was of course not thinking of any legal repressions of freedom of thought, but of the fact that the mass becomes the intellectual authority. The third danger is the danger we may say to human greatness. "The good things and the evils of life . . . but it is extremely easy and tranquil." You must of course see that he is measuring by older standards, not by absolute standards. "Few pleasures are . . . than what before existed in the world." (pp. 595-6) **Now, what he had in mind is, I think, the phenomenon which we might call in relatively polite language philistinism, and in the brutal language of Nietzsche the last man, namely the man who has little pleasures by day, little pleasures by night, and thinks he has discovered happiness. I mention Nietzsche advisedly to show you the connection between this very moderate and humane criticism of the modern development**
by Tocqueville and the extreme revolt against it which is represented by Nietzsche. IF we had time I think one could show that this analysis is certainly not entirely wrong. One could say something about the state of the sciences in general and the social sciences in particular in connection with this phenomenon which he described; one could also analyze such an outstanding theorist of democracy in our age as John Dewey and give an analysis of his moral doctrine, which I think could in all fairness be described as a very impressive statement of Philistinian ethics. But I don't have the time for that. I raise this one question. **Why does Tocqueville decide in favor of democracy, seeing this grave problem? The first answer is that he doesn't decide; he doesn't decide; someone else has decided for him.** I read to you just one passage from the Introduction to the first part: "Those who have fought this democratic development . . . all have been blind instruments in the hands of God." "The whole book . . . in the midst of the ruins it has made." (pp. 5-6**) In other words, Providence has decided in favor of democracy. Now, we have seen already the beginning of this argument in the end of Burke's Thoughts on French Affairs. Now let us look at this argument. I think it is obviously insufficient because the fact that a great social movement is victorious does not prove that God willed it for men to accept it for the good. It could very well be divine punishment**

inflicted on men for their sins. So the presupposition of this argument is really not the theological understanding of Providence, but what is loosely called the secularized version of Providence, meaning an understanding according to which the ways of God are not inscrutable, so that we really would not know whether this is a blessing or not, but the ways of God are scrutable. In the traditional understanding of Providence, man took his bearing by God's love addressed to man, natural or revealed, and not by the ways of Providence which are never fully clear. I don't want to dwell on that; at any rate, that is certainly not a sufficient argument. It goes without saying that the same argument which favors democracy in Tocqueville's argument would favor any successful anti-democratic movement in a later age very obviously.

The second reason is of a more serious nature and that is that democratic egalitarianism is rooted in Christianity. This is a thought to which he frequently recurs; in other words, that modern democracy fulfills the will of the New Testament on political things. The third argument, which is somehow connected with the second, is one I must read to you in Tocqueville's own language, where he retracts, or sems to retract, his whole previous criticism toward the end of the book. "When I survey this countless multitude of beings, shaped in each other's likeness" - in other words, no true individualism any more - "among whom nothing rises and nothing falls . . . and its justice constitutes its greatness and its beauty." (pp. 596-7) In other words, that constitutes the philosophic argument which seems to decide the issue in the eyes of Tocqueville: democracy is more just than aristocracy. But this is really a very peculiar notion of justice, namely the notion of justice which completely disregards the other aspect, the aspect of the elevation or perfection which he also mentions in the same context. We are therefore not surprised to observe that Tocqueville continues as follows: "No man upon the earth can as yet affirm . . . and its own evils." (p. 597) Similar passages elsewhere. In other words, **the last word, almost literally the last word in the book of Tocqueville, is that the question cannot be decided; there are two social systems, each with its peculiar merits and peculiar defects, and we have to accept the one because it has been victorious, or to use the religious language of Tocqueville, because Providence has declared in favor of it**. If we consider such an attitude such as that of Tocqueville we understand better the human roots of the present attitude of the social sciences toward value judgments. Here there is no notion of scientific () method and so on which influences Tocqueville's hesitation. But there is inability or unwillingness to make a decision between two social systems which both impress him in different ways. He doesn't see any criterion for deciding the ultimate superiority. You have here an inkling of what Max Weber later on meant by his insoluble value conflict. Here you have a social order, democracy, superior to aristocracy from the point of view of justice; but from the point of view of human elevation aristocracy is superior to democracy. And what can you do? You are confronted with this insoluble problem. Needless to say, in Tocqueville's scheme and his understanding, there are certain things which are altogether bad and which

could not be considered as respectable for one moment, say, simple tyranny or simple despotism would out of any consideration, so it is still a very balanced and moderate "relativism," but the roots of the relativism are here. I think we can see the reason if we analyze Tocqueville's thought more closely. I mentioned this point before. For Tocqueville the democratic ideas, as we usually call them, the principles by which democratic societies live are a consequence of the establishment of a democratic society, so it is not that these ideas guided men in striving for a democratic order**. Tocqueville is a sociologist. The fundamental fact which moves man and society are not so much opinions or ideas, but social conditions. And this is of course closely connected with the general, more broader phenomenon we have discussed previously, namely, this fundamental change in modern thought in which the ruling, or guiding position of the mind or of reason was weakened in favor of other elements of human nature, in favor of sentiment, in favor of the fundamental wants or other elements. Tocqueville's formulation and his thought about it is only a modification.** I will come back to this perhaps later. Now let me conclude these remarks.

One point is crucial for Tocqueville's argument. **Whatever the fundamental difficulties may be, democracy can be and remain compatible with freedom and the dignity of man only if it is religious**. That goes through the whole book. The difficulty is of course that the age of democracy is an age of skepticism and incredulity. Tocqueville wrote many years before Darwin and the other great upsurge of natural science affecting modern thought. Tocqueville gives all kinds of advice, () especially to religious leaders of the democratic age. **They must put greater emphasis on morality than on ritual and dogma and so on. They must exercise great prudence. This argument, while it is very strongly stated, and doubtless the nerve of the argument, it has a certain inherent weakness because, while Tocqueville was doubtless personally a religious man, the argument is here made as a political argument, as follows. Spiritualistic religion is needed for democracy**. (cf. pp. 513; 430-1 among others) Now, this kind of argument is, of course, dangerous to religion because this argument proves merely the need of spiritualistic myth, and not the need of a spiritualistic religion. I also mention another point, but I can only allude to that; **from the quite obvious limit of Tocqueville's argument, his complete unawareness, one could say, of what came to be called the social problem**. **Of course, there are certain remarks in which he indicates that modern democracy, being an industrial democracy, is productive of a new kind of inequality. But that this might lead to grave problems, grave problems threatening democracy, that awareness does not exist to my knowledge.**

I would only make this remark in conclusion to link up the discussion of Tocqueville with the theme of this course, namely the problem of natural right. **What is usually called modern rationalism, rationalism of the 17th century and its natural right doctrine, was already based on a subordination of reason and of the intellect to some thing non-rational, non-intellectual, sub-intellectual, the fundamental**

needs of man and sentiments and so on. The movements of the 19th century,
continue and radicalize this tendency, and connected with the inner crisis of modern natural right this was the decisive reason why natural right and the idea of natural right lost its hold on the mind of modern western man. We will find other aspects of the same development in the remarks on Marx and Nietzsche.

Question: on Tocqueville's third argument for democracy, concerning justice. Does he make that argument on the basis that democratic society satisfies the needs that are most powerful in most men most of the time? **Answer: NO, it is simply a general notion; one could say in Aristotelian language, he dogmatically accepts the democratic notion of justice, justice simply identical with equality, so that the kind of reasonable inequality corresponding to merit is not considered. The fundamental reason is the serious will of Providence. But then of course, since he can't help thinking about it, he gives an analysis and the analysis leads to criticism inevitably. And then there is a conflict between the belief in the divine dispensation and the criticism and that is solved, if you can call it a solution, I am not aware of a more adequate solution**. In the 19th century this view was very strong, and it is of course still lingering on in present-day social sciences, just as if you scratch the skin of present-day social science you can see the basis of utilitarianism. You can also find in another way this peculiar limitation of the horizon, exemplified by Tocqueville. That is settled, the question is settled, by the successful establishment of this order; now this is an excellent argument form any practical point of view, but theoretically it is impossible to leave it at that. IN a way, Tocqueville knows that. Now one could say that it is perhaps the greatest political work of the 19th century, it is the work of a fairly young man; he was about 27 when he wrote it, but it is very strange to see in his later works on the Ancien Regime and the Revolution the fundamental argument is in no way taken up again. He rests satisfied with that: democracy is about to become victorious. **We are confronted with this alternative, to make an extremist movement, like the French terreur of 1848, or some respectable democracy of the Anglo-American type and that**
is the problem. That this is the practical problem would be defensible position, I don't know whether it is even the correct position, because this notion of the mild, paternalistic end, which Nietzsche too had, is based on a very grave delusion that social influences of any kind can really extirpate the fundamental beastlinesses of which man is unfortunately capable. The clear optimism even here for which we may be said to have paid a very heavy price in the 20th century.

Question: is the idea of progress necessarily involved in his belief? Answer: No, because that would be true only if equality were the one thing next (?); but since there is this questioning of democracy, it means that God has changed one social system into another, neither of which is perfect, and neither of which is despicable, and we simply that allotted to us**. One can perhaps put it this way, and it is not perhaps**

the worst thing that one can say about this kind of political thought; it is an approach which is perfectly sound for most practical purposes, but it never sufficient from the point of view of theory. I make this reservation, for most practical purposes, not for all, because there are always little difficulties there which are overlooked and which bear in themselves the germ of very grave practical dangers. There are several other things one could say, for instance, that Tocqueville simply identifies aristocracy with the *ancien regime* with all of its residues of feudalism which are not, of course, of the essence of aristocracy.