

SUMMARY

Radicalism and Activity. By Yrjö Littunen

This paper is an empirical analysis of social and intellectual activity as correlates of extremist orientation in politics. The choice between the communist and non-communist ideologies was studied among the youngest voter groups in Finland. A two-stage sample, 573 men and women in the age groups 23—29, was interviewed in 1955. The sampling universe consisted of the total population of Finland in these age groups. (Non-political aspects of these data were analyzed in *Erik Allardt, Pentti Jartti, Faina Jyrkilä ja Yrjö Littunen: Nuorison harrastukset ja yhteisön rakenne, Porvoo: Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö, 1958*. See also an article by the same authors: *On the Cumulative Nature of Leisure Activities, Acta Sociologica, Vol 3, Fasc. 4, 1958*). As social and intellectual activity are related to status and education, an overall analysis across the social class boundaries was not possible. The negligible proportion of support for the communists among the members of the Finnish middle-class and the higher educational groups resulted in the decision to analyze the working class data only; the data from the other classes were merely used for comparison. The results may be summarized as follows:

(1) Cognitive or intellectual passivity was related to an extremist orientation. Persons who were passive in book-reading, newspaper-reading and radio-listening were more likely to choose communist candidates in the elections than more active persons. This was confirmed both by analysis of single activity items and by a Guttman scale measurement of intellectual activity. However, no relation was found between extremism and interest in entertainment (e.g. popular music, sports, show-programs). These results may indicate that extremism reflects an expressive rather than instrumental value orientation. An expressive orientation involves an emotional-motivation, in which action itself provides a satisfactory goal (cf. Parsons, Himmelstrand). Social-emotional roles may be related to such a motivation. An instrumental orientation is task-motivated and »zweck-rational»: action provides satisfaction only as a means to an end.

(2) Unlike intellectual activity, the degree of social activity was not related to extremist vs. non-extremist political choice. Persons who were active in either informal or formal groups were as likely to vote for Communists as the passive ones, but social isolation during childhood appeared to result in an extremist orientation in adult years. The expressive type of social activity seems to satisfy extremist persons, whereas instrumental activity interests them less. Thus, the task-area (chairing meetings or acting as secretary etc.) was associated with non-extremism, whereas the social-emotional area was associated with extremism.

(3) The interpretation that political radicals or extremists are committed to the values of »expressive activism» is furthermore corroborated by attitudinal differences in our data. Although radicals seem as a mass rather uninterested cognitively in the societal problems (see (1) above), they are, nevertheless, among the more dissatisfied members of their community, as our attitude scale indicated. This lack of interest in instrumental activity among the radicals is also illustrated by their verbalized emphasis in their adjustment in the peer-group.

(4) Political extremism is a form of social deviance, and in this sense it is functional, as it facilitates social change. Change occurs relatively seldom without a group of deviants protesting against the *status quo*. Sometimes the protesting group seems to act more in

the role of an innovator, sometimes more in the role of a disintegrator. An obvious problem, neglected so far, is what types of social mechanism could be used in the prediction of this difference in outcome. The present attitude data offer some suggestions for research in this area.

The Structure of Political Attitudes. By Erik Allardt.

In his paper Professor Allardt draws the attention of the readers to some viewpoints on the structure of political attitudes.

Attitudes are usually defined as tendencies to act in a particular way. Nevertheless measurements of political attitudes are usually dealing with the content of the attitudes only. It seems reasonable to require that studies of attitudes should also deal with the behaviour to which the attitudes can be regarded as tendencies.

The most fruitful way to specify attitude-components is to analyze the behaviour that one aims to predict by measuring attitudes. Some general categories useful in defining what attitudes are about are discussed in the article.

The Duties and Organization of Foreign Representation. By Leo Tuominen.

In *Politiikka's* second number for the current year Professor L. A. Puntila, professor of political history at Helsinki University, examined the accomplishments and organization of Finland's foreign affairs administration. His article, »Diplomatic Evolution in our Time», which was perhaps just a little caustic, has aroused a great deal of discussion in Finnish diplomatic circles, and now Mr. Leo Tuominen, the Finnish ambassador in London, publishes a reply. Mr. Tuominen's article throws light in the matter from the point of view of a foreign office official.

The ambassador's remarks include the following: »It is true that the acceleration of the means of transport and the development of communications have simplified contact, shortened distances and greatly improved the possibilities mentioned. But have they also led to a simplification in the management of international affairs? On the contrary, has not the shrinking of distances simultaneously led to increasing complication in the management of these affairs, for even the most distant countries have now become neighbours and reciprocal dependence has become correspondingly greater? Everything that happens in the world now interests everybody. Naturally, this has not led to a stagnation of political activity in the sphere of foreign representation but has preserved its vigour, especially as the politically responsible organs have considered in indispensable to be well and confidentially informed on the total situation. Very rarely are leading politicians able to operate successfully without such information; and still more rarely can international conferences, bilateral or multilateral, lead to a result in the absence of this background activity.»

Mr Tuominen also affirms that the achievement of lasting results in the negotiations between nations still demands thorough preparation, adjustment and assurances in accordance with the spirit of diplomacy. These can best be performed, continuously and unobtrusively, through those who operate as their government's official representatives in the countries concerned and are in general very well acquainted with the conditions prevailing there. Suggestions made in a constructive spirit for the correction and improvement of the present organization are of course always welcome; but one can hardly expect any thorough-going revolution to ensue.