

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Posc 150**

WHO GOVERNS: COMPARISON

I. CONTENTS:

- A. Before discussing state and capitalism two films
 1. Example of pluralism in action.
 2. Illustrations of power elite model.

II. PLURALISM

- A. Short film clip that illustrates elements of pluralistic politics.
- B. The sugar quota bill.
 1. This provision of the law, which limits sugar imports and keeps the cost sugar high compared to international prices, is much loved by growers (and presumably their workers) but is bitterly resented by food and soft drink manufacturers.
 - i. Group conflict that takes place in the halls of Congress.
 - ii. This is still a contentious issue.
 - 1) The Bush administration has talked about limiting this type of program, but has so far not been able to accomplish much.
- C. Look for:
 1. ✱ Interest groups, lobbies and PACs.
 - i. ○ Political Action Committees (PACs): solicit donations from members, bundle them, and donate to candidates who support their interests.
 2. ○ Campaign finances: reforms enacted in the 1970s tried to control the flood of money into politics, but...
 3. ○ The importance of congressional committees.
 4. Cross-party line fights.
 5. ○ The labyrinth of the legislative functioning that often keeps the public in the dark.
- D. ✓ Follow the main “actors.”
 1. Dan Burton (R, Florida)
 2. FloSun, American Sugar.
 3. Note Senator Santorum’s (R, Pennsylvania) position. Hershey has major operations in his state.
 4. Charles Lewis is ex-UD political science graduate who has made it big.

III. POWER ELITE MODEL:

- A. The film, “Taken For A Ride,” illustrates various points.
 1. ✱ “Things don’t just happen.”

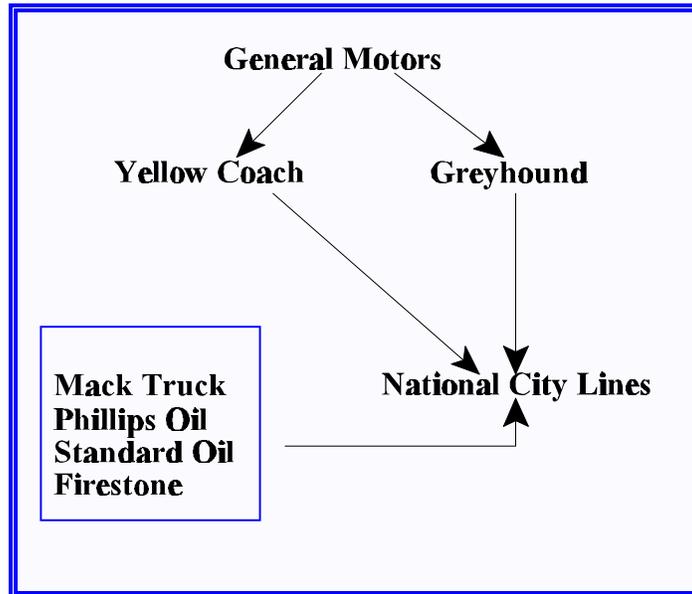
- i. Many aspects of contemporary life are the result of conscious decisions made by people and groups for their specific benefit.
- 2. ✱Words like “progress,” “modernization,” and “advancement” are often used in sentences claiming to assert just plain and simple facts. But economic and technical development don’t have to take any particular form and always bring costs as well as benefits, disadvantages as well as advantages.
 - i. This aspects illustrates how the “higher circles” influence or attempt to influence the public philosophy.
- 3. The power of the “higher circles.”
 - i. ✓Public (mass) transportation gave way to private cars to the great advantage of certain industries.
 - 1) We now live in an automobile civilization. It didn’t have to be that way.
 - ii. ✓These industries played a disproportionate role in the decision making process, both in the public and private sectors.
 - 1) It’s the story of the automobile versus the city.
 - iii. ✓Note also how industry used terms (like “progress”) to gain acceptance of its preferences.
 - 1) This again is an example of the “mobilization of bias” and how the upper levels supposedly influence it.
- 4. ✱The symbiotic relation between the state and “capitalism,” especially the core sector.
 - i. Notice that entire industries—automobile manufacturing, rubber, cement, housing, petroleum to name a few—depend on a government supported and sanctioned transportation policy.
 - 1) Some analysts (not in the film) argue that the “automobile lives on public welfare.”
 - a) That is, auto transportation can’t exist without massive state (government) assistance.
 - b) See required readings below for examples.
- 5. But also note that the state does stand up to particular “capitalists” at different times with differing degrees of success.
- 6. ○The **revolving door** in American politics.
 - i. ✓Example in film: Charles Wilson of General Motors becomes Secretary of Defense and argues that national security depends on creation of a massive interstate highway system.
 - 1) This man, incidentally, said “What’s good for GM is good for the country.”
 - ii. ✓Example: Francis DuPont, of DuPont a major shareholder in General Motors, headed the Federal Highway Bureau.
- 7. The power of symbols.
 - i. ○As noted, a decision or policy is sometimes made and implemented and then “sold” to the public via the manipulation of

symbols.

- 1) ✓“Mobility, the fifth freedom.”
- 2) ✓“Freedom to travel safely...is a big freedom.”
- 3) ✓“It’s your country. Give yourself a green light.”

B. THE CAST OF CHARACTERS:

- 1. Some names to keep track of:
 - i. Alfred P. Sloan
 - 1) What role did he play?
 - ii. National City Lines.
 - 1) By the way, National City Lines owned the bus that Rosa Parks rode in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955.
- 2. The corporate web:



- 3. E. Roy Fitzgerald. Who’s he?
- 4. DuPont and Sloan as mentioned above.

C. What were the basic events?

- 1. City lines buys street car lines, allows them to deteriorate, replaces them with buses, etc.

IV. NEXT TIME:

- A. Capitalism and the state.
- B. Social security
- C. Reading for next time:
 - 1. *Suggested:* John Holtzclaw, “America's Autos On Welfare: A Summary of Subsidies” available in the class Cyber Reserve Room or directly from

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2. *Required:* Stanley Hart, "Huge city subsidies for autos, trucks," Modern Transit Society, Inc. in the Cyber Reserve Room or at <http://www.preservenet.com/ATAutoWelfare.html>.
 3. *Suggested:* Scott Latham, "Market Opening or Corporate Welfare?" Policy Analysis No. 252, April 15, 1996. Available in the course Cyber Reserve Room or at <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-252.html>.
 - i. I briefly mentioned and will discuss in more soon how government helps certain industries, sometimes at the expense of the general public, through trade policy. This paper provides a good example.
 4. *Required:* Article on National City Lines by Paul Matus, Street Railways: 'U.S. vs. National City Lines' Recalled," in the Cyber Reserve Room or at <http://rapidtransit.com/net/thirdrail/9905/index.htm>.