A Republic is better than a democracy, as it can extend the sphere of liberty and exercise the common good from a disinterested distance. However, it requires individuals of the best people, who are too factious will be kept in check by the same passions or interests (the problem of faction). A faction is defined as “a number of citizens, whether a majority or minority, who are united under some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.”

There are two possible ways to cure factions:

1) Prevent the existence of factions by removing their causes. Precluding the causes of faction, in other words, is to fire. Removing liberty is like destroying liberty, but the latter would be height of “folly.” The government is like a house, and its protection is the first right originating from property rights. Property rights originate from the nature of man and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. Instability, injustice, and confusion are diseases born out of faction that have led to the destruction of popular governments everywhere (i.e., throughout time).

2) Take steps to prevent majority faction. Majority faction is the threat, as we must take steps to control them. There are two possible ways to control them:

   a) Prevent the existence of factions by removing their causes.
   b) Take steps to prevent majority faction.

Controlling the effects of faction (i.e., if factions are already present), the government must be large enough to enable it to control them. “The size of the State must continue to be much greater than the size of the republic.”

The cure is worse than the disease for popular government.

It’s hinted in paragraph 9 that an enlightened statesman (those able to see the aggregate interests of the community) might be able to govern justly, however we can’t count on their existence in any particular generation. Republicanism is the best object of government.

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