Macheavelli The Prince Essay, Research Paper

The Prince, one of the most popular and well known doctrines of political thought was also one of the greatest works of Niccol Machiavelli. First published in 1513, The Prince was written in response to the failure of the Greek-based Italian city-states. Machiavelli wrote The Prince because, despite being a firm Republican, he was also well-documented as a strong patriot. He wanted that his people live under a free but effective government, but he decided that if his nation has to be ruled by a despotic form of government that he would rather have it be a strong yet merciful tyranny. He wasn t paid for writing The Prince, it wasn t even originally a book, but a series of letters to the Prince Lorenzo de Medici. He wrote it during exile, after he had been arrested and tortured by Medici s people, so it is doubtful that they had a bountiful relationship.

Machiavelli s intent, it would seem to the naked eye, was not to taunt the Prince, but to give him advice about how to survive on the throne and to also keep the dynasty in his family after his death. It appeared that he wanted to help the Prince to keep the nation free from invasion and occupation and also how to handle internal problems; such as when to bribe, oppress, cajole etc Machiavelli s real objective in writing The Prince was far different from the words that are found composed by him.

The letters from Machiavelli to the Prince of Florence were not messages of suggestion as much as they were a job application for a place in his dynasty. The actual ambition of Machiavelli was to use this political hypocrisy to promote his own good. He was a firm believer that one should give the people what they want in order to earn their support and respect. Then, once in the public s good graces, to use your authority, position and support to promote and complete your own agenda, political or otherwise, as long as it would eventually benefit the good of the people. He was a believer that anything can be justified as long as the results in for the common good. Machiavelli used this idea to coin his most well known phrase, the end justifies the means. He explains that is it necessary to appear to be a lovely moral person, but in reality, to act as necessity dictates and this allows lying, perjury and other immoral acts as long as the overall intent and final product is for the Common Benefit. Machiavelli was the original ME generation. He believed that people act according to their self interests alone, that people are generally equal in mind and body, and that it is this equality amongst man that causes them to war. Without a superior power to suppress the common power of the individual, man is apt to violence.

Machiavelli believed that proper government was a cyclical event, with three stages. The first, tyranny, was the beginning of the new regime, an overthrow of the current government. The second stage, the republic regime, began once authority was imposed and stable. The third and final stage was effective government, which would lead to the people having more leisure time, eventually leading to idleness and corruption. Once this third stage was reached, there would once again be a need for tyranny to restore order among the people. Machiavelli saw a need for harsh government overthrow periodically to keep the peoples from becoming to relaxed in their duties and daily lives. There is definite evidence of this is found in the Rimirro de Orco example (chapter 7) that harsh government can then pave the way for a more liberal regime.

Machiavelli promoted political hypocrisy as an effective form of government because he was a patriot and wanted his people to be free, but live under an effective government. He wanted to expose the problems with the ruling class and illustrate the proper path to the reunification of Italy. He wanted to lead the way for The Prince to use whatever tactics deemed necessary to seize, control and maintain the power of Italy. Machiavelli wanted his Prince, not to be a role model or to encourage spiritual and moral integrity, but only to attain and maintain the principality. Machiavelli also promotes this form of government through political hypocrisy because he wants to establish order in the world. He attempts to prove that man is inherently evil, leading to acceptance of his principals. Machiavelli does not want to tell people what to do exactly, but to empower them to think on their merit, rather than that of religious, moral or political code. He wanted his book to be a reference of logic rather than a strict code to be followed. Machiavelli promoted this political hypocrisy as a form of government because he felt that it would promote order in the world.