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Understanding Machiavelli over Absolute Monarchy and Republic

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Abstract: Machiavelli generally grounds his discourses on the government, regime, the ways that empower the government and the policy to be followed in determining the state power and limits and on the elements that lead to the decay or collapse of the state. According to Machiavelli, all the regimes somehow come to an end. What is important is to create a good regime construction and to turn this into a long-lasting structure. Machiavelli, generally mentioned by absolute monarchy, actually supported the absolute monarchy in a certain period especially during the establishment of the state. In his work called Discourses on Livy, he mentioned the supporting of the republican regime during the development stage of the state. Moreover, he emphasized that republican regime is essential for the continuity and longevity of the state. In this study the answers given by Machiavelli, regarded as the founder of modern state theory, to the issue about how a good and long-lasting regime can be established are attempted to be discussed based on the author's point of view regarding absolute monarchy and republican regimes. At this point, it is worth discussing the approach of Machiavelli to Republic, whose discourses were associated with and evaluated as absolute monarchy and even tyranny. Of course, while this discussion is made, based on the principle of period thinking, Italy and even Europe at the time when the philosopher lived should also be considered. Especially including Italy in the evaluation, which had not yet provided its central union and was governed by small principalities has a vital importance in terms of accurately identifying the opinions of Machiavelli. While the research is made, descriptive and historical research methods have been used.

Keywords: Republic; Machiavelli; Absolute Monarchy.

1. Introduction

Machiavelli is not only a political figure, but also an idealist humanist, realistic Renaissance philosopher. A conjectural historian longing for the past, and a passionate Italian admirer. As it can be understood from his famous works, he is a personality that left his mark on the history of political philosophies with his ideas that are still up-to-date. Machiavelli has started to recover from his bad reputation in the early years of the last century with the mindset of the modern era. His republican and humanist ideas have started to be discussed, instead of being the originator of atheist, immoral and monarchical cruelty. His genuine ideology made him a milestone for the politics concept.

Machiavelli has only one political/mundane worry; Italy, where is the inheritor of magnificent Ancient Rome. Trying to survive among the strong countries of Europe, prosperous in the way of having intricate in the daily political life, fallen into pieces regarding the political structure, and ruined as the result of interior and international wars. He committed not only his 14 years of political life but also his whole life producing political recipes that can unite Italy and form a national state. He visualized the large and strong political structures, which he visited, for his own country, on realistic base without becoming utopic.

We have to take his time into consideration, while reading Machiavelli. Because the principal element that brought Machiavelli to his position was the conditions. We cannot discriminate Renaissance, Savonarola, Medici Family, the attitudes of the Church, the committee named Ten of War, and Cesare Borgia from the ideas of Machiavelli. We have to take the independent variables into consideration while comprehending the Prince, which is the Bible of the realistic politics, and Discourses, which puts the republic on the throne of the ideal regime.

As it can also be seen in his works, Machiavelli is a politician who has a deep knowledge of history. His putting the absolute monarchy and republic on the forefront of the regimes, is because of the historical progress of these two regimes. He has given the examples from the history of the humanity, as old as humanity itself, and aimed to attract attention to the time based characteristics of these two regimes. Because, the time and space differences are the elements that affect the regimes and the politics. They also direct the spiritual and behavioral universe. Machiavelli, who analyzed a lot of regimes by experiencing himself, in an understanding of cyclical history, has seen the absolute

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monarchy and republic regimes that he formed as the appropriate models for management on the way to the unity of Italy, which was his ultimate goal.

In the study, after presenting the life of the politics analyst Machiavelli, the effects of the renaissance, which constitutes the primary characteristics of the term, on the formation of the Machiavellist ideology, and his ideas of authority that is the basic concept of the political life; the ideas of Machiavelli on regimes were tried to approach by using the historical and descriptive research methods, under the lights of the works of Machiavelli, named *Prince* and *Discourses*.

2. The Life of Machiavelli and a Short Glance to the Italy of His Era

The Florence city of Italy is symbolized with Machiavelli. Even though he had started the University of Florence at the age of eighteen, this adventure had not been too long due to the economic situation. He moved to Rome after leaving Florence for a cash clerk job he found in a bank (Skinner, 2004). During that are, the city of Florence was in a very tough situation due to the internal chaos. The prosperous Medici family, which had held the manager positions for years, was removed from the authority in 1494 and a Dominican priest named "Savonarola" had been brought to the power. However, the political life of Savonarola had not been too long as he was known with his anti-Renaissance speeches, having the books and artworks burned because he had seen them as sinful (Senel, 2008). Instead of Savonarole, who was executed by being suspended and burned, Florence bourgeoisie established a democratic regime. A committee named "Ten of War" led this new republican administration. The most important duty of the committee was to carry out the relationships of Florence with the other countries. Machiavelli, again with the help of his humanist environment, which is his father's spiritual prosperity, started his duty as the clerk of the Ten of War on 19th June 1498 (Anil, 2010). From this date on, Machiavelli had served in the top institution of the republic regime that was constituted in Florence, which had been under the authority of the monarchy of Medici family. In the republic regime, he had undertaken a lot of diplomatic duties during his 14 years of political life. Machiavelli was sent as an ambassador; to Volatons Duke Cesare Borgia that had been considered as a dangerous leader for Italy and Machiavelli was affected a lot from his personal characteristics; to France that had set up its national unity and governed with monarchy; to German Empire that had a strong army; to Switzerland that he analyzed the cantons; and to Italian city states that had continuously been in friction and conflict between each other. The regime of republic, in which Machiavelli successfully served, had lost its power throughout the time. The Medici family, who had increased the number of their supporters, had taken over the authority again in 01 September 1512, with the help of the Spanish army (Machiavelli, 2015). Thus, Florence went into the monarchy era again. Machiavelli, who had problems with the Medici family, was discharged in 07 October 1512. And with the suspect of joining an assassin against Medici family, he was sent to the Florence jailhouse in 19th February 1513. After being kept under arrest for three weeks, Machiavelli was deported to a farmhouse in San Casciano with his wife and four children. There, he wrote some of his works. In 1520, he was assigned by University of Florence to write the history of the Florence. In 1526, he was forgiven and firstly assigned to a simple government official job and afterwards as an ambassador, by the Pope VII. Clementus. After the foundation of the republic in 1527, he was not trusted and was not given any duties. He lost his life on 22nd June 1527 (Ekinci, 1996).

The personal characteristics of Machiavelli also attract the attentions. First of all, his thinking in a realistic structure is one specialty of him that cannot be opposed. With this specialty, he is accepted as the founder of the "realist concept". He was a politician that had learned politics very well, and his political intuitions had reached to a significantly high level. Within this frame, he is regarded as one of the founders of the "political science". Especially his talent in interpreting the historical events can be called as magnificent. His style of utilizing the language, suits his reputation. He was a good observer and a good government official who carried out his duties with success.

3. The Transformation of Mind, the Renaissance

The medieval time is a very unfortunate period for humanity and universe of ideologies. Because, the idea of a static universe that theoretically rejects the change was dominant in medieval time (Akal, 1990). The theocentric characterized ideology type had covered the minds of all of the European nations, and also the oppressive and terrific policies of the church were added to the stochastic lifestyle. However, a bourgeoisie class was created during the historical flow and with the accumulation of the capital and the developments in the technology of printing broke down the dogmas and the reason was accepted as the most realistic truth. The god was taken out from the center of the lifestyle and the individual was put instead. Secularism improved and humanism revealed itself in every field. As the result of all of these facts, a change has happened. Thus, the renaissance, is an innovation movement, that has shown itself first in the Italian city states and primarily appeared in branches of arts such as literature, art, and architecture; and afterwards has spread within the scale of Western Europe (Agaogullari and Koker, 1997). This resurrection has not only been in the arts, but also the economy, social, cultural and political fields were covered.

Renaissance is also the symbol of a large-scale of transformation. Many medieval concepts like religious dogmas, challenges, constraints and feudalism were terminated. Man has taken the form of a free individual by breaking his chains. The reason that was captured for centuries has brought the medieval monster down. Europe has begun to take the most efficient harvest years like an uncultivated fertile land.

When Machiavelli's works are analyzed, a clear influence of the Renaissance is seen. Machiavelli, has given great importance in the first place to human intelligence, in his own words to "the virtue". He defended that virtue

can even beat the fortune, which is opposed to the fatalistic approach. He wanted to isolate the religious issues from government business, and desired a secular political ground. He reinvented the nature of the human, and adopted that the human nature does not change and it's universal. He supported the liberation of the individual and aimed to eliminate the factors that restrict the imaginary life. He defended liberty, and sharpened his revolutionary side against classical ideas.

4. Machiavelli and Power

At a young age, Machiavelli found himself a place at the top of the management, and as it can be seen in all his works, his largest problematic is "power". In his works, he revealed the ways of gaining power, strategies to be able to continue ruling and attitudes that end the government, with a realistic analysis. Because power is the only real force in the life for Machiavelli.

Machiavelli has seen governing as a free value; that can select the required real from a variety of alternatives, which has the ability to move within the framework of interests, that ignores restrictive disciplines such as religion and ethics, which identifies the decision-making mechanism with the "egoism", which is a feature of creation. He has assessed the governing value that he borrowed from ancient Rome, adorned with the concepts of "virtue" and "fortune"; with a humanistic approach. As a result, he has evaluated the governing, not the concepts that are supposed to, by using simple expressions and considering the subjective characteristic reactions. He has provided a visionary supra-identity to power, by defeating scientific weaknesses.

When scrutinizing his works, we see that, according to Machiavelli, what is required for power is the origin, not being legitimate. Questions such as "What is the ideal state?", "What should be the best management?" that Plato and Aristotle asked are not his problem. Concepts as God, church, and happiness concepts that are not related to power did not interest him at all (Bektas, 1993). He somehow revealed how the desire of power, which the human conceals inside, found its body. (Canbolat, 2008). Machiavelli determining power as a secular institution, by taking over the human psychological and sociological characteristics, he selected to analyze the activities of power in a secular human prototype. He didn't pass over in this analysis, supporting elements such as army, form of government, and behavioral and imaginative features.

Machiavelli's "all the ways going to the purpose are permissible" rhetoric is a completely power-driven approach. This way of thinking, of course, is closely related to the period and experience he lived. His knowledge of history and his political life of 14 years in the middle of his life that he had to chance to know Cesare Borgia, Ten of War, and the Medici Family have guided him. He has supported the idea that flexibility, functionality and pragmatism that this concept provides should be utilized while taking over and maintaining the power, which is the peak of the passions. The situation that Machiavelli was afraid of most was loss of power because of letting these ideas out of the mind and falling into the position of caesarism. Machiavelli, having an idealistic personality profile, has considered the individuals, who have the mindset that will try every way to be able to achieve the goals and eliminate the obstacles on his/her way, appropriate for the role of power.

5. Prince and Discourses

When we look at Machiavelli's, the calm and prudent thinker of power relations, political writings, undoubtedly two works come to the forefront, *Prince* and *Discourses*. The work *Discourse*, which was completed in 1517, is a work that Machiavelli's commitments are clearly on place, with lots of details and developed kind of the work he wrote in 1513, the *Prince*. Even though *Discourses*, outlines the *Prince's* basic courses, there are remarkable differences in terms of rhetoric. Even, the opposing ideas in two works force the intellectual understanding, that both of them are from the same author's pen.

Machiavelli's first work that made him come to the forefront among the realist political thinkers was the "Prince". It consists of 26 chapters with a dedication letter. In this work, Machiavelli has dealt with the subject of politics different from all the thinkers till his time and evaluated the power by means of humanist thinking. In this work; he classified government forms; approached the foundation and maintaining the empires and strategies of keeping the power; examined the issues of armies and military service, and in the last chapter expressed his goal of constituting an independent and unified Italy (Machiavelli, 2015); *Prince*, at the same time, is a psychological work, which goes down to the imaginary depths of human being, and shed light on darkness of politics at these depths. In this book, Machiavelli has assumed the role of an anti-rogue, who reveals the inner feelings of people that they don't/cannot accept, and starting from this point of view, brings the politics into its subjective reality.

One of the major books in the history of political thought and Machiavellism is, undoubtedly the "*Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy*". Machiavelli, in his *Discourse*, scrutinizes in a political dimension by analyzing the Roman Historian Titus Livius's book, "Roman History" that is written on 27 BC. In this work Machiavelli examined Ancient Rome's internal affairs, spreading of their rule, and the impact of the Roman Republic on individuals. The work, which is among the important sources of politicians as well as historians and philosophers, has especially kept the republic in the front and literally praised this regime with great compliments.

Machiavelli answers a lot of questions and concepts of *Prince* in his *Discourses* book. Generally, it is thought that Machiavelli defends absolute monarchy in *Prince*, and the idea of republic in *Discourses*. However, this idea of contradictions becomes false in the very first sentence of his book *Prince* (Machiavelli, 2015); 'All states that established and still establishes dominance over people, are all either republics or principalities, today, just as in

the past.' Also, some readers may think that Machiavelli clearly breaks away from the traditional understanding of politics, but he returns again to the Ancient Rome with his Discourses book and show signs of softening. This idea was also a critical error. Machiavelli has always put an emphasis on history in his either political or non-political writings. His objective is not to live the history again, but to analyze again, the shape and implementations of the power by deriving lessons from the history.

Machiavelli's understanding of history and politics bears traces of the Renaissance. They are innovative, inquisitive and open to change. They distinguish the rights and wrongs in the past, and determine the properties of a new state and society. According to Machiavelli, human characteristics are universal and unchanging (Machiavelli, 2015). So, the history repeats itself constantly. Knowing the historical experiences can avoid the unnecessary future destructions. Because, as the conditions of success and victory are known from the past examples, the history comes across and helps us more like a guide.

Machiavelli wrote the works called *The Prince* and Discourses, with the same goal in an attempt to create a political and social order. *Prince* was written for the states that are in the period of newly establishing or up to the stage of development. And Discourses is written to the states that reached an advanced and specific social-political level. In fact, this overall process is a series of stages that each state had spent. These stages are in the characteristic of repeating each other and the main task of the governments is to create policies to provide delay for all these repetitions.

6. Monarchist Machiavelli

Machiavelli has examined France and Germany, which are Europe's strongest states with a patriotic jealousy, when he visited these countries during his duty as a diplomacy officer in Ten of War committee. Because he comes from a complex geography, that is scattered in the continuous friction and conflict, with their efforts to be able to continue their lives in the city-states. To get rid of this mess from the misery brought by hypocrisy, he aimed at the creation of Italian unity as the largest ideal. In his exile period, he has presented his work, the *Prince*, that he described the specifics of management, to the Medici family that he thought they have capacity to perform that goals.

During the dates that Machiavelli wrote *Prince*, the city-states of Italy are in serious turmoil. The powerful city-state of the period, Florence is struggling with political instability and even management has changed frequently. In addition, management weaknesses, social anarchy and moral decline has reached to the size that worried the patriots. And the relationship between the church and the church's representatives with the state and individuals made the situation worse. Under the influence of all these, Machiavelli, with the aim of Italian unity above all, he desired to strengthen and stabilize the current city government. The primary desire of him was, as a citizen of the Florence City State, which could provide the Italian unity, was to stabilize. He believed that the stability will be achieved only by an absolute monarchy management (Machiavelli, 2015).

Machiavelli has written *The Prince* almost as the guide book for the strong manager who wants power. The work has brought the state's establishment process and the subsequent growth period after the establishment. *Prince*, although in reality it is a revolution in the concept of absolute monarchy, may seem as a traditional monarchy management. In absolute monarchy model of the book, power is dominated by a single source and the authority of the monarch is unlimited. He should do whatever is needed to ensure the unity of Italy. If you need to kill a man and he should be killed. And he should lie if necessary. If you need to act against morality, should act immorally without hesitation. A treaty must be remained faithful as long as it serves the Italian unity; as soon as it contradicts Italian unity he should know to return back from the treaty (Machiavelli, 2015). Ruler should not be limited by anything in that way.

Machiavelli tried to maximize the political power of the newly established state with absolute monarchy. Individual and society as a structure of absolute power are the tools needed to demonstrate compliance with the principles of legitimacy of power. As there will not be a power to limit the authority, the authority is a structure on top of the individuals and society. The laws are the tools for the unilateral creation of political power in society and are means of imposition of the will of the authority to the society.

Machiavelli, has set-up understanding of the political power, for newly established or still in the phase of establishing, that sees individual and community as the vehicle of power, the society who insecurity due to the properties of human nature, the sovereign absolute, unlimited and only identifies moral and union political power rather than universal legitimacy principles of cultural life and to prioritize integrity, only absolute sovereign of the common good principles leaving a will, accept no power to limit the sovereign, purpose-vehicle hard on relationships, pressure and power precede obedience phenomenon into a passive into submission ruling only newly established or phase formed exactly for states that cannot be completed.

One of the main reasons affecting the emphasis on Machiavelli's idea of absolute monarchy is historical examples. He has chosen examples from history to support the idea of unification of Italy. And one of these samples was Turks. Especially Turks conquering Istanbul and Greece; and by placing their own people to keep the territory their hands have a profound impact on Machiavelli. For the absolute monarchy model that he designed and considered as an indispensable condition for the unity of the state of Italy, the country he took as an example was the Turkish monarchy, where he thought the people that were managed were like slaves (Senel, 2008). Undoubtedly another important reason is the state of Italy which was divided into large and small states from the strong Roman Empire.

According to Machiavelli (2009), a state can only be established by a single person. New regulations and institutions must start from one virtue. The authorities should gather in the own hands of the rulers, who want the public good, leaving the individual interests aside. Besides this, monarch must be prudent and generous enough that he will not leave this power, for which he worked throughout his life, with inheritance. Also Machiavelli (2015), suggested that, the ruler of the Italy that will rescue it from the hands of barbarians and unite it would bring happiness to the people like the Prophet Moses.

7. Fractious Republican

Machiavelli, putting the philosophers after himself into a deep pessimism; have been subject to heavy criticism for years that his work *Prince* and *Discourses* are contradictory and incompatible. He was written to be into political instability, as a full absolute monarchist at *The Prince*, and as a republic admirer in his *Discourses*. When scrutinizing the two main political works, to find out which of Machiavelli's real, it is possible to find a fine strategy has been imposed into the.

All of the thoughts of Machiavelli, who is known as fractious republican for centuries, carry a republican sensitivity and all of them are interrelated. In fact, he aimed the ultimate objective of the republic, while formulating the politics and power. The features that the republic carries, reveals the deep substance in Machiavelli, as one of the idols of renaissance. Republic contains the characteristics of the three main themes; corruption - the feared nightmare of power, the concept of freedom that the Ancient Rome had crowned, and the individuals that humanism made the importance of them indisputable.

According to Machiavelli all forms of governments, although showing differences in times, they decay. There is no way of preventing administrative corruption, it can just be delayed. The most suitable form of governance for degeneration is an absolute monarchy. Because it is very dangerous to give the unlimited authority, in the long term to a single person or group (Machiavelli, 2009). Initially, these powers could be used in a good way, but it may create a bad management in the future. This can turn into a very dangerous situation for the state. For this reason, a form of government that can be corrupted in longer time should be selected. And it is republic. In the long term, in republican regime, the inevitable corruption can be prevented or delayed by structural characteristics and institutions. The Republic, is a system that can extend the life of the government so that the state. It also can save people from selfishness and sociological impact will bring the "common good" as the aim on top.

The concept of the Republican form of government is also a sense of freedom, which is politically named the state of functional freedom. People are their own managers. Individuals won the freedom and a free individual in a free place in the top level of the welfare state has formed. Freedom of the individual and the state are intertwined. In the Republican regime there are virtue owner individuals in executive positions. Merit is further rewarded in Republic. Therefore, it is easier to keep track of each other talented administrators. Also managed people will always want more freedom. This freedom isn't provided in any regime other than the republic. Freedom is protected by the people themselves. (Machiavelli, 2009).

Machiavelli has quite liked the individual's understanding of humanism, created on a secularism basis. According to him, people turned into individual status have many contributions in management. There is a constant conflict between governments of the Republic and the free individuals. This stems from the quest for more freedom for both of the two. But this friction is a function not unlike the structural element which is harmful (Machiavelli, 2009). Conflicts between people and government constitute good laws. And administrators who managed to comply, which also provides the principle of equality, good laws; corruption was appointed as the stability mechanism that will be delayed quite a bit. According to Machiavelli, ancient Rome owes its greatness and prosperity to free individuals.

Machiavelli has attached great importance to the law in the republic. He saw the governments' disobeying the laws created as a huge folly to and as the biggest corruption movement. Governments that do not obey the law, which is equivalent to the people's conscience, will become quite worthless in the public mind map. In fact, in some cases, people feel themselves in an unsafe environment due to not implementation of the laws. When these feelings occur, it can create widespread ideas that may lead to a revolution. Such revolutions are people's movements that are significantly harmful to power and the state (Machiavelli, 2009). Also laws are rules that aim "the common good". The common good, is a psychological factor that makes the individual feel belong to a community, by moving the spiritual changes, they are important preconditions for the understanding of citizenship. Individuals can internalize the citizenship departing from his personal feelings.

Machiavelli, as the best political judge of his age, has reused his opinions from practices against the political philosophy. As a result of observations, he has warned of the Florentine thinkers of the fact that they defend the republic under the guise of an oligarchic structure. As the thinkers of the Florentine define the republic as "the harmony between citizens" where there is more than one class of these classes and leads to overlook the fact that there is always a conflict of interest, according to Machiavelli. Based on the idea, a republican form of protection in absolute harmony between citizens from this perspective actually hides the management of a certain class. These secrets, converts the "freedom of the public" to the use of the power, republican discourses to the art of "governing" in the form of "politics". (Tuncel, 2014).

Machiavelli has also given great importance to the army that will be created in the absolute monarchy and republic. Machiavelli (2015), never comfortable with the mercenaries; relating the division and defeat completely to this system, he advocated the establishment of the national army. An army moving with citizenship awareness and

the belief of the soldiers will be much more successful than the soldier's pursuit of money. According to Machiavelli, army created of laws in the republic environment, it is inevitable to have a strong army. Good law and strong army are inseparable (Machiavelli, 2009). In the management of the Republic, legislations defining the common good of the army, should be a regular and functional.

However, if republic is faced with great danger, like the old Roman Republic, the management can be assigned temporarily to a tyrant. Moreover, even the righteous people are faced with the danger of corruption at any moment. So, Machiavelli (2009) thinks that, even as republics, if the political leaders have to, referring to the hard way and the trick is to leave the legal way. In such cases, the administrator must resort to illegal ways of thinking about the public interest. The corruption of the administration is a normal situation. To avoid a delay in this case or in the Republic of laws should be revised over time, and leaders with virtue should get booster gains in republic.

8. Conclusion

Machiavelli, having deep regrets about politically fragmented Italy, has drawn a road map that will bring back the glory years of old Italians. For this cause he has kept his mind quite busy. He has created complementary and supportive works. The idea of losing anything from the times of innovation and originality never surpassed in purgatory. His ideas are clear, consistent and stable.

According to Machiavelli literature absolute monarchy-republic is not a contradiction, it is consistency. It is believed that it could happen by a strong administrator as Italian troops in France and Spain. The leader has the virtue that can provide the union shall be the sole and unlimited authority. The nation state should have been built from scratch. There should be no power to prevent Prince that will slow down in activity. Even if they exist, Prince must destroy them in any way. If a particular group or person to do evil that good faith (due to the public interest) should be made. In such a period/administration, another form of government other than absolute monarchy in understanding is already unthinkable.

Founding leader of the state should leave the authority to public, after developing to the desired level on firm ground. People wanted people to be selective and as director of their own managers. Thus, it is switched to the Republican administration. In this transition period, the leaving monarchy prince should have virtue; the public taking over the management should have merit. In such a process that will happen to the republic managers will have the virtue anyway.

According to Machiavelli, a new state cannot be established as an oligarch or republic instead of an absolute monarchy with limitless authority. Because this government will be moving quite slow in the face of emergencies. The Republican oligarchy and the procedures are quite heavy in the process and always, the opposition voices will not be missing. The functioning of the state was established in this discussion can be a waste of time and fall into troublesome situations. In this troubled situation, the state can come out of the exit state legislation to protect itself. As a result, can lead to very bad consequences go beyond the law in the republic? As will be realized during the establishment of absolute monarchy is a choice rather than necessity.

In sum, Machiavelli, tackles the founding of the state administration in the form of absolute monarchy. Is able to maintain the stability of the virtuous public with maximizing political power, it is planning the introduction of a time-consuming corruption republic. That is in the monarch authority for the continuity of states, it will be distributed to the institutions of the republic, with the reason of public interest.

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