Concepts of Information 11: The Modern State

Reading:


prime movers:
- business (Chandler, Beniger, Yates, Kline)

or

the state (Oettinger, Scott)

"without information, nothing has meaning" --Oettinger

commerce or the state?

information technology: telegraph, railways, IBM ...

information management: supply chains:

    critical dates supply chain in NYT/WSJ: 1917, 1942, 1950, 1966 ...

political vs commercial concepts of information, contrast

    "the public cannot have too much information" --Times, 1882

    vs

    "it was not wise to give too much information with regard to the business they had in hand, as it might not be to the advantage of the company" --Times, 1867


    borders, language

    taxes: rolls, polls, and farmers

    cadastra

    laws

    customs and excise
bills of mortality
trade figures
maps
conscription
standards & "market revolution" (Kula)
population & census
records and registers: b,m, d; patents, copyrights, trademarks
passports, driving licenses ...

government intelligence
1785 [in re Indian Affairs]: Mr Burke reprobated the Ministry for having refused to lay before the House the papers which had been required; and objected to Major Scott, a gentleman in the army, giving any official information to that House, which, he thought, would have been more proper for the Chairman of the Committee, or from some of the Directors themselves
blue books

Information, information technology, cybernetics, government
Haldane, Report on the Machinery of Government [cp Body Politic, vs levers of power]
- civil service debates, another middle management battle

the uses of registration
- the poor, Speenhamland
- the population bomb - Malthus - Burgerdörfer, "department of demographic welfare"
- human value - Zahn & the statistical value of the human being

civil society -- facts, counterfactuals & counterfrictions
"If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of govt ... Let your life be a counterfriction to stop the machine" --Thoreau
"the tragic episodes of state development ... originate in ... a weakened or prostrate civil society" -- Scott, Seeing Like a State
press
"A more general diffusion of accurate knowledge regarding the state of public affairs would tend to check that excitement and party spirit which has often been created by misrepresentation or exaggeration, and has produced an annoyance to the government and at least a temporary disaffection of the public mind." --William Jacob, 1832

"the first and most essential rule of its conduct to exclude all opinions" -- Richard Jones, 1833

"moral statistics"

"the government of our Fürher ... is statistics friendly" --Zahn

"Leonard Horner was one of the Factory Inquiry Commissioners in 1833, and Inspector, or rather Censor of Factories till 1859. He rendered undying service to the English working class. He carried on a life-long contest, not only with the embittered manufacturers, but also with the Cabinet, to whom the number of votes given by the masters in the Lower House, was a matter of far greater importance than the number of hours worked by the 'hands' in the mills."

"freedom of information"