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#### **Essay # 4**

“Act for the people’s benefit, trust them; leave them alone.” (59) Machiavelli’s government has no trust in their own people, as Lao-tzu’s government puts trust within the people. A government for the people by the people is one of the best ideas anyone has ever had. When a government and/or leader bases society and its purposes of the government on the people, its order is effectively established. The obligations of the Tao leader, and their ultimate purposes along with the main work of the government would comfortably suit my living needs as compared to Machiavelli’s idea of how government should be.

One of Machiavelli’s purposes in government is to maintain overall power, whether it is within its own government or in all the lands in general. Lao-tzu’s form of government relies around the common people. As I quoted in the beginning, “Act for the people’s benefit. Trust them; leave them alone,” (31) this implies the government relies around the people, rather than power, war, and deception. Many aspects of the Lao-tzu government rely around the people. For instance, “I let go of the law, and people become honest. I let go of economics, and people become prosperous. I let go of religion, and people become serene.” (27) Lao-tzu refers to many things in the cause and effect sense towards the happiness of the people. “Throw away peoples holiness and wisdom, and people will be a hundred times happier. Throw away morality and justice, and people will do the right thing. Throw away industry and profit and there won’t be any

thieves.” (23) It seems that in Machiavellian government his people are none of his concern only war and power. One of the other main purposes of Lao-tzu’s government is to have a peaceful way of life. “Peace is his highest value.” (25) The Lao-tzu form of government detests weapons and violence while Machiavelli’s government is centered on it. Machiavelli expresses that the princes people should be used for war and willing to fight at any time.

Machiavelli’s obligations as a leader, war and power, were the same as his purposes in government. One obligation of Lao-tzu is to make people feel trustworthy, and not let people be aware that their master exists because the people will think they accomplished achievements all by themselves. (23) Machiavelli’s leader had to role-play, manipulate, and have strict rules. The Tao master must have the characteristics of being simple, patient, and compassionate. “Simple in actions and thoughts, you return to the source of being. Patient in with both friends and enemies, you accord with the way things are. Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world.” (30) Those are three important obligations that the Master of Tao must fulfill to be successful and loved. In the government of Lao-tzu, the master must be successful within the people love, and fear must be acquired by the leader. Obtaining a government that is characterized by the people and for the people, is another obligation of Lao-tzu. The master of Lao-tzu’s government acts as a guide to the people. Machiavelli is deceiving and just appears to do have a society for the people by the people. Machiavelli’s only goal is to maintain security and appear to keep his word.

The main work of the Lao-tzu government is to keep peace and happiness among the people. The actual government doesn’t really do anything against the people. “The

Tao never does anything, yet through it all things are done.”(25) Lao-tzu does not try to rule the world by war or gaining power. The government must place themselves below the people, and learn how to follow them. This gives people comfort within the fact that the people who are inferior are in the same position in society. Lao-Tzu government tries to keep the taxes low so people don't go hungry and not to be too intrusive. “When taxes are high, people go hungry.” (30) Instead of Machiavelli keeping peace within his people, the government tries to be in control because the government must be prepared for war at all times.

The Lao-tzu form of government is governed wisely with respect towards its people and land. People have no limits on their freedoms. They have no desire to do anything wrong or harmful because they are not exposed to war and killing. In the Machiavellian government there are no freedoms, he is self-centered and unpleasant. It also seems as if there is no happiness in his society. Machiavelli is too intrusive for me. “And if men were all good, this rule would not be good; but since men are a sorry a lot and will not keep their promises to you, you likewise need not keep your to them.” (21) He is full of deception, and his government is based upon war and power. Therefore, I would not want to live in a society full of deception and lies.