

# PD37

Bailey: 37. Among actions which are sanctioned as just by law, that which is proved, on examination, to be of advantage, in the requirements of men's dealings with one another, has the guarantee of justice, whether it is the same for all or not. But if a man makes a law, and it does not turn out to lead to advantage in men's dealings with each other, then it no longer has the essential nature of justice. And even if the advantage in the matter of justice shifts from one side to the other, but for a while accords with the general concept, it is nonetheless just for that period, in the eyes of those who do not confound themselves with empty sounds, but look to the actual facts.

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“From the moment that a thing declared just by the law is generally recognized as useful for the mutual relations of men, it becomes really just, whether it is universally regarded as such or not. But if, on the contrary, a thing established by law is not really useful for social relations, then it is not just; and if that which was just, inasmuch as it was useful, loses this character, after having been for some time considered so, it is not less true that during that time it was really just, at least for those who do not perplex themselves about vain words, but who prefer in every case, examining and judging for themselves.” Yonge (1853)

“Whatever in conventional law is attested to be expedient in the needs arising out of mutual intercourse is by its nature just, whether the same for all or not, and in case any law is made and does not prove suitable to the expediency of mutual intercourse, then this is no longer just. And should the expediency which is expressed by the law vary and only for a time correspond with the notion of justice, nevertheless, for the time being, it was just, so long as we do not trouble ourselves about empty terms but look broadly at facts.” Hicks (1910)

“Among the things accounted just by conventional law, whatever in the needs of mutual intercourse is attested to be expedient, is thereby stamped as just, whether or not it be the same for all; and in case any law is made and does not prove suitable to the expediencies of mutual intercourse, then this is no longer just. And should the expediency which is expressed by the law vary and only for a time correspond with the prior conception, nevertheless for the time being it was just, so long as we do not trouble ourselves about empty words, but look simply at the facts.” Hicks (1925)

“Among some actions which are sanctioned as just by law, that which is proved on examination to be of advantage in the requirements of men's dealings with one another, has the guarantee of justice, whether it is the same for all or not. But if a man makes a law and it does not turn out to lead to advantage in men's dealings with each other, then it no longer has the essential nature of justice. And if the advantage in the matter of justice shifts from one side to the other, but for a while accords with the general concept, it is none the less just for that period in the eyes of those who do not confound themselves with empty sounds but look to the actual facts.” Bailey (1926)

“Among the things commonly held just, that which has proved itself useful in men's mutual relationship has the stamp of justice whether or not it be the same for all; if anyone makes a law and it does not prove useful in men's relationships with each other, it is no longer just in its essence. If, however, the law's usefulness in the matter of justice should change and it should meet men's expectations only for a short time, nonetheless during that short time it was just in the eyes of those who look simply at facts and do not confuse themselves with empty words.” Geer (1964)

“What is legally deemed to be just has its existence in the domain of justice whenever it is attested to be useful in the requirements of social relationships, whether or not it turns out to be the same for all. But if someone makes a law and it does not happen to accord with the utility of social relationships, it no longer has the nature of justice. And even if what is useful in the sphere of justice changes but fits the preconception for some time, it was no less just throughout that time for those who do not confuse themselves with empty utterances but simply look at the facts.” Long, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* 125 (1987)

“Among the measures regarded as just, that which is proven to be beneficial in the business of men's dealings with one another, has the guarantee of justice whether it is the same for all or not. If someone makes a law which does not result in advantage for men's dealings with each other, it no longer has the nature of justice. Even if advantage in the matter of justice is variable but nonetheless conforms for a certain length of time to the common notion people have of it, no less for that period is it just in the opinion of those who do not confuse themselves with words but look straight at the facts.” O'Connor (1993)

“Of actions believed to be just, that whose usefulness in circumstances of mutual associations is supported by the testimony [of experience] has the attribute of serving as just whether it is the same for everyone or not. And if someone passes a law and it does not turn out to be in accord with what is useful in mutual associations, this no longer possesses the nature of justice. And if what is useful in the sense of being just changes, but for a while fits our basic grasp [of justice], nevertheless it was just for that length of time, [at least] for those who do not disturb themselves with empty words but simply look to the facts.” Inwood & Gerson (1994)

“Among actions legally recognized as just, that which is confirmed by experience as mutually beneficial has the virtue of justice, whether it is the same for all peoples or not. But if a law is made which results in no such advantage, then it no longer carries the hallmark of justice. And if something that used to be mutually beneficial changes, though for some time it conformed to our concept of justice, it is still true that it really was just during that time – at least for those who do not fret about technicalities and instead prefer to examine and judge each case for themselves.” Anderson (2004)

“Among those things that are conventionally accepted as just, whatever is universally acknowledged to be conducive to the purpose of maintaining civic society is necessarily adjudged to be a patently just thing, whether it is the same for all people or not. But if one stipulates something as the law even though it is at cross purposes with the interest of maintaining civic society—such an ordinance does not partake of natural justice in any way. In addition, if and to the extent that the interests which are in accordance with natural justice prove variable, so that concepts of justice can remain harmonious with natural interests only for a certain period of time: we must say that such concepts of justice [though short lived] are no less just within their corresponding frames of time.” Makridis (2005)

“Among things that are thought to be just, that which has been witnessed to bring mutual advantage among companions has the nature of justice, whether or not it is the same for everyone. But if someone legislates

something whose results are not in accord with what brings mutual advantage among companions, then it does not have the nature of justice. And if what brings advantage according to justice changes, but for some time fits our basic grasp of justice, then for that time it is just, at least to the person who is not confused by empty prattle but instead looks to the facts.” Saint-Andre (2008)

“In the case of actions that are legally regarded as just, those that are of tested utility in meeting the needs of human society have the hallmark of justice, whether they turn out to be equally just in all cases or not. On the other hand, if somebody lays down a law and it does not prove to be of advantage in human relations, then such a law no longer has the true character of justice. And even if the element of utility should undergo a change after harmonizing for a time with the conception of justice, the law was still just during that period, in the judgment of those who are not confused by meaningless words but who look at the actualities.” Strodach (2012)

“That which has been considered just by convention because it benefits our mutual intercourse is therefore stamped as just, whether or not it is so in all instances; and if a law is made and does not prove beneficial to our intercourse, then it is no longer just.

And if what the law considers expedient changes, and only corresponds for a time to the preconception, it was nonetheless just for that time, if we do not trouble ourselves about empty forms but simply examine the facts.” Mensch (2018)

“If established norms of justice are attested to promote the mutual interactions of a community, then it has the status of justice, whether it is the same for everyone or not the same. But if someone establishes a law and the result does not promote the community’s relations, then it no longer has the nature of justice. And if what does promote justice changes, then as long as it did align with the preconception [sc. of justice] for a time, it was no less just during that period of time, provided people do not get confused by distracting themselves with empty expressions and instead look at the actual facts.” White (2021)