INTRODUCTION TO BRITISH GOVERNMENT

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SECOND EDITION

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M
MACMILLAN

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To W. A. M.

. . . we should like to have good rulers, but historical experience shows us that we are not likely to get them. This is why it is of such importance to design institutions which prevent even bad rulers from causing too much damage.

Classes, however, never rule, any more than nations. The rulers are always certain persons. And, whatever class they may have once belonged to, once they are rulers they belong to the ruling class.

SIR KARL POPPER
Conjectures and Refutations, 1976

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Preface

This book is intended as an introduction to the intricacies of the British system of government. It is directed mainly at those who are preparing for the public administration examinations of the Business and Technical Education Council, the Rating and Valuation Association, the Institute of Housing, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, various other professional bodies and for Advanced Level GCE papers in British government and politics.

The general reader may well find the book of interest.

Local government has been dealt with in somewhat greater detail than in comparable books.

I would like to record my thanks to Professor Hugh Berrington, Head of the Department of Politics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, for his generous help and encouragement. The shortcomings of the book are entirely mine.

At the end of each chapter is given a list of books which deal in greater detail with the particular subject matter of the chapter. The following books give a comprehensive treatment of British government:

R. M. Punnett, *British Government and Politics* (Heinemann, 4th edn, 1980).

P. J. Madgwick, *Introduction to British Politics* (Hutchinson, 2nd edn, 1976).

I. Gilmour, *The Body Politic* (Hutchinson, 1971).

For this second edition I have updated as necessary facts and figures and the reading lists. I have substantially re-written Chapters 3 and 17.

October 1983

S. G. R.

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