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I. Martin (Irving) Isaacs

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TWO SOLVABILITY THEOREMS

I. M. ISAACS

In this paper we prove two theorems which have certain similarities.

THEOREM I. **Let G be a group with a cyclic S_p subgroup P such that every p'-subgroup of G is abelian. Then either G has a normal p-complement or else $P \Delta G$.**

THEOREM II. **Let G be a group and let $p \neq 2$ and q be primes dividing $|G|$. Suppose for every $H < G$ which is not a q-group or a q'-group that $p \mid |H|$. If q^a is the q-part of $|G|$ and $p > q^a - 1$ or if $p = q^a - 1$ and an S_p of G is abelian then no primes but p and q divide $|G|$.**

Both theorems are proved by studying minimal counter-examples and in both cases contradictions are obtained for $p > 3$ without the use of character theory. When $p = 3$ both minimal counterexamples satisfy the hypotheses of the same character theoretic proposition which is actually a special case of Theorem II, and this yields the desired contradictions.

Both theorems imply that the respective groups in question are solvable. In the first case the Schur-Zassenhaus Theorem (see 9.3.6 of [5]) is used and in the second case Burnside's p^iq^j theorem (see 12.3.3 of [5]) yields the solvability.

1. In this section we prove the character theoretic proposition which is a special case of Theorem II and which is used to prove both of our main results. We begin by giving a lemma which is a restatement of some of the restlts of § II of [1].

LEMMA 1. *(Brauer-Fowler) Let G be a group of even order which has only one class of involutions K_0 with $m = |K_0|$. Let K_i, $1 \leqq i \leqq r$ be the remaining nonidentity real classes in G. Then*

$$m^2 = um + \sum_{i=1}^{r} v_i \, |K_i|$$

where u is the number of involutions in the centralizer of an involution and v_i is the number of involutions which transform x to x^{-1} when $x \in K_i$.

PROPOSITION. Let G be a group with an abelian S_3 subgroup P with the properties

(1) $|\mathfrak{N}_G(P)| = 4\,|P|$, $|\mathfrak{C}_G(P)| = 2\,|P|$,

(2) $\mathfrak{C}_G(P)$ is a *T.I.* set and

(3) if $H < G$ has even order then $|H| \mid (4|P|)$.

Then G is not simple.

Proof. Suppose G is simple. It is clear that the order of an S_2 of G is 4 and thus by Burnside's theorem it must be elementary and all of its involutions are conjugate in its normalizer. Put

$$S = \mathfrak{C}_G(P) = P \times \langle s \rangle \quad \text{and} \quad N = \mathfrak{N}_G(P) = S\langle t \rangle ,$$

where s and t are commuting involutions. Since G is simple and P is abelian, we have $P \cap \mathfrak{Z}(\mathfrak{N}(P)) = 1$ by 13.5.5 of [5] and thus $\mathfrak{C}_P(t) = 1$ and t acts on P with no nontrivial fixed points. Therefore t transforms every element of P and thus also of S into its inverse. Clearly $S \triangle N$ and $P \triangle \mathfrak{N}_G(S)$ and thus $N = \mathfrak{N}_G(S)$. If two elements of S are conjugate in G they are conjugate in N since S is a *T. I.* set and if they are distinct they are inverses. Since the only elements of S equal to their inverses are s and 1, the remaining $2|P| - 2$ elements of S span $|P| - 1$ classes of G.

If $y \neq 1$ is a real element of G which is not an involution then $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle y \rangle) < G$ has even order and thus y has order divisible by 3 and centralizes some element of order 3. By taking conjugates we may suppose that this element is in P and therefore $y \in N$. Since no element of $N - S$ centralizes any element $\neq 1$ in P, we conclude that $y \in S$. Therefore the $|P| - 1$ classes spanned be the nonself-inverse elements of S are the classes K_i of the lemma and $r = |P| - 1$.

Since $\mathfrak{C}_G(s) \supseteqq N$ and $|\mathfrak{C}_G(s)| \mid (4|P|)$ we must have $\mathfrak{C}(s) = N$. Every element of $N - S$ is an involution and therefore in the lemma we have $u = 2|P| + 1$. Since $\mathfrak{C}(s) = N, m = [G : N] = |G|/4|P|$. If $x \in S$ and $x \neq 1$, s then $\mathfrak{C}_G(x) = S$ and $|K_i| = [G : S] = 2m$. Finally, the only involutions transforming x to x^{-1} are the elements of $N - S$ and hence each $v_i = 2|P|$ and the lemma yields

$$m^2 = (2|P| + 1)m + (|P| - 1)(2|P|)(2m)$$

and therefore $m = 4|P|^2 - 2|P| + 1$ and $|G| = 4|P|m$.

Now G has $|P| + 1$ real classes and thus by Theorem 12.4 of [4] it has $|P|$ irreducible, nonprincipal real valued characters, χ_i, $1 \leqq i \leqq |P|$. Since G has m involutions,

$$m = \sum_{i=1}^{|P|} \chi_i(1)\varepsilon_i$$

where $\varepsilon_i = \pm 1$ by Theorem 3.6 of [4]. Therofore $m \leqq \sum_{i=1}^{|P|} \chi_i(1)$ and we have

$$m^2 \leqq \left[\sum_{i=1}^{|P|} \chi_i(1)\right]^2 \leqq |P| \sum_{i=1}^{|P|} \chi_i(1)^2 = |P|\,[|G| - \sum \psi_j(1)^2 - 1]$$

where the ψ_j are the irreducible nonreal valued characters. Thus

$$|P| \sum \psi_j(1)^2 \leqq |P|\,(|G| - 1) - m^2 \leqq m(4\,|P|^2 - m)$$

since $|G| = 4\,|P|\,m$. Since $4\,|P|^2 - m = 2\,|P| - 1 < 2\,|P|$, we have $\sum \psi_j(1)^2 < 2m$. Because G contains elements of order prime to 6, not every class of G is real and thus some ψ exists with $\psi \neq \bar{\psi}$ and hence $\psi(1)^2 < m$.

Now $[N : S] = 2$ and S is abelian and thus all nonlinear irreducible characters of N have degree 2. Since t acts without fixed points on P, it is clear that $N' = P$ and N has exactly 4 linear characters and thus has $|P| - 1$ distinct irredudcible characters of degree 2, say $\lambda_1, \cdots, \lambda_{|P|-1}$. Since $[N : S] = 2$ and $\lambda_i \mid S$ is reducible, it follows that λ_i vanishes on $N - S$ and we may apply Theorem 38.16 of [3] since S is a $T.\ I.$ set. Therefore G has irreducible characters

$$\zeta_1, \zeta_2, \cdots, \zeta_{|P|-1}$$

and there is $\varepsilon = \pm 1$ with $\lambda_i^G - \lambda_j^G = \varepsilon(\zeta_i - \zeta_j)$. Since each λ_i^G is real valued, the same is true of the ζ_i and thus we have the inner product $[\psi, (\lambda_i^G - \lambda_j^G)] = 0$. Therefore

$$[\psi, \lambda_i^G] = [\psi, \lambda_j^G]$$

and by Frobenius Reciprocity, $[\psi \mid N, \lambda_i] = [\psi \mid N, \lambda_j]$. We conclude that the multiplicities of each λ_i in $\psi \mid N$ are equal. Since ψ is faithful and N is nonabelian, $\psi \mid N$ has some nonlinear constituent and thus this common multiplicity is $\geqq 1$ and therefore $\psi(1) \geqq 2(|P| - 1)$. Since $\psi(1)^2 < m < 4\,|P|^2$, we have $\psi(1) < 2\,|P|$ and thus

$$\psi(1) = 2\,|P| - 2 \quad \text{or} \quad 2\,|P| - 1\,.$$

Let q be the largest prime divisor of $\psi(1)$. If $q = 2$ then since $\psi(1) \mid |G|$ we must have $\psi(1) = 4 = 2\,|P| - 2$ and $|P| = 3$. In this situation $m = 31$ and $|G| = 12 \cdot 31$ and since no simple group can have this order, we have a contradiction. Thus $q \neq 2$ and since $3 \mid |P|$, $q > 3$. Since $q \mid |G|$ we must have $q \mid m$ and $4\,|P|^2 - 2\,|P| + 1 \equiv 0 \bmod q$. Since $2\,|P| \equiv 1$ or $2 \bmod q$, we have $4\,|P|^2 - 2\,|P| + 1 \equiv 1$ or $3 \bmod q$. Since $q > 3$ this is our final contradiction.

2. In this section we prove the first of our main results. We begin with a lemma.

LEMMA 2. *Let H be an abelian group with a collection of proper subgroups $\{K_i\}$ such that $H = \bigcup K_i$ and $K_i \cap K_j = 1$ if $i \neq j$. Then*

H is an elementary abelian p-group for some prime p.

Proof. If $x, y \in H^\#$ have different orders m and n respectively, with $m > n$, choose K_i with $x \in K_i$. Then $1 \neq (xy)^n = x^n \in K_i$. If $xy \in K_j$ then $(xy)^n \in K_i \cap K_j$ and therefore $i = j$ and $xy \in K_i$. Thus $y \in K_i$. If $z \in H^\#$ is arbitrary then the order of z is different from at least one of m and n and thus $z \in K_i$. Thus $K_i = H$ and this contradiction shows that all elements of $H^\#$ have equal orders and the result follows.

THEOREM I. *Let G be a group with a cyclic S_p subgroup P such that every p'-subgroup of G is abelian. Then G has a normal p-complement or else $P \triangle G$.*

Proof. Suppose the theorem is false and let G be a minimal counterexample. Let $N = \mathfrak{N}_G(P)$ and let K be an $S_{p'}$ (p-complement) of N whose existence is guaranteed by the Schur-Zassenhaus Theorem (9.3.6 of [5]). If any element $x \in K$ centralizes a nonidentity element of P, then because P is cyclic, x centralizes all of P. (See for instance 20.1 of [4]).

Every proper subgroup of G satisfies the hypotheses and thus has either a normal S_p or $S_{p'}$. If $L \triangle G$ and $p \nmid |L|$ then G/L satisfies the hypotheses and does not have a normal $S_{p'}$ and therefore if $L > 1$, $PL \triangle G$. By Burnside's theorem, $K \not\triangle N$ and thus NL does not have a normal $S_{p'}$ and if $NL < G$, L normalizes P and P is characteristic in PL and thus is normal in G. This contradiction shows that $NL = G$. Now put $M = \bigcap_{x \in G} N^x \triangle G$. Since $x = uv$ for some $u \in N$ and $v \in L$ we have $N^x = N^{uv} = N^v \supseteq K^v$. However KL is a p'-subgroup and thus is abelian and $K^v = K$. Since x was arbitrary, $M \supseteq K$ and thus $M \supseteq K^u$ for all $u \in N$. Since K is an $S_{p'}$ of the solvable group M we may conclude that K^u is conjugate to K in M by P. Hall's theorem (9.3.10 of [5]) and therefore there exists $w \in M$ with $uw^{-1} \in \mathfrak{N}_N(K)$. If $\mathfrak{N}_N(K) > K$ then $\mathfrak{N}_P(K) > 1$. This group is normalized and thus centralized by K and thus all of P is also. This contradiction shows that $\mathfrak{N}_N(K) = K, uw^{-1} \in K$, and thus $N = MK$. Since $p \nmid |K|, P \subseteq M$ and we have $M = N$ and thus all N^x are equal and $N \triangle G$. Thus $P \triangle G$ and we have a contradiction. Our assumption on the existence of L is therefore invalid and $\mathfrak{O}_{p'}(G) = 1$.

If $P_0 \triangle G$ is a p-group, put $C = \mathfrak{C}_G(P_0) \triangle G$. If $C = G$ then K centralizes P_0 and therefore K centralizes all of P and we have a contradiction. Thus $C < G$ and since $P \subseteq C$, C does not have a normal S_p. Therefore C is not a p-group and has a normal $S_{p'}$ and this contradicts $\mathfrak{O}_{p'}(G) = 1$ and we conclude that $\mathfrak{O}_p(G) = 1$. If $L \neq 1$

is any proper normal subgroup of G then either an S_p or an $S_{p'}$ of L is normal in G and is >1 and this contradiction shows that G is simple.

If P and P^* are two S_p subgroups of G and $P_0 = P \cap P^* > 1$, then since P is cyclic, $U = \mathfrak{N}_G(P_0) \supseteqq N$ and $U < G$. Since N fails to have a normal $S_{p'}$, the same is true of U and thus the S_p P of U is normal and $P = P^*$. Therefore P is a T. I. set. Now let

$$S = \mathfrak{C}_G(P) \subseteqq N .$$

If P^* is another S_p of G and $S^* = \mathfrak{C}(P^*)$, suppose that $S_0 = S \cap S^* > 1$. Now S_0 is not a p-group for otherwise $S_0 \subseteqq P \cap P^* = 1$, and thus there is some $x \neq 1$ in S_0 which is a p'-element. Since

$$P, P^* \subseteqq \mathfrak{C}_G(x) < G,$$

$\mathfrak{C}_G(x)$ has a normal $S_{p'}$ L. Since x is a p'-element of N we may suppose that $x \in K$ and hence $K \subseteqq \mathfrak{C}(x)$ because K is abelian. Thus $K \subseteqq L$ and $K = \mathfrak{N}_L(P)$. Since P normalizes L, it also normalizes K and this is a contradiction. Therefore $S_0 = 1$ and S is a T. I. set.

Now let A be any maximal p'-subgroup of G and B a p'-subgroup with $A \cap B \neq 1$. If $V = \mathfrak{C}_G(A \cap B) < G$ then $A, B \subseteqq V$. If V has a normal $S_{p'}$ L then $A \subseteqq L$ and by maximality $A = L$ and $B \subseteqq A$. If V has a normal S_p P_0 then V has a possibly not normal $S_{p'}$ L and since V is solvable, we may suppose that $A \subseteqq L$ by P. Hall's theorem. Thus $A = L$ and some conjugate of B is contained in A. In this situation, since A normalizes P_0 and P is a T. I. set we may conclude that A normalizes some S_p of G.

If q is a prime, $q \mid |A|$, let Q be an S_q of G with $Q \cap A \neq 1$. Then some conjugate of Q is $\subseteqq A$ and thus A is a Hall subgroup of G. If A^* is another maximal p'-subgroup of G with $q \mid |A^*|$ then A^* meets some conjugate of A and we may conclude that A^* is conjugate to A and $|A| = |A^*|$. If A does not normalize an S_p of G then A is disjoint from all other maximal p'-subgroups of G and A is a T. I. set. In this situation let $Q \subseteqq A$ be an S_q of G. Since A is abelian, $Q \triangle \mathfrak{N}_G(A)$ and since A is a *T. I.* set, $\mathfrak{N}_G(Q) = \mathfrak{N}_G(A)$ and thus by Burnside's theorem, $\mathfrak{N}_G(A) > A$. By the maximality of A it follows that $p \mid |\mathfrak{N}(A)|$ and some element of order p normalizes A.

Continuing with the situation where A does not normalize an S_p of G, suppose some element y of order p centralizes some $a \neq 1$ in A. We may suppose $y \in P$ and since $y \in P^a$ also, we conclude that $P = P^a$ and we may suppose $a \in K$. Then $K \cap A \neq 1$ and therefore $K \subseteqq A$. Since A is a *T. I.* set, y normalizes A and $K = \mathfrak{N}_A(\langle y \rangle)$ and thus y normalizes and hence centralizes K and therefore K centralizes all of P and we have a contradiction. Thus no $a \in A$ different from

1 commutes with any element of order p and since A is normalized by such an element we have $|A| \equiv 1 \bmod p$.

Let $A_0, A_1, \cdots, A_s$ be a collection of maximal p'-subgroups of G with all $|A_i|$ distinct and including all posibilities and with $K \subseteq A_0$. If $q \mid |G|$ and $q \neq p$ then some A_i contains an S_q of G and if $q \mid |A_j|$ also, then A_j meets some conjugate of A_i and as we have seen this implies that $|A_j| = |A_i|$ and thus $j = i$. Therefore

$$|G| = |P| \prod_{i=0}^{s} |A_i| .$$

Since $K \subseteq A_0$, no A_i for $i > 0$ can normalize an S_p of G and if $A_0 > K$, the same is true of A_0. In this situation no p-element commutes with a p'-element nontrivially and thus $\mathfrak{C}_G(P) = P$ and K is isomorphic with a subgroup of the automorphisms of P and since P is cyclic and $p \nmid |K|, |K| \leqq p - 1$. Continuing with the assumption that $A_0 > K$ we see that all $|A_i| \equiv 1 \bmod p$ and thus $|G|/|P| \equiv 1 \bmod p$. By Sylow's theorem, $|G|/|K||P| \equiv 1 \bmod p$ and therefore $1 \equiv |G|/|P| \equiv |K| \bmod p$. Since $|K| < p$ we must have $|K| = 1$ and this is a contradiction by Burnside's theorem. Therefore $A_0 = K$ and K is a maximal p'-subgroup.

Let $Z = \mathfrak{C}_K(P) < K$ and let Q be an S_q of K. Clearly, $K \subseteq \mathfrak{N}_G(Q)$ and thus by Burnside's theorem, $K < \mathfrak{N}_G(Q)$ and hence $p \mid |\mathfrak{N}(Q)|$. Since $Z < K$ we may choose q with $Q \not\subseteq Z$. If $\mathfrak{N}(Q)$ has a normal S_p P_0 then Q centralizes P_0 and therefore Q centralizes all of some S_p subgroup of G. It follows that Q is contained in some conjugate of Z and thus $Q^u \subseteq Z$. However Q^u is therefore an S_q of the abelian K and $Q^u = Q$. This contradicts $Q \not\subseteq Z$ and thus $\mathfrak{N}(Q)$ fails to have a normal S_p and hence has a normal $S_{p'}$ L and $L \supseteq K$. By the maximality of $K, K = L$ and K is normalized by an element x of order p. If $x \in P^*$, an S_p of G, suppose $K \subseteq \mathfrak{N}(P^*)$. Then $K \subseteq \mathfrak{N}(\langle x \rangle)$ and thus x centralizes K and therefore K centralizes all of P^*. Since $KP^* = N_G(P^*)$ we have a contradiction and no S_p containing x is normalized by K. In particular, $x \notin P$. We conclude that each of $P, P^x, \cdots, P^{x^{p-1}}$ is normalized by K and they are all distinct. Now $\mathfrak{C}_K(P^{x^i}) = Z^{x^i}$ and since $\mathfrak{C}_G(P)$ is a $T.\ I.$ set $Z^{x^i} \cap Z^{x^j} = 1$ unless $i = j$.

Put $|Z| = c$. Since the direct product $Z \times Z^x \subseteq K$ we have $c^2 \mid |K|$ and we set $|K| = c^2 t$. We have $|K - \bigcup Z^{x^i}| = c^2 t - p(c-1) - 1$. Now K/Z is a p'-group isomorphic with a subgroup of the automorphisms of P and thus is cyclic of order dividing $p - 1$. Since $[K : Z] = ct$, we have $ct \mid (p-1)$.

If x centralizes any $a \neq 1$ in K then a normalizes and thus centralizes a full S_p P^* of G with $x \in P^*$. If $b \in K$ then $a^b = a$ centralizes

$(P^*)^b$ and thus $P^* = (P^*)^b$ because $\mathfrak{C}_G(P^*)$ is a $T.\ I.$ set and thus K normalizes P^*. We have seen that this is impossible and thus x acts without nontrivial fixed points on K and $p \mid (c^2t - 1)$.

We have then, $p \mid (p - 1 + c^2t)$ and since $ct \mid (p - 1)$,

$$p \mid \left[\frac{p-1}{ct} + c\right].$$

Since both $p - 1/ct$ and c divide $p - 1$, we have $(p - 1)/ct + c < 2p$ and thus $(p - 1)/ct + c = p$. This implies that $c \mid ((p - 1)/ct - 1)$ and $p - 1/ct \mid (c - 1)$. It follows that either $p - 1/ct = 1$ or $c = 1$. If $c = 1$ then $t = 1$ and thus $|K| = 1$ and this is a contradiction and therefore $p - 1/ct = 1$. This yields $t = 1$ and $c = p - 1$ and thus $|K| = (p - 1)^2$. We have then $|K - \bigcup Z^{x^i}| = c^2t - p(c - 1) - 1 = 0$ and thus $K = \bigcup Z^{x^i}$. We may therefore apply Lemma 2 to K and conclude that K is an elementary abelian q-group for some prime q. Since K/Z is cyclic of order $ct = p - 1$, we conclude that $p - 1 = q$ and thus $p = 3$ and $q = 2$. Therefore $|\mathfrak{N}_G(P)| = |P|\,|K| = 4\,|P|$ and

$$|\mathfrak{C}_G(P)| = |P|\,|Z| = 2\,|P|.$$

If $H < G$ has even order then so does an $S_{p'}$ of H and thus a maximal p'-subgroup containing it has even order and this order must equal $|A_0| = |K| = 4$ and therefore $|H| \mid (4\,|P|)$. Since $\mathfrak{C}_G(P)$ is a $T.\ I.$ set, the proposition applies and G is not simple. This contradiction proves the theorem.

We note here that an alternate method of completing the proof is to use the theorem of Brauer, Suzuki and Wall [2] instead of the proposition given here in § 1. While there are some similarities in the proofs of these two results, the Brauer-Suzuki-Wall theorem is considerably deeper.

3. Here we prove our second theorem.

THEOREM II. *Let G be a group and let $p \neq 2$ and q be primes dividing $|G|$. Suppose for every $H < G$ which is not a q-group or a q'-group that $p \mid |H|$. If q^a is the q-part of $|G|$ and $p > q^a - 1$ or if $p = q^a - 1$ and an S_p of G is abelian then no primes but p and q divide $|G|$.*

Proof. If the theorem is false, let G be a minimal counter-example. Every $H < G$ which is neither a q-group nor a q'-group satisfies the hypotheses and thus none has order divisible by any prime different from p and q. Suppose $N \triangle G$ with $1 < N < G$. If $q \mid |N|$ then no other prime but p can also divide it and thus some prime

$r \neq p$, q divides $[G:N]$. If Q is an S_q of N then $\mathfrak{N}_G(Q)N = G$ and since $r \nmid |N|, r \mid |\mathfrak{N}_G(Q)|$ and thus G has a subgroup of order $r|Q|$. This contradiction shows that $q \nmid |N|$. If any $r \neq p$ divides $|N|$, let R be an S_r of N. Then $\mathfrak{N}_G(R)N = G$ and since $q \nmid |N|$, $q \mid |\mathfrak{N}_G(R)|$ and G has a subgroup of order $q|R|$. This contradiction shows that N must be a p-group.

If Q is any q-subgroup of G then $\mathfrak{N}_G(Q) < G$ and thus is not divisible by any prime different from p or q. If for every $Q > 1, \mathfrak{N}_G(Q)/\mathfrak{C}_G(Q)$ is a q-group then by Frobenius' theorm (see for instance 21.8 of [4]) G has a normal $S_{q'}$ which must be a p-group and this is a contradiction. Thus for some Q, an S_p of $\mathfrak{N}_G(Q)$ fails to centralize Q and in particular is not normal. Thus an S_p of G is not normal and Q is normalized by an element x of order p^b which does not centralize it. Some orbit of the elements of Q thus has size $\geqq p$ and $q^a \geqq |Q| \geqq p + 1 \geqq q^a$. We have equality and thus $p + 1 = q^a$ and Q is a full S_q of G, all of whose nonidentity elements are conjugate under x. Thus since $p \neq 2, q = 2$ and all 2-elements of G are involutions and in one class. Furthermore, by hypothesis, an S_p subgroup P of G is abelian.

If G has the proper normal subgroup N then we have seen that N is a p-group but since G does not have a normal S_p, $p \mid [G:N]$. If $N \subseteqq H < G$ and $q \mid [H:N]$ then the only other prime which can divide $[H:N]$ is p and thus G/N satisfies the hypothesis and if $N > 1$ we have a contradiction. This shows that G is simple.

If $H < G$ has even order and an S_2 of H is not normal then H does not have a normal p-complement. If P_0 is an S_p of H then by Burnside's theorem, P_0 is properly contained in its normalizer in H. Therefore $[H:\mathfrak{N}_H(P_0)] < [H:P_0] \leqq 2^a = p + 1$. By Sylow's theorem then, $P_0 \triangle H$.

Suppose $x \neq 1$ is a real element of G. Then $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle x \rangle) < G$ has even order and since the only 2-elements are involutions, the order of x^2 is a power of p and x^2 is a real element. If G has no nonidentity real p-elements then for every real $x \in G$, $x^2 = 1$. Since the product of two involutions is real, the set $\{x \mid x^2 = 1\}$ is a normal subgroup of G. Therefore there exists $y \neq 1$, a real p-element. Since y is transformed into its inverse by an element of $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle y \rangle)$, y is not central in that group and thus $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle y \rangle)$ does not have a normal S_2. It therefore has a normal S_p which is a full S_p subgroup, P of G and thus $\mathfrak{N}_G(P)$ has even order. It follows that $\mathfrak{N}(P) = PS$ where S is contained in an S_2 T of G and P is the unique S_p of G containing y.

If no involution centralizes any nonidentity p-element then S acts in a Frobenius manner on P and being abelian, it must be cyclic and thus have order 2. If $t \in T$ is an involution then $\mathfrak{C}_G(t) = T$ and in the terminology of Lemma 1, $m = |G|/2^a$ and $u = 2^a - 1$. If $1 \neq s \in S$ then s inverts every element of P. Therefore each nonidentity element of P is real and thus is contained in a unique S_p and hence P is a $T.\ I.$ set. Thus if any two elements of P are conjugate in G they are conjugate in $\mathfrak{N}_G(P)$ and thus are inverses and the nonidentity elements of P span $(|P| - 1)/2$ classes of G. These are the only real classes other than $\{1\}$ and the class of involutions and thus in Lemma 1, $r = (|P| - 1)/2$. If $x \neq 1, x \in P$ then $\mathfrak{C}_G(x) = \mathfrak{C}_{PS}(x) = P$ and the set of involutions transforming x to x^{-1} is the coset Ps. Therefore in Lemma 1, $v_i = |P|$ and $|K_i| = [G:P]$ for each i. The lemma yields

$$m^2 = m(2^a - 1) + \frac{|P| - 1}{2}|P|[G:P] .$$

Since $|P| \mid m$ and $2^a - 1 = p$, $p|P|$ divides the left side and the first term on the right side but not the remainder of the right side of the above equation and thus we have a contradiction. Therefore an involution centralizes some element of order p.

Now let $C = \mathfrak{C}_G(T)$ and suppose $C > T$. Then $C = T \times P_1$ where $P_1 > 1$ is a p-subgroup of G. Set $A = \mathfrak{C}_G(P_1) \supseteqq C$. Either $T \triangle A$ or an S_p subgroup P^* of A (which is a full S_p of G) is normal. If $P^* \triangle A$ then since $|A| = |P||T| \geqq |\mathfrak{N}_G(P)|$, $A = \mathfrak{N}_G(P^*)$ and

$$1 \neq P_1 \subseteqq P^* \cap \mathfrak{Z}(\mathfrak{N}_G(P^*))$$

and this is impossible in a simple group by 13.5.5 of [5]. Thus $T \triangle A$. Let $s \in S$, $s \neq 1$ and let $B = \mathfrak{C}_G(s)$. If P_2 is an S_p of B then $s \in \mathfrak{N}_B(P_2)$ and thus $[B:\mathfrak{N}_B(P_2)] < p + 1$ and $P_2 \triangle B$. Since $P_1 \subseteqq B$ we have $P_1 \subseteqq P_2$ and thus $P_2 \subseteqq A$ and thus P_2 normalizes T. Since $T \subseteqq B$, T normalizes P_2 and thus P_2 centralizes T and $P_2 \subseteqq P_1$. Now

$$\mathfrak{C}_P(s) = P \cap B = P \cap P_2 \subseteqq P \cap P_1 \subseteqq P \cap \mathfrak{Z}(\mathfrak{N}_G(P)) = 1$$

and therefore S acts without nontrivial fixed points on P and every p-element of G is real. In particular $x \in P_1$, $x \neq 1$ is real. However, we have $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle x \rangle) \supseteqq A$ and since $|A| = |P||T|$, we have equality and x is central in $\mathfrak{N}_G(\langle x \rangle)$ and this is a contradiction. We have shown that $C = \mathfrak{C}_G(T) = T$.

If $x \neq 1$ is a p-element centralized by an involution then $\mathfrak{C}_G(x)$ has even order but does not contain a full S_2 of G and thus has a normal S_p which is a full S_p of G. Hence x is contained in a unique S_p of G which is normalized by an involution centralizing x. By taking conjugates we may suppose that $x \in P$ is centralized by $s \in S$. Put $E = \mathfrak{C}_P(s) > 1$. Now $\mathfrak{C}_G(s)$ has the normal S_p $P_0 \supseteqq E$ and since E can meet no S_p of G other than P we see that $P_0 \subseteqq P$ and thus

$P_0 = E$. If $P^* \neq P$ is an S_p of G then $P_0 \cap P^* = 1$ and thus $\mathfrak{C}_{P^*}(s) = 1$.

Choose $t \in S$, $t \neq 1$. Since all involutions of T are conjugate in $\mathfrak{N}(T)$, choose $u \in \mathfrak{N}(T)$ with $s = t^u$. If $P^u \neq P$, then $1 = \mathfrak{C}_{P^u}(s) = \mathfrak{C}_{P^u}(t^u) = \mathfrak{C}_P(t)^u$ and thus $\mathfrak{C}_P(t) = 1$. Otherwise, $P^u = P$ and $u \in \mathfrak{N}(P) = PS$ so that $u = ry$ for some $r \in S$ and $y \in P$. Now S^u normalizes P and $S^u \subseteqq T$ and thus $S^u \subseteqq \mathfrak{N}_T(P) = S$ and therefore $S = S^u = S^y$ and $y \in \mathfrak{N}_P(S)$. This group is normalized and thus centralized by S and $y \in P \cap \mathfrak{Z}(\mathfrak{N}_G(P))$ which as we have seen is trivial. Thus $y = 1$ and $u = r$ and hence $s = t$. We have therefore shown that s is the only involution in S which centralizes any nonidentity element of P.

If $|S| = 2$ then $1 \neq \mathfrak{C}_P(s) \subseteqq P \cap \mathfrak{Z}(\mathfrak{N}_G(P))$ and this is a contradiction. Thus $|S| \geqq 4$ and we may find two involutions t and t' in S, both different from s. Then both t and t' invert every element of P. Therefore tt' centralizes P and hence $tt' = s$ and $\langle s \rangle$ has index 2 in S. We have now $|\mathfrak{N}_G(P)| = |S||P| = 4|P|$ and $|\mathfrak{C}_G(P)| = |\langle P, s \rangle| = 2|P|$. Since we have seen that a nontrivial p-element which is centralized by an involution is in only one S_p, P is a $T. I.$ set. If $P^* \neq P$ is an S_p of G then if $\mathfrak{C}(P) \cap \mathfrak{C}(P^*) > 1$ it is not a p-group and thus contains an involution. Because $P \triangle \mathfrak{C}_G(s)$ this is impossible and $\mathfrak{C}_G(P)$ is a $T. I.$ set. Furthermore, since $T \subseteqq \mathfrak{C}(s)$, T normalizes P and $T = S$. Therefore $|T| = 4 = p + 1$ and $p = 3$. If $H < G$ has even order then $|H| \mid (|T||P|)$ and the hypotheses of the proposition are satisfied. Since G is simple, we have a contradiction and the theorem is proved.

We note that for $p = 2$ we can get a counterexample to the theorem by taking $G = A_5$ and $q = 3$.

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