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CHAPTER 9

HOW TO SCHEME VIRTUOUSLY: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHANGING SOCIETIES*

There is only one excuse for a lecture: to challenge.
— Karl Popper

It is presumptuous for a career academic to address practical men and women holding important responsibilities in human affairs on the role of their agencies in meeting the needs of changing societies. This borders on temerity when the group of experts represents a wide array of cultural and national circumstances, especially when the academic in question is known to have traveled widely only in Ottawa. It becomes daredevilry to do so at a time when the ground is in motion.

Yet there is some merit in listening to the interrogations of a lay person: much merit for le profane — a dangerous word used in French to refer to the uninitiated. There is much to be learned by the lay person in the process of tackling such a task; there is also some merit for the initiated to hear the lay person, if only to understand better what lies behind the puzzlement and criticism they face in their rapports with the public.

My only credentials for this task, besides a quarter of a century of casual public service watching, stem from some adventurous comments I made on the Canadian Public Service Commission (Paquet 1985c). The paper was published, but I was also relieved, as a result, of civic duty as a member of the Auditor General’s Comprehensive Auditing Task Force charged with an assessment of the PSC. I learned first-hand that criticizing the PSC can be perilous. I hope that, in this second round of critical discussion of the roles of public service commissions (PSCs) and kindred institutions, I will succeed in airing my interrogations, and even in making some suggestions, without encountering the anger of the experts.

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Let me start with a few basic propositions:

- despite the contemporary rhetoric about the demise of the state and the downsizing of governments everywhere, the state will not play a lesser role in our socioeconomies in the future;
- the role of the state, however, will be quite different; there will be a shift from a regulatory to a strategic function (Paquet 1978b; Navarre 1986);
- human resource management is likely to be much more complex in this new setting;
- PSCs are bound to be key players in the strategic management of the public household;
- to play this role PSCs will need to be proactive and become more experimental instead of focusing on their traditional functions.

THE CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE

Canada is relatively young as a modern administrative entity. Yet, paradoxically, like many other young Commonwealth countries, it is also an aging socioeconomy. The last 30 years of relentless rule-making and institution-building have developed in our economies some incapacity to adapt and transform easily. There are only a few prognoses and therapies for such socioeconomies (Kindleberger 1978):

- building up protective barriers against foreign competition and bundling up in blankets;
- searching for a Fountain of Youth under the guidance of an economic Ponce de León; or
- inventing ways to dissolve the social arteriosclerotic structures in the body politic.

This painful third way is unfortunately the only reasonable one to follow. Many countries have crafted a strategy of this sort over the last decade. But, because much of this sclerosis has also been diagnosed as being of the iatrogenetic variety (i.e., generated by ill-inspired policies), many have seized on a philosophy of downsizing the public sector as the only way to make our socioeconomies less sclerotic. This, in turn, has triggered the recent efforts to reverse the vast transfer of material, human, and financial resources from society to state that occurred in the post-World War II period — to replace state regulation by self-regulation in a civil society equipped with a strengthened legal framework (Cohen-Tanugi 1985). These dual objectives (to rejuvenate the socioeconomy and to downsize the public sector) have become confounded.

Those bold enough to attempt to refurbish the state apparatus to invest it with a renewed capacity to deal effectively with the changing needs of society have had to face striking challenges. The first major challenge was that whatever might be accomplished would have to be done with fewer rather than more resources.
The second challenge has come from growth: from the world population increase and from the new form of knowledge-based development of our socioeconomies. Demographic growth has meant a larger demand for public service, with geometrically expanded personnel management problems, whereas the development of knowledge-based economies has entailed the demand for services that were not necessarily those provided by the state in the heyday of industrial growth. Because information and knowledge are not handled as well by markets as simple commodities, the need for nonmarket coordination has grown considerably with the development of the information economy. Indeed, the very notion of state intervention has experienced a fundamental transformation: in the world of the mass economy, governments built their legitimacy on their roles as agents of protection, stabilization, and redistribution; in the information economy, governments have to become agents of integration, coordination, and networking (Paquet 1985c).

The third challenge has come from the growing involvement of states and governments in matters of culture and values. Formerly, governments and their public services were not asked to act as regularly as they are now as referees between stakeholders in these realms. But the growing importance of affairs of the mind in the information economy has led governments to become more and more involved in adjudicating matters of values. This is not only of consequence in the rapport between government and the population, but it is a matter that has become very important internally, in the operations of government, as new norms of equitable treatment of employees and different types of affirmative action in dealing with racial, linguistic, or gender groups, etc., have arisen. These have created new constraints on the mode of delivery of public service. Administration has become philosophy-in-action and is becoming more so all the time (Dlugos and Weiermair 1981; Hodgkinson 1983; Mitroff 1983).

The fourth challenge is the world scale of many of the new problems facing public servants: from environmental issues, to urbanization processes, to technological change — issues that cannot either be abandoned to the market forces or be controlled by any national government in isolation, even under the most auspicious circumstances. This calls for new forms of collaboration between national organizations and going concerns, which have traditionally perceived themselves as in conflict but whose fates have become positively correlated in these turbulent times.

Finally, all our public administration apparatuses are frightfully deficient in the face of these new challenges. At the very moment when problems are becoming more difficult to solve, the public bureaucracies are under attack for their inadequacy. Although this is true to different degrees as one roams the continents, the style and procedures of public administration have been, and remain to a great extent Legalistic, formalistic, inflexible and authoritarian, with almost unassailable status arrangements... corruption is pervasive; there is no orientation towards goal setting and individual initiative is strangled. Functions are restricted to control and regulation plus a few limited services, with a marked
bias in the direction of overcentralization. There is what amounts to a continuous administrative crisis. [Goldstaub 1981]

This general diagnosis applies to developed and developing countries: the key difference is that the problems do not appear insoluble when resources are abundant; in less wealthy countries, the disproportion between the scale of the problems and the resources available to deal with them is awesome. But this is a difference in scale not in kind.

The situation is clear: more public service of a more complex sort has to be performed with fewer resources by public-sector organizations and personnel who do not appear to be capable of delivering the goods.

THE TASKS GOVERNMENT SHOULD/SHOULD NOT TAKE ON

The growing complexity, turbulence, and interdependence in the global socioeconomic environment have led to a loss of the stable state and to an evolution in government functions. It is no longer possible to regard the state as a simple policeman enforcing certain rules, acting as protector and provider in a placid environment. Those functions persist but they are no longer the only responsibilities of the state. Governments have had to develop capacities to act as animateurs, facilitators, and negotiators, as accelerating change and growing related uncertainty create circumstances where no simple rules will do, where judgment is called for (Vickers 1965).

The hierarchy of layers of public administration — ranging through politics, policymaking, implementation, administration, operations — still exists, but the need to attend to each of these with sensitivity to their novel particular constraints has been heightened. Over the last 20 years, both industrial countries and underdeveloped economies have seen a dramatic change in the nature of the perception of government and in the way in which government is expected to carry out its duties (Solo 1975; Islam and Hénaut 1979): a shift from a Taylorian view of public administration to an interactive perception of the process of public management (Friedmann and Abonyi 1976; see also Chapter 5, this volume).

In the Taylorian model, the different layers of the hierarchy are presumed to trigger a cascading of decisions from top to bottom: the political body determining the goals, and the implementation process apparently occurring mechanically through controlled activities of functionaries. In the interactive model, this one-way process of goal-setting-cum-control is replaced by a two-way process putting greater emphasis on different areas of concern — intelligence (i.e., gathering, processing, and interpreting the information needed for policy decisions) and innovation (i.e., changes in the design of administrative arrangements). In this context, the problem to be solved is regarded from the start as ill-structured, i.e., the goals are not spelled out and the means-end relationship is blurred. Consequently, the process of public
administration and government becomes a learning process (Wilensky 1967; Paquet 1971; Schon 1971).

Government is hesitant to accept this second mode of operation and the new sort of policy research it entails. Despite the rhetoric and the language of experimentation that is in good currency, government continues to perceive itself as the centre and to view society as the periphery. Much of what passes for policy and administration are efforts by governments to induce groups at the periphery to conform to central policy. By contrast, social learning entails listening to the periphery, interacting with the periphery in such a way that the centre becomes a party (but only one of many) in identifying, analyzing, and solving society’s problems. This in turn calls for policy research, policy-making, and administration to take on a cybernetic flavour: it is no longer a simple delivery system but a continuing process of information-gathering and organization redesign leading to a continuing redefinition of the goals and reassessment of the directions of policy (Paquet 1971).

Such a need for local participation in the design and implementation of policy and for participation in the minding of the public household is a central feature of the public philosophy required to reform the administrative process. It postulates that local knowledge is crucially important in the crafting of policy. Administration becomes a process of mutual education. This mutual education leads first to a recognition that the state does not necessarily belong in every aspect of the life of citizens. Second, learning must also reveal where the state needs to play a role as animateur and what structures will be necessary for it to play such a role effectively. Third, learning must show what sort of areas should simply be abandoned to private activities or to community work and what sort of structures might be useful to ensure that such activities will be conducted according to acceptable norms of efficiency and fairness.

PSCs must play a key role in shaping this broad process of mutual learning. Not to do so would be tantamount to allowing the system to evolve as if public services were unconcerned, and accepting a limited technical staffing management role. This would almost condemn PSCs to ineffectiveness. Ignoring its design role would be akin to a central bank being unconcerned about the nature of financial institutions and their regulation.

The allocation of functions (among the private, public, and civic sectors and within the public sector among the local, provincial, regional, and national levels) is not an easy task, and it is unlikely that PSCs will have a final say on such matters. However, as central agencies equipped with a fair sense of what is feasible and implementable, public services might benefit immensely from getting involved in the design of the institutions they will have to staff. Otherwise, they might find themselves relegated to an ex post role, on the personnel front, not dissimilar to the one played by the Auditor General on the financial side, while they should legitimately expect to play also an ex ante role, very much akin to the role of a Comptroller General on the human resources front.
Each country must design its own brand of allocation of functions among the public, private, and civic households and within the public household. In each case, it will be inspired by ideology and culture, effectiveness concerns, political and sociocultural circumstances. Yet within these country-specific constraints, a few general principles might be used as a basic sextant in designing a starting point for the process of social learning (Kirby 1980; Paquet 1988d):

- the principle of government exiting from routine management of nonessential or nonstrategic sectors;
- the principle of decentralization and devolution and of strengthening or creating intermediary organizations capable of acting as relay stations in this process of mutual education;
- the principle of full costing of public service;
- the principle of revenue dependency for all units where the services have the potential of being marketed;
- the principle of encouraging direct private–public competition;
- the principle that, if a subsidy must be given, it should be given to the consumers;
- the principle of a necessary culture of public service through mission statements, corporate plans, and a legitimate system of status and rewards.

This would amount to a philosophy of public service that might dramatically transform the contours of public service: not less government but a different form of government.

These principles of organization or institution design are meant to be only a starting point in discussions likely to lead to a set of meta-rules in the management of the public household. Most project managers define such meta-rules in their project manuals. What is necessary for PSCs is a project manual adapted to their own circumstances.

Completely abandoning these broad concerns to political leaders may be disastrous for PSCs. Given the constraints of values and circumstances, not all possible allocations of tasks between sectors are equally feasible, implementable, and manageable. If PSCs are to ensure that they will be able to do the best they can with reduced resources, it may not be unimportant for them to have a say in shaping the tasks devolved to them. This clearly means a redefinition of the central functions of PSCs: abandoning the security-generating in-basket/out-basket routine management and contracting-out of such services (Kemball 1984), but allocating more of the reduced resources to the intelligence, innovation, and design functions.

These are important new roles for PSCs in increasingly organizational states (Laumann and Knoke 1988), roles of an entrepreneurial sort (Giersch 1984). PSCs have neglected this side of their work in the past: as a result, in most countries, policy reviews or royal commissions have been struck, from time to time, reminding them that these concerns would not go away.
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS AS DESIGNERS

Once it is decided that an activity should fall under the responsibility of the state in some way and that PSCs will have to overview its organization and staffing, the key job is to determine how this task will be despatched. These decisions are rarely made once and for all. The form of the required organization and institution often evolve in unexpected ways. But there is still a need to work at the architecture of the organization and institution from the start to achieve effectiveness, efficiency, economy, and equity: doing the right thing, doing the thing right, doing it cheaply, and doing it fairly.

Organizations and institutions are the tools that refurbished PSCs have to design. These are quite different creatures: an organization is, more or less, a technical instrument, an expendable tool; whereas an institution is related to society's requirements, it embodies its norms and values. An institution may be said to be viable if it "creates conditions in which the competencies of its personnel are well utilized, and the positive values applied to structures related to its clients are also applied to structures related to its members" (Perlmutter 1965). In many ways, PSCs as designers must get away from the job of organization-building (which is obviously tempting because it is easier) and get involved in the construction of viable institutions. This in turn requires a good understanding of institution-building taking into account people, values, and environments.

Because these parameters are quite different from country to country, one cannot expect to be able to transplant institutions from one setting to another without major adaptations.

This is hardly the place to develop a primer on social architecture but it might be useful to summarize basic principles of institution-building before proceeding to specific recommendations about the way PSCs might design new institutions. Perlmutter (1965) has prepared a textbook for social architects. It both sketches the conceptual requirements and provides a step-by-step description of the working relationship between social architects and their clients in the institution-building process. (A statement of the seven conceptual components of a theory of social architecture as seen by Perlmutter is presented in the appendix at the end of this chapter.)

Conceptually, institution-building is the outcome of mutual education of the architect and of the clients and it is based on a sort of intercreation process leading both parties to develop jointly a structure that takes as fully as possible into account the human and technical criteria of effectiveness in a global sense (including positive values such as health, respect for the individual, and acquisition of skills — technical and interpersonal).

But there is more to building an institution than simply the conceptual basis. The practice of institution-building must proceed on the basis of a set of clear assumptions that one must fully realize and steps one must go through. Again Perlmutter (1965) spells this out clearly:

* preliminary mutual exploration of the clients' commitment to build;
• mission of the institution and central objectives of the clients;
• alternative routes to building objectives;
• choice and commitment to a specific strategy;
• implementation process;
• validation and stabilization.

PSCs, as designers of institutions, have to acquire a research capability if they are to perform this sort of task. At present, it is fair to say that, in most countries, no central agency is charged with organizational and institutional design. As a result, much of it is improvised at the local level and PSCs are, then, asked to staff organizations and institutions that often turn out to be unworkable.

This research requirement has to go much beyond the usual studies of remuneration, evaluation, training, and classification which have used much of the time of PSCs in the past. It is not that these requirements have to be ignored or their importance downplayed. But effectiveness cannot be achieved by concentrating on such plumbing issues. The whole process of personnel management has to be put in broader perspective and the PSCs have to be able to contribute in a meaningful way to this broader perspective through an alternative approach to public policy. PSCs would fill a vacuum in so doing and might succeed in developing a higher status within the government apparatus if they were to become not only the locus of expertise on remuneration and classification, but also the place where expertise on organizational and institutional design resides.

The social learning framework suggested by Friedmann and Abonyi (1976) might be an interesting policy framework to help the PSCs develop this new role as designers (Figure 5). It calls for a new sort of policy research developed not on the sole basis of analysis of technical data, but on the basis of a full exploration of values, political gaming and collective action as it evolves in the civil society (see Chapters 2 and 5).

On the basis of such policy research — done nowhere in governments except sometimes through task forces and royal commissions — PSCs might be in a position to suggest organizational/institutional designs that will not only be efficient, but will also likely provide the ongoing intelligence, the innovative capability, the political viability, the sensitivity to evolving values, and the mobilization and commitment necessary for the public organizations/institutions to perform well.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS AS ANIMATEURS

The research function necessary for the PSCs to become effective designers is also necessary if they are to become effective animateurs. The PSCs have to develop a theory of human behaviour if they are to have any impact on the ethos of the public household and the organizational culture of the public service. Professionalism, collective pride, and a sense of civic responsibility
have disappeared to a great extent from the public service. In its place, one finds anomy, alienation, corruption, and a fundamental lack of commitment to the organization/institution.

A recent study in Canada has shown that loyalty and commitment in the public service is much lower than in the private sector (Zussman and Jables 1987). This has been interpreted as resulting from a variety of causes. However, the root cause of this disenchantment is easily summarized under two headings: flawed organization/institution designs and poor understanding of the motivation of public servants.

I suggested above that the flawed designs could be resolved by some architectural repairs or through preventive architecture according to certain principles, and that experimentation with new structures would be a central outcome of new policy research culminating in social learning. But institutional architecture will not suffice. Nothing less than a new concept of citizenship needs to be developed and, concomitantly, a new concept of the appropriate way for public servants to deal with the new citizens inside and outside the civil service (see Chapter 7, this volume). Private firms have learned to deal with their employees and customers in new ways over the last few years: the manager in both the private and the public sectors has to become an anthropologist (Boisot 1987).

Managing an organization/institution requires a capacity to understand the sociocultural circumstances of the employees. If the employees are not properly trained, if their social responsibilities outpace their income, or if their remuneration is whimsically defined, it is hardly surprising that motivation and competence are wanting. Before one is tempted to engage in elaborate efforts to provide leadership and to stimulate entrepreneurship in the public service, one has to ensure that the basics are there. These basic components are somewhat trivial but fundamental:

- a well-established recruitment and selection capability;
- a sound classification/evaluation/compensation system;
- a fair remuneration policy;
- a good performance evaluation scheme;
- a clearly stated human resource development policy;
- good training arrangements and facilities.

None of these basic features can be imported ready-made from other countries: they depend on the dominant values and the sociocultural underground. Some organizational features may be importable, but many institutional features have to be learned locally and must fit local circumstances. For example, in societies where the central institution is the family, any tacked-on administrative organization is simply going to be milked in the name of family priorities, and no “sermon on the Mount” will do any good.

The role of PSCs as animateurs entails balancing coercion (i.e., external pressure) with effective stimulation (i.e., internal pressure). The simplest way to apply coercion is still competition: it provides a decentralized and
omnipresent external pressure to perform according to certain standards. The best way to generate internal pressure is to develop an organizational culture likely to reduce shirking and corruption.

There has been undue reliance on competition as the guiding force. Peter Drucker (1988) has reminded managers that organizations of the year 2000 will look much more like symphony orchestras, hospitals, and universities than like the typical manufacturing concerns of the 1950s. Much of Drucker's argument indicates that private concerns will look more and more like public concerns in the year 2000 and that there will then be a need for mechanisms of motivation more sophisticated than those emanating from simple market competition: new sociocultural institutions creating a unified vision, developing collective pride, building an esprit de clan, and getting professionalism to act as a moral bond to complement the commercial and utilitarian pressures (Haworth 1977).

The importance of professionalism as a bond and of professional identification as a way to bring "commitment to assure that action is characterized by excellence" (Haworth 1977) has been underestimated, very much like clan-type relationships within organizations (Ouchi 1980). Indeed the extraordinary wealth of motivational forces contained in the pursuit of excitement and novelty has hardly been tapped (Scitovsky 1976; Servan-Schreiber 1986). Yet these represent a promising basis on which to build commitment, loyalty, creativity.

There has been a grand malaise in public services everywhere and the fundamental questions of values, leadership, morale, and motivation have now been put on the agenda. It has reached such a critical level that even the media are taking notice. Yet little has been done to probe these dimensions because the social sciences as currently practised are ill-equipped to deal with them (Paquet 1988a).

It is not clear that the industrialized countries have performed any better than developing socioeconomies in tackling this task: the lack of concern for values and related dimensions in the large bureaucracies of industrialized nations has become so ingrained that it may be even more difficult to get their PSCs to acknowledge the existence of such problems. On the Canadian scene, it is not unfair to say that the artillery of defense mechanisms deployed in response to studies, such as those of Nicole Morgan (1981, 1985) and the Zussman/Jabes (1987) team has been impressive, and the degree of cognitive dissonance that has marred the interpretation of their results extremely high.

However, built into the social learning paradigm (sketched in Chapter 2 and mentioned above), there is the capacity to bring the social sciences back to their original questions, back to mixed positive/normative concerns. Such an approach might entail a long overdue remise en question of the methodological naïveté and pretensions of the social sciences (Schrag 1980). The roots of this crisis of the social sciences can be traced back to the 17th century philosophers who have set the research agenda in a theory-centred style bent on framing solutions in timeless universal terms. As a result there has been an
unholy shift of what is regarded as interesting from the oral to the written, from 
the particular to the universal, from the local to the general, and from the 
timely to the timeless (Toulmin 1988). Yet the practical questions are calling 
for timely, local, and particular answers.

The social learning paradigm is only one of many new approaches signal-
ing a move back to those very things that made social sciences and philosophy 
"practical," and case studies and case ethics (casuistry) are not maligned as 
much and as openly as they used to be. There has been a growing concern over 
the moral dimensions of statecraft in the recent past (Waldo 1980; Dwivedi 
1987). The refurbished social sciences that one hopes will ensue from this 
renewed concern for practical affairs and normative values may pave the way 
to new policy research into the central issues mentioned above.

IN PRAISE OF SHORTCUTS

The time may be long before PSCs are allowed to transform themselves into 
the informed and competent designers and animateurs we might wish them 
to be. In the meantime, there is room for experimentation based on a sound 
appraisal of where each PSC starts from: a point that is quite different 
culturally and administratively) for each. The basic features of any legitimate 
public service (listed in the previous section) must be in place: for no 
meaningful reform movement can be built on whimsical remuneration, 
classification, and evaluation. One must also realize that only 5% of public 
administrators advise ministers on policy issues, while 95% are involved in 
routine work. Both groups cannot be motivated by the same techniques: a 
two-track system will have to be put in place. Studies have already shown 
where the crucial points are in each case (Montgomery 1986; Glaser 1988).

Betting on New Organizational/Institutional Forms

One of the central weaknesses of public bureaucracies is the overcentralized 
nature of their operations. Much can be said, therefore, in favour of experi-
menting with techniques of decentralization of decision-making. This has been a 
common feature of the newly industrializing countries: they have allowed "key 
state actors and bureaucracies to perform as economic entrepreneurs" (Luke 
1986). This sort of flexibility and freedom cannot be exercised without the 
appropriate framework of participation and accountability, but there have 
been many proposals that look promising.

One approach is to experiment on a small scale with intrapreneurship, i.e., 
the development of "profit centres" within larger bureaucracies (Macrae 
1982). The decision to separate some portion of the work in public bureauc-
racies and to subcontract it to interested groups of employees may appear 
far-fetched at this time, but it amounts to nothing more than the simple 
decision to make-or-buy that bureaucracies all around the world are forced 
to make. The question is simply that what is made internally by a bureaucracy 
might be produced more efficiently by a "minifirm," either inside or outside
the bureaucracy. Peter Kemball (1984) has shown how this can be done quite simply, and he has worked out a scheme through which a standing offer might be extended: anyone inside or outside the bureaucracy "who can deliver a service currently being offered by government at the current quality level and at a saving of 50 percent of current costs will be awarded a multi-year franchise or license to do so, upon submission of a credible plan of action."

Another approach is to go directly to the concept of franchising and to carve out of the existing bureaucratic work some portion that could, experimentally but legitimately, be contracted out. On matters like training and auditing, this is already done. The solution is all the more appealing if one is willing to consider the possibility of allowing some local concern to bid on a franchise from a well-organized international network providing instant know-how and quality control. There is no reason to believe that there would be adverse reactions to such experiments any more than there has been when local governments have begun to contract out services like sweeping hospitals or collecting rubbish. One advantage of franchising is that it might provide an ideal vehicle for technology transfer: if an advanced country like Canada that has developed expertise in services like classification were to develop a franchise system open to groups capable of serving other PSCs in the developing world, one might be able to ensure high-quality service by nationals under stringent franchise rules (quality control, standards, etc.) at much lower costs than at present (Bettinger 1978).

Crafting New Public Service Cultures

Tinkering experimentally with institutional forms will not suffice. It might, at best, inspire the top quartile of a bureaucracy to become intrapreneurs or project leaders. To reach down into the other levels, it will be necessary to create a new public service culture: as new norms come to be in good currency in public institutions and organizations, rules will become less important. However, the new norms will not be developed without an acculturation mechanism. This mechanism is training and development. Private firms have used it extremely well, and there is no reason to believe that public bureaucracies could not do the same.

Training and development are the ideal vehicles in which to send throughout the organization the philosophy, norms, and cultural distinctiveness one wishes to develop and to show how the reward system is linked to this philosophy. Dissemination of information about the goals, strategies, and tactics of the government apparatus may be effected this way, and this message is often much more important that the so-called technical know-how imparted. Yet, it is surprising to find that this is not done by public service training agencies (Dwivedi and Engelbert 1981). Training and development is also the channel through which professional standards and professionalism may be best inculcated. With professionalism comes the basis for the development of self-enforced norms, collective self-reliance, and a lessening of corruption. Nothing less than a mafia can be developed in this way: a group having
attended the same courses, speaking the same "language," and consequently communicating more effectively across departments (Carmichael 1986; McAllister 1987).

As for the morale and motivation of public servants, there can be no instant fix. A renewed PSC would do much toward solving the morale and motivation problem. Under the present arrangements, with their byzantine rules and regulations, civil servants are becoming impersonal and irresponsible (i.e., incapable of responding effectively) because it is no longer clear to whom they should respond and to whose needs they should attend. Much depends on the development of a home-grown management culture in the public sector. This, in turn, depends much on the role that the PSCs appropriate. Much could be accomplished if PSCs could recast their role away from an ever-interfering hand between management and staff toward a three-pronged function: (1) a recruitment service at the lower level (where large numbers trigger economies of scale), (2) an audit/certifying agent to ensure that proper procedures have been followed in the case of higher appointments, classification, promotion, etc., and (3) an agency of designers and animators along the lines suggested above.

One cannot hope to develop an "esprit de corps" (Fayol 1949) and eliminate "soldiering" (Taylor 1911) — a work phenomenon whereby average productivity approximates that of the least productive worker — without attacking the principal cause of "soldiering" and low productivity, i.e., the system of compensation. One might experiment with decentralization of fiscal authority at the departmental level and with discretionary authority for unit managers to "increase salaries of their subordinates but only as a group and only if the unit meets a predetermined output" (Halpern et al. 1988). This would reintroduce the principle of merit into public service compensation on a broader scale: not at the level of the individual but of the unit. This sort of compensation, based on a consensus or negotiated agreement about fair and meaningful work goals, would encourage functional cooperation and maximum employee input, eliminate soldiering, take full advantage of the informal organization, and help develop "esprit de corps." This sort of system is implementable even in public sector departments providing "complex services to the public requiring interpretation and professional judgment in their normal course of business" (Halpern et al. 1988).

This sort of initiative would encourage participative management and eliminate another major source of morale problems in public bureaucracies — the whimsicality factor in dealing with subordinates in the absence of clear and fair work goals. Managerial accountability, efficiency in the use of resources, and better programs would ensue from joint clarification of work goals and from the reduction of whimsicality in compensation.

CONCLUSION

To propose a social learning framework is to suggest that learning is essential. The necessary unfinishedness of such ex ante analysis is one of the costs of the
strategy we propose: social learning can only come with practice and action, it is not possible to spell out \textit{ex ante} the design of policy-in-the-making. The problem formulation will evolve with the learning process.

At this point, PSCs everywhere are torn between neo-Taylorian imperatives and the dominant values in their societies, and everywhere rules and regulations are in the end perverted to fit dominant values. The only recourse of political masters, who are anxious about having lost control over the public bureaucracies and are searching for ways to discipline the elusive mass of civil servants, is to decree drastic cuts: if one cannot control the civil service process, one may always scale it down.

The only meaningful response of PSCs wishing to escape the trappings of local dominant sociocultural values is to initiate a social learning process likely to lead to a reasonable balance between what is feasible, acceptable, implementable, and effective. This cannot be done from the centre but requires action hypotheses and interactive planning.

In each country's design of its own brand of PSC, some international collaborative work might be fruitful. It might take the form of franchise-type links or less-formal networking on issues of common concern. It might even be possible to develop better liaison through dissemination of the results of applied research. A good example is the replication in a number of countries of the Zussman and Jabes (1987) study. This would both serve the community of PSCs and be a much-needed basis for the revaluation of the importance of research capabilities within the PSCs. Indeed, the devaluation of the status of research within PSCs is as dangerous and fundamentally wrong-headed as the devaluation of the status of training and development in ministries and departments.

Finally, there may be a case for PSCs that elect, as a matter of strategy, to exit with fanfare the monitoring of a multitude of routine transactions between managers and employees in the public sector, to enter forcefully into activities of organization/institution design, even if it means temporarily scaling down the size of the agency. This might be an astute tactic for PSCs in their efforts to move the public household into a new style of public administration, by showing the way.
APPENDIX: CONCEPTUAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A THEORY OF SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE

- Concepts concerned with the human dimension of institution-building: at the level of individual personality, interpersonal relations, group behaviour, intergroup behaviour, the total organization, and the social, economic, cultural, and political systems that constitute the environment in which the organization exists.

- Concepts dealing with the objective-reaching process, whereby the mission of an institution is formulated and translated into structural, i.e., sociotechnical and performance objectives; the strategy for reaching these objectives is devised on the basis of alternatives that are realistic in terms of an analysis of the consequences, e.g., to resources, payoffs, and risks; the choice of alternatives leads to implementation; and implementation in turn leads to validation, when the objectives actually reached are tested against desired results, and structures considered necessary for further growth and survival are stabilized (Simon 1960).

- Concepts relating the institution to its environment, especially sponsoring institutions and special interest groups:
  - how the institution being built influences and alters the environment;
  - what the environment in its political, economic, social, and technological aspects seems to demand of the institution;
  - how the institution responds to changing environmental conditions, political instability, prosperity and economic depression, war and peace.

- Concepts relating to the creation of essential organizational structures, either formal or informal: work-process systems, patterns of authority, of reward and punishment, evaluation, communication, identification, perpetuation.

- Concepts that concern the realization of positive values: respect for individual dignity, for physical and mental health, justice, freedom, human growth, authentic relationships, technical excellence, service, productivity, profitability, distribution of wealth and power, and efficiency.

- Concepts regarding changes of feeling, anxieties, and emotions; dealing especially with the reduction of persecutory and depressive anxieties and the promotion of more constructive emotions.

- Concepts related to a general-systems model of the organization; in particular the transformation of inputs, resources (both human and non-human) into results and outputs or performances.

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