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The symbolic values represented in the design of the Group Plan and University Circle—civic virtue, culture, and learning—were put on trial in Corporate Regime service distribution and wealth redistribution policy. If democracy indeed leveled upward, then the masses must be educated and the very poorest must be given a leg up on the social ladder. True to its beliefs, the Corporate Regime reformed the Cleveland Public School System and built an entirely new charity edifice.

That the Corporate Regime was not omnipotent, even in its heyday, can be seen in its limited ability to make the delivery of urban services more efficient. Although the regime clearly dominated urban policy making, it did not have a comparable ability to dominate policy implementation and the bureaucratic operations of the municipality. The city government remained a constant irritant to the Corporate Regime, even though service delivery improved considerably during the years of the regime’s policy making primacy. The source of irritation was that the municipal government remained to a significant degree captive of populist political culture and highly independent mayors. Repeated attempts at municipal charter reform misfired, and populists retained their influence as elected officials and as public servants within the bureaucracy.

The regime was also split between entrepreneurial and professional approaches to the delivery of services. In electoral politics as well as within the service delivery departments of the municipal bureaucracy, Corporate Regime professionals made accommodations to populist political culture in the interest of consensus building around broad urban policy goals, especially those related to urban growth policy. For more than half the quarter century that the Corporate Regime made policy, the mayor’s office was occupied by Tom L. Johnson (1901–1909) and
Newton D. Baker (1912–1916). Often at loggerheads with the Chamber of Commerce, both men nonetheless made cabinet appointments of exceptional quality, expanded civil service, and implemented business management techniques and modern accounting systems. While the entrepreneurs shunned Johnson, professionals made accommodations with both administrations. This was in the main a successful political strategy but one that frustrated the impatient entrepreneurs who eventually lost interest in the municipality and concentrated instead on policy areas—the land use development projects, the public school system, and wealth redistribution in the charity system—where they could more reliably affect outcomes. Although professionals practiced a strategy of accommodation in electoral politics and within the municipal bureaucracy, the triumph of middle class professionalism was nearly total in the delivery of public educational services.¹

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Gains won by the middle class professional schoolmen did not materialize quickly or in a conflict-free environment. Yet control of the school system was essential if the Corporate Regime was to modernize the organization and reconcile a welter of public demands for educational services and fulfill its custodial destiny of elevating the masses. Three layers of Corporate Regime control eventually materialized: (1) structural control over the system of governance, (2) consensus on the school system’s educational mission, and (3) the introduction of modern management techniques. The campaign for structural control was won during the municipal charter reforms of the 1891–1905 period. Programmatic control was secured between 1891 and 1915 when the Corporate Regime reconciled public demands for a more broadly based institutional mission with actual programs. Following the recommendations of the Cleveland Foundation Survey of 1915, management controls were established by means of pedagogical reform and regulation of budgets and costs.²

Structural Reform

Three episodes of municipal charter reform gave the Corporate Regime structural dominance over the public school system. The 1891 Federal Plan reduced the number of school board members from forty-two elected by ward to seven members elected at large, a structural reform which purged
the school board of populist and sectarian influences. A temporary setback occurred in 1901 when Tom L. Johnson’s political coattails proved long enough to elect a suspect slate of school board candidates in an at-large election. With a political base built on the support of middle class professionals and the populist-leaning lower middle class, the Johnson school board included two reform minded lawyers, a minister, a librarian, and a college student. The new board members were broadly representative of the city’s new social geography. A new anti-Johnson municipal charter enacted in 1905 mandated the familiar seven-member board, but the new charter skirted the controversial at-large representation issue by requiring at-large election of five of the board members, while throwing a bone to the populist idea of geographical representation by having one member each chosen from the city’s east and west sides. During the balance of the Corporate Regime, the demographic composition of the school board came more and more to resemble the demographic composition of the Corporate Regime itself. The several elected boards were composed primarily of male corporate managers and lawyers and women active in Corporate Regime cultural and charity organizations. Except for the lone west side representative, all lived within a one-mile radius of University Circle.

*The Evolving Institutional Mission, 1891–1915*

Structural reforms purged the school board of populist membership, but they did not expunge populist influence from the school system. The importance of the populist era in the history of Cleveland public education was that it prompted a wide-ranging community debate over alternative educational agendas. These agendas were given shape, focus, and advocacy by the professional schoolmen hired to administer the Cleveland Public School System. The community-wide debate survived the departure of populist school board members and culminated in an entirely new educational mission for the Cleveland Public Schools.

From the onset of the Populist Regime in 1878 to the Cleveland Foundation Survey of 1915, several alternative programs and services came under review, discussion, debate, and, finally, implementation. The first matter was agreement on the constituencies to be served by the public school system. This issue in turn provoked debates over which programs would best serve which groups of students. Corporate Regime traditionalists, unwilling to commit dollars to nontraditional students and programs, held that all constituencies would be best served by an unadorned school system which simply taught the three R’s. But the educational expectations
of public school constituencies and the expertise of the professional schoolmen had grown too sophisticated during the course of the unfolding industrial era to be placated by threadbare pedagogical homilies. Immigrant leaders, for example, demanded English-language instruction for children and adults alike, while labor spokesmen pursued evening and weekend classes for adults and children obliged to participate in the work force. With compulsory school attendance laws in effect, special provision would have to be made for the instruction of incorrigibles who might otherwise be ignored or expelled by the system. In an industrializing city, manual training became a highly important educational issue for both labor and management. A handmaiden of corporate managerialism and the emergence of retailing and services was a growing demand for a cadre of white collar workers with “commercial competencies” which could be learned in the public school system before entering the white collar labor force. Employers, clamoring for a trained work force, broadly supported the educational demands of immigrant and labor groups. Turn of the century public health crusaders and charity agency workers targeted the neighborhood elementary school as the organizational base from which to deliver the message of preventive health care and the delivery of basic family social services.

The Merchant Regime had defined the mission of the public school system as education in the service of good citizenship. The new demands in the Populist and Corporate regimes meant that the mission of the public school system must be redefined and more broadly configured to include training for children and adults from all social classes for diverse roles in the industrial workplace and society. School superintendents Andrew Draper and Lewis H. Jones (1891–1902) thoroughly overhauled the educational delivery system, efforts calculated to offer something to all public school constituencies. Thereafter, until the Cleveland Foundation Survey of 1914, their successors, public school superintendents William H. Elson and James Frederick, made the commitment of bricks, mortar, and dollars to the broad based educational programs designed by Draper and Jones.

When Superintendent Jones pledged to rid the public schools of the “uneducated and unthinking classes,” he was issuing a politically expedient rejection of the departing populist school board and not a blanket rejection of the public’s increasingly divergent expectations for the public school system. The actions of the schoolmen spoke more loudly than their words. Draper and Jones implemented the populist educational agenda. Manual training classes were offered. “Steamer Classes” in English-language instruction combined with an evening program for immigrant students harked back to the days of the old populist school board. Special
programs designed to lure dropouts back to the school system also materialized. The middle class social service constituency was served when classes for the disabled were offered and, by allying with the Visiting Nurses Association, health education programs and physical education programming were implemented. In response to new child learning theories developed in universities, the kindergarten idea was incorporated into the curriculum. To house the new programs, superintendents William H. Elson (1906–1911) and James Frederick (1911–1914) built manual training and commercial high schools and six new kindergartens.

Large-scale programmatic and physical expansion of the Cleveland Public School System addressed the demands of the various constituencies for broad-based educational services, but it helped that this local educational agenda was also the agenda of an emerging national public education establishment. Symptomatic of the growing professionalization of education, the aim of the national public education establishment was to standardize the delivery of educational services across the nation. The education establishment emerged from the cooperative relationship between education programs in universities, foundations devoted to the study of educational issues, and administrators in public school systems. Schoolmen moved freely between the institutions and exchanged experiences and ideas which in time evolved into a national education agenda. The fully realized national public education agenda included scientific management, vocational education, vocational guidance, intelligence testing, standardized examinations, educational tracking, and standardized educational materials.

Superintendent Andrew Draper was one of the new schoolmen. His career straddled public school administration, the university, the private foundation, and legislative lobbying for improved educational standards and programs. In 1894, in a career change not uncommon among schoolmen, Andrew Draper left the Cleveland Public School System to become President of the University of Illinois. Other local schoolmen followed similar career paths. Superintendent Jones left Cleveland in 1902 to head the Michigan State University Normal School and Frank Spaulding (1916–1920) left the Cleveland superintendency to accept a faculty appointment at Yale.

If the institutional mission of the Cleveland Public School System between 1891 and 1915 broadened in response to public demand and the new educational standards formulated by the national education establishment, criticism of the local public school system continued almost unabated. Even though the schoolmen responded affirmatively to the concerns on the local public education agenda with new programs and physical facilities, annual enrollment surges amounting to nearly ten thousand...
students a year placed growth pressures on the system that led inevitably to mishaps in service delivery, inefficiencies that provoked renewed criticism of the public schools. Critics pointed to the system’s high dropout rate and low participation rate (students enrolled relative to the number of children in the school age population cohort). The Orth Commission, appointed in 1905 by lawyer and school board president Samuel P. Orth, was created to respond to just this sort of criticism. The Orth Commission’s report reaffirmed the school board’s commitment to a broad based educational agenda but promised greater efficiencies in service delivery. The enrollment increases and attendant service delivery inefficiencies, however, continued to rack the system until 1915, when the Cleveland Foundation intervened unilaterally with a comprehensive survey of public education in Cleveland.

Management Controls, 1915–1920

The Cleveland Foundation was established in 1914 by Frederick Goff, banker to the entrepreneurs, and it became the social policy research arm of the Corporate Regime. One of the first tasks the new foundation took on was the comprehensive survey of the Cleveland Public Schools. The commission for the survey was awarded to Leonard Ayres of the Russell Sage Foundation, a key institutional link in the national education policy network. Ayres, in turn, dispatched a team of expert schoolmen to Cleveland to study the city’s public schools, and between 1915 and 1916, the Russell Sage Foundation consultants wrote a series of reports which set the course for a managerial revolution in the Cleveland Public School System. The school board, initially stung by the reports, intemperately accused the Cleveland Foundation of meddling, but yielding to irresistible pressure from the Corporate Regime, the school board sheepishly hired Frank Spaulding as the superintendent to implement the management recommendations of the Cleveland Foundation Survey.

Schoolman Spaulding was an efficiency expert enamored of Frederick Winslow Taylor’s new science of management. He labored under the illusion that a soulless management system designed by Taylor for business organizations could be transported wholesale to the public school system. Schoolmen like Spaulding and the staff and professional consultants employed by the Russell Sage Foundation were oblivious to the fact that a management system appropriate for an organization engaged in the manufacture of nuts and bolts was inappropriate for an organization that educated children. Yet Taylor’s management system was uncritically appro-
priated by educational organizations. Taylor’s system of management armed complex business organizations engaged in manufacturing with tall, top-down command and control line hierarchies supported by heavily layered staff bureaucracies. This bureaucratic, impersonal system of organizational management was imposed on the Cleveland Public Schools by Superintendent Spaulding, who, as the man atop the command and control hierarchy, held the reins of organizational control firmly in his grasp. The unaddressed issue was that the industrial management model unnecessarily distanced the recipient of the service from those responsible for providing it, transforming what was once a personal relationship between teacher and student into an impersonal relationship between students and teachers on the one hand and layers of faceless schoolman-bureaucrats on the other.

Taylorism empowered the superintendent by disempowering school boards, principals, teachers, students, and parents. By explicitly separating policy setting from daily management functions, Spaulding became nearly independent of the school board. Under the pre-Spaulding administrative system, the school district was organized by geographical district with a relatively autonomous district superintendent in charge of the locality, administrators whose offices were in the neighborhoods and who were recognizable and accessible to students and parents. Teachers in this decentralized system were acknowledged as professionals with responsibility for setting classroom standards and for evaluating student progress. Spaulding replaced this structure with a top-down command and control administrative hierarchy purloined from corporate organization charts, a model in which the company president at the top of the chart placed vice-presidents in charge of the chief functional operations of the business, and so on down through lesser ranking functionaries on the organizational ladder until the widget at last rolled off the assembly line.

In the Cleveland Public School system, Spaulding replaced district superintendents with assistant superintendents for budgets, curriculum, instruction, and buildings. Assistant superintendents reported directly to the superintendent, and their offices were placed near Spaulding’s in the newly constructed school administration headquarters building on the Mall downtown. From these offices, assistant superintendents for curriculum and instruction reduced school principals to middle management overseers and teachers to white collar labor. The assistant superintendents for curriculum and instruction created the matrix of educational programs that would become the “one best system.” District-wide intelligence testing, standardized examinations, educational tracking, and standardized instructional materials installed a standard curriculum and a Taylorized

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instructional process which degraded the teacher’s role in evaluating student performance and progress and designated students as mere products of an educational assembly line. Apprehensive students and parents were now routinely referred “downtown” with concerns or complaints. The added costs of the new centralized management operation were charged against the budgets of the individual schools.\textsuperscript{19}

Frank Spaulding’s downtown budget office gave the superintendent control over the school system’s finances, and budgets came more and more to drive all operations of the school system. The corporate organizational model and the Cleveland Foundation surveys emphasized the importance of rigorous business-like fiscal controls and strict accountability for monies spent. The tax avoidance strategies and tax burden shifting tactics of the Corporate Regime put the public school system on a tight fiscal leash.

The schoolmen countered with suspect productivity measures and evasive accounting practices in their attempts to squeeze more money from taxpayers. Productivity measurements were one of the hallmarks of Taylorism, and Tayloristic schoolmen developed their own productivity measurements. The annual reports of the superintendent fairly bristled with these statistics. Annual reports ran to hundreds of pages of tables accounting for nearly every conceivable activity of the school system, tables introduced by lengthy, densely written obfuscations rendered in a pseudo-scientific managerial jargon that only accidentally resembled the English taught in public school classrooms.\textsuperscript{20}

Enrollments were counted and categorized and cross-tabulated in a variety of imaginative ways but rarely the same way two years running. The budget was sensibly split into capital and operating accounts and in the operating accounts enrollments were joined to dollars to fashion productivity measurements. Per capita spending per student was touted as the most important productivity measurement because it could be used to track the overall spending of the school system. In reality, the most important productivity measurement was the student-to-teacher ratio, for it drove the operating budget and had far-ranging consequences for the capital budget. Extreme fluctuations could take place in the student–teacher ratio and yet not be discernible in per capita spending tabulations. The superintendent was under constant pressure to keep the budget under control, and per capita spending was a way to evaluate the superintendent as watchdog of the public purse. The schoolmen, fatedly, suffered from edifice complexes, and the showiest educational edifice of the era was the high school. In order to build high schools and professional reputations and still keep per capita spending and high school student-to-teacher ratios
impressively low, student-to-teacher ratios were driven skyward in elementary schools. By manipulating this student–teacher productivity measure, per capita spending increases were held to politically acceptable levels, and superintendents won rave reviews for their prudent fiscal management from school boards, the public, and potential employers.

Not everyone in the public was so persuaded. The statistics and productivity ratios derived from them formed a double-edged sword upon which the schoolmen eventually impaled themselves. The productivity ratios exposed the hollowness of Frank Spaulding’s claim that a “one best system” could be all things to all people. Private and suburban schools spent far more per capita than the Cleveland Public School System, and these schools had far lower student–teacher ratios than did the Cleveland system, most conspicuously at the elementary school level. Because the private and suburban schools were not required to spend on manual training and commercial programs, evening classes, classes for immigrants and incorrigibles, and social service functions, they got far more per dollar spent. Middle class parents who made the connection between the quantitative claims of the schoolmen and qualitative results observable in their children moved expeditiously to the suburbs. At the close of the Corporate Regime, Cleveland public elementary schools were experiencing their first losses in enrollment.

However much the public school system became a captive of the professional ideal of the schoolmen, the goals of the entrepreneurs nonetheless were realized in the system. The entrepreneurs wanted a public school system that was accessible to the masses and that delivered a quality education, was well managed, and fiscally responsible. The entrepreneurs saw in the public school system the institutional means for elevating the masses. With a public school education and hard work the humblest of toilers could himself become an entrepreneur and a contributor to the betterment of society, a captain of industry and employer of labor who had earned a position inside the policy making boardrooms of the buildings lining the Mall and gracing the park land at University Circle.

WEALTH REDISTRIBUTION
The Scientific Management of Charity

Scientifically managed wealth redistribution was the final policy achievement of the Corporate Regime. During its years of policy making ascendancy, the Corporate Regime rationalized a charity system composed of a welter of warring public and private, often sectarian, organizational
elements, a network further splintered by debates over the philosophy of charity. The notion of wealth redistribution itself was at the core of the philosophical and institutional discord.

Wealth redistribution is an economic act directed toward a social beneficiary. Plainly put, haves give to have-nots. This, in the language of economics, is a one-way transfer of wealth. Unlike other economic relationships, there is no mutuality of exchange between giver and receiver. In all other areas of urban policy—economic development, urban growth, and distributive services—there is exchange value for a dollar spent. Dollars spent on economic development return profits to owners and jobs to workers. Urban growth policy plots out rational and pleasing uses of urban space with results both tangible and intangible that are cast to a widening circle of beneficiaries who see in the spatial benefaction a utilitarian exchange value for money spent. Distributive services are measured in the public mind with mathematical precision: services improve in accordance with the amount of money spent and just as predictably worsen during moods of fiscal retrenchment. Wealth redistribution offers no such exchange value. The individual beneficiaries do not reciprocate; nor, in the short term, do the monies spent appear to improve the human or social condition. Frustration inheres in wealth redistributive policy.

Wealth Redistribution Policy Reprised

Frustration with wealth redistribution policy was common to all policy making regimes, and it led mostly to angry finger pointing and convulsive debates over blame. Americans believe that for every condition there is a cause and for every cause a cure. But wealth redistribution policy is thwarted by the lack of consensus over cause and cure. The core purpose of wealth redistribution policy is to alleviate poverty, a goal which raises a twofold debate. First is the matter of poverty itself. Why are some people poor? Once widows, orphans, the chronically infirm, and the handicapped are dispensed with, the debate turns to the matter of why there are such unexplainable numbers of able-bodied poor people. Two contradictory and mutually exclusive answers to this question shaped an important part of the debate over wealth redistribution policy. The poor are poor either because of (1) personal failure or (2) failure of the economic system. The policy maker’s causal preference is important because it guides the choice of remedial vehicles and institutional agendas. Until the Corporate Regime, Cleveland’s wealth redistribution policy floundered on these contradictory claims of cause and cure. The ideals which motivated policy
making in each of the regimes differed on the causes of poverty and therefore on remedial policies.

The Corporate Regime in the matter of wealth redistribution policy was philosophically at odds as between entrepreneurs and professionals over the causes of poverty, though far less so on the mechanics of fund-raising, the organization of institutional delivery systems, and the direction of wealth redistribution policy.

Cleveland entrepreneurs readily agreed with the sentiments of Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus, who declared in 1798 that “Dependent poverty ought to be held disgraceful.” Wealth was a reward for personal achievement and poverty a punishment for personal failure. Early in their involvement with the local charity movement, Cleveland entrepreneurs parroted the sentiments of English liberals, from Malthus to Chamberlain. When turn of the century English liberalism became tainted by the socialist attempt to lay the blame for poverty on industrial society and by its advocacy of state collectivist remedies, Chamber of Commerce entrepreneurs probed modern psychology for answers. Modern psychology was seductive because it scientifically set normative standards for individual and family behavior and judged as abnormal and deviant those who failed to conform to such norms. Social psychology put a modern face on the causal relationship between personal failure and poverty.

Entrepreneurs, however, also believed in the old fashioned virtues of reciprocity, their own as well as that of dependent groups. Entrepreneurial reciprocity required service to society, and an element of that service was the amelioration of poverty. Judgments about the origins of poverty, moral or scientific, did not absolve the entrepreneurs of their obligation. Entrepreneurs were at heart optimists who wanted to believe that poverty was only a temporary condition. The poor were lacking only in opportunity. Hard work and education would manufacture the opportunities needed to lead the dependent classes out of poverty. The public school system was the long-term remedy for poverty, but short-term relief fell to the network of private charitable agencies. Entrepreneurs thought that this heretofore directionless network must be taken in hand and directed toward getting the dependent claimants back on their feet.

The professionals were far less sanguine about the origins of poverty. It was not a simple matter of either/or. Moral frailty, social deviance, and the industrial system were all valid explanations of poverty. Unlike their entrepreneurial colleagues, many professionals had first-hand experience working with the poor. When lawyer Frederic C. Howe arrived in Cleveland, he took up residence at Hiram House in the decaying Central neighborhood and volunteered his evenings and weekends working with the
social settlement’s clients. There he began to appreciate the fact that many of the impoverished clients of the settlement house were neither depraved nor deviant. Still, he agreed to serve on the board of the Charity Organization Society (COS), a board composed chiefly of entrepreneurs. One fund-raising letter sent out by the COS was returned to Howe with a stern rebuke, written by Dr. Louis B. Tuckerman. A physician, religious leader, and reformer active in the public health movement, among other, more radical causes, the doctor’s letter to Howe laid the blame for poverty squarely on the steel and coal magnates who served on the COS board. The COS, Dr. Tuckerman charged, was merely an ill-disguised attempt to sweep the human refuse of industrial society off the street and hide it in charitable agencies, an effort now capped by the appalling insult of petitioning middle income people to pay for the sins of the plutocracy. Howe was chastened, and he joined other professionals in laying the blame on industrial society, though not directly on the individual entrepreneurs who served on the board of the charity organization society.

Realists among the professional classes appreciated the fact that the inequities of industrial society were not going to be remedied at the local level. Many professionals were too beholden to entrepreneurs to too loudly lay blame, while some, such as Starr Cadwallader, the director of Goodrich Social Settlement House, George Bellamy of Hiram House, and James Jackson of Associated Charities, feared government participation in wealth redistribution policy as much as they feared poverty itself. What professionals discovered is that they could either fight entrepreneurs in a winless battle over blame or join them on the common ground of organizational process. Aid to the impoverished if not the cure for poverty could be improved through effective fund-raising and efficient redistributive agencies. It would mean, however, that wealth redistribution policy would attack symptoms rather than causes.

The Cleveland Chamber of Commerce confronted the wealth redistribution problem in its Committee on Benevolent Associations, established in 1899. Composed of entrepreneurs and professionals, the Committee on Benevolent Associations for a period of twenty years worked toward solutions to the problems that had frustrated wealth redistribution policy in each regime: management, fund-raising, service delivery, and policy research, problems exacerbated by the proliferation of social service agencies as the city’s population grew in size and diversity. The major religious denominations had charitable arms; immigrant groups created benevolent associations; labor groups had affiliated welfare agencies; professional organizations aided their pet populations; and businessmen’s service clubs performed their acts of charity and benevolence. Some of these agencies
were highly exclusionary, while the clientele of others overlapped. Some were highly efficient as service providers, while others were sloppy, inefficient, and soft-hearted. Entrepreneurs were drawn into redistributive policy because they were the most visible beneficiaries of the new industrial order, and they quickly became the beleaguered targets of the fund-raising campaigns of every charitable organization. Professionals were more troubled by the sheer proliferation of organizations, the wasteful duplication of effort, the competitive bickering among the agencies, the amateurishness of the service delivery staff, and the lack of a coherent policy direction. Entrepreneurs and professionals alike suspected that clients exploited these weaknesses to their own advantage, which, of course, they did.  

After years of drift in a sea of trial and error, the Chamber of Commerce’s Committee on Benevolent Associations at last took heed of the lessons learned from failed past attempts to centralize wealth redistribution policy. In a series of bold strokes between 1913 and 1917, the committee at last resolved the issues of management, fund-raising, service delivery, and policy research. It did so by helping to organize the Welfare Federation, the Community Chest, the School of Applied Social Sciences, and the Cleveland Foundation.

The Welfare Federation (initially, the Federation for Charity and Philanthropy and today the Federation for Community Planning) was the umbrella organization that coordinated charitable fund-raising, accredited agencies, set operational standards, and distributed money to agencies meeting its standards. The importance of the Welfare Federation was that it adapted the corporate planning model to wealth redistribution policy. One of the responsibilities of the Welfare Federation was to approve all agencies seeking funds. A Welfare Federation seal of approval meant that the agency had submitted a plan stating its goals and objectives supported by a budget detailing its capital and operational needs. A parallel to the managerial revolution occurring in the public school system, the charity agency budget became the means for achieving organizational accountability. From the myriad agency plans, the Welfare Federation staff prepared a single, comprehensive wealth redistribution policy budget and proceeded to raise the money to fund it.

Fund-raising campaigns led by the Committee on Benevolent Associations and later the Welfare Federation made impressive gains over the ad hoc and inefficient nineteenth century methods of charitable money grubbing, but in 1919, when the Committee reassigned fund-raising to the newly created Community Chest, charitable solicitation reached a new and far more sophisticated level.

Community Chest fund-raising directed a new stream of money into
philanthropic agencies, money that augmented the public tax dollars flowing into public education and public charities and eased the fiscal burden on the entrepreneurs who were channeling their philanthropic capital into University Circle. The Community Chest employed professional fundraisers who brought modern marketing techniques to the task of charitable fund-raising and, most significantly, spread the cost burden of wealth redistribution well beyond the entrepreneurial class. The professional fundraisers targeted entirely new categories of contributors and tailored marketing strategies to reach each segment of the solicitation market.

Entrepreneurs remained an important segment in the fund-raising campaign, but the marketing strategies of the professional fund-raisers shifted the cost burden of wealth redistribution to new categories of contributor. Middle income households were identified as a significant but largely untapped segment and fund-raising campaign strategy dictated a door-to-door campaign carried out by an army of neighborhood volunteers. The most significant marketing breakthrough, however, came with the campaign to raise funds from the employees of major businesses. White collar employees of corporate and professional organizations were required by management to pledge a percentage of their annual salaries. The last year of Welfare Federation fund-raising yielded $250,000, a sum far exceeding that of any previous campaign. But the Community Chest in its first year alone raised $4 million to fund wealth redistribution policy, and the amount soared every year thereafter.34

The staffing of wealth redistribution agencies remained a problem until the founding of the School of Applied Social Sciences (SASS) in 1913. A college within Western Reserve University, SASS trained professional social workers to staff welfare agencies. Prior to 1913, agency staffs were likely to be composed of volunteers, such as Frederic C. Howe at Hiram House, clergymen, well-intended amateurs, and salaried but untrained social workers. But social work was evolving into a profession at the turn of the century. Late in the old century, charity organization societies conducted in-house training programs for their workers, the approach taken by James Jackson of Associated Charities in Cleveland before he came up with the idea of establishing the School of Applied Social Sciences as a two-year graduate program to train professionals in social work, public service, and public health care.35 Within five years, two of SASS's three divisions, the programs in Municipal Administration and Public Service and the Course for Public Health Nurses, were dropped for lack of enrollment, but the Family Welfare and Social Service Division for the training of social workers went forward with considerable success.

In the early years of SASS, social work education sought to blend the
practical with the academic. Its twenty-seven faculty members were drawn from traditional academic disciplines in the university and in part from practitioners in Corporate Regime businesses and civic sector organizations. Political scientist Raymond Moley, economist Charles C. Arbuthnot, and sociologist James Elbert Cutler (who was also the school’s first dean) allied with Samuel Scovil of Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, investment banker Warren S. Hayden, Mayo Fesler of the Civic League, Munson Havens of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, and City Engineer William A. Stinchcomb to train social work students in the broadest possible application of their discipline.  

The SASS curriculum was grounded in the new institutionalism gaining currency in universities. Core courses in government, municipal government, sociology, social institutions, and the child and the community were paired with social issues such as labor, socialism, and the factory system, and to these the curriculum linked such courses as municipal administration, the administration of social legislation, household administration, playground management, charity organization administration, and case work with families so as to maximize the program’s key concern—organizational management.

Institutionalists skated on thin ice. Their approach implied that social ills could be remedied by social institutions, but institutionalism also strongly suggested that poverty and other social maladies were rooted in society and its institutions rather than in individual behavior. Early master’s degree students under the direction of Professor Mildred Chadsey studied neighborhood life and workplace environments and made the connection between society and the individual. By 1920, the first forty SASS graduates were so trained.  

In the 1920s, however, the emphasis in SASS shifted from institutionalism to case management and social psychology. Agency management remained an integral part of the curriculum but courses in psychology, case studies, interviewing techniques, counseling, and case management steadily replaced the study of institutions and institutional behavior. Masters essays, now case studies of dysfunctional families and individuals, reflected the trend. The new approach was geared toward setting standards of normative behavior for families and individuals. The social ills that had earlier been blamed on industrial society could now be ascribed to the deviant behavior of individuals or groups of individuals. Modern psychology offered the hope that these deviancies could be treated and corrected by the new generation of social worker–counselors. Ironically, Corporate Regime wealth redistribution policy began by holding society accountable and ended by laying the blame on individuals.
The work of Corporate Regime wealth redistribution policy was at last completed in the 1920s, just as the regime was slipping from power. Wealth redistribution policy rested in the hands of the private sector, which satisfied the entrepreneurs in the regime. At the same time, its managerial efficiency and operation as one collectivity (the system) serving another collectivity (classes of clients) satisfied the bureaucratic impulses of regime professionals. It was a remarkable edifice. The Community Chest Fund raised funds; the Welfare Federation provided planning, budget making, and operational oversight; SASS trained professional staff; and the Cleveland Foundation conducted policy research with surveys of the public schools and criminal justice system. This policy edifice, despite the commanding federal role in wealth redistribution policy since the 1930s, survives to this day.

CONCLUSION: THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CORPORATE REGIME

The Corporate Regime was the most dynamic and effective of Cleveland’s policy making regimes and the regime whose policies had the most far-reaching impact. The economic development, urban growth, service distribution, and wealth redistribution policies, for good or ill, cast a long shadow over Cleveland a century after their inception.

Yet it was a regime that accomplished much despite internal divisions and debate. The entrepreneurial element within the regime argued that, to the extent practicable, policy making should be an individual enterprise contributing to the well-being of individuals. As organization builders themselves, entrepreneurs appreciated the importance of individuals acting together in an organizational conduit to achieve important goals from which individuals would benefit.

But the entrepreneurs divided over the proper organizational conduit. The faction represented by Tom L. Johnson relied heavily on the state to achieve individualist goals. This was anathema to the faction headed by Cleveland Chamber of Commerce entrepreneurs. For them the organizational conduit must be removed from the perils presented by public institutions and elected officials. The proper conduit was the voluntary civic organization, the nonsectarian organization, the special purpose district, or the private foundation. Only in these organizations could self-interest be put aside and could civic virtue flower.

Critics, of course, might claim that these organizations were too narrowly representative of a single class and its values. But professionals,
whose numbers were most dominant late in the Corporate Regime, did not rise in opposition to the values or the conduits chosen by the entrepreneurs. For the professionals, organizations were both ends and means: one collectivity benefitting another collectivity. The goal of the professionals was to improve organizational efficiency and spread the benefits of regime policy making as broadly as possible to as many groups as possible.

Corporate Regime economic development policy did not engage the attention of professionals; instead, they deferred to the superior business wisdom of the entrepreneurs. Corporate Regime economic development policy, in truth, died of individualism. The telling moment came when the entrepreneurs refused to make venture capital available to the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce to attract new enterprises. From then on, Cleveland’s ability to attract new businesses was left to chance, and the fate of the largest local employers was in the hands of multilocational corporations.

Professionals played a much more important role in urban growth policy. Both parties to the regime agreed that land use controls were the essence of growth policy. The entrepreneurs wanted to bring order and civic virtue to the city by way of example, as demonstrated particularly in the parks systems and the twin group plans; their commitment was measured by their lavish redirection of capital from business investments to philanthropy represented in University Circle. Assigning both order and virtue to institutions, the professionals sought to achieve land use order through comprehensive building regulation, zoning, and city planning; they sought to promote civic virtue by means of establishing cooperative relationships between more conventional institutions, such as the municipality, the public school system, higher education, and cultural institutions. In this manner, urban growth policy was eventually co-opted by the professionals and the professional ideal.

Entrepreneurs shied away from service distribution policy except to lend support to political structural reform measures intended to disempower populists. Tom L. Johnson was the lone exception. As mayor, Johnson appointed qualified professionals to head executive departments and attempted to spread the professional ideal of order and efficiency throughout the municipal bureaucracy. He paved the way for Newton D. Baker and the Chamber of Commerce professionals to establish productive working relationships with civil servants within the municipal bureaucracy, the result being improved efficiency in the delivery of services but not the wholesale purging of populist influences. Of all municipal institutions, the public school system most notably became the instrument of the professional ideal, the universalism of which provoked a crisis of expectations in the public school system by regime’s end.
Wealth redistribution policy was the most unqualified success of the Corporate Regime. It was a unique blend of entrepreneurial vision and professional managerialism. The fund raising edifice was a triumph of burden shifting from the rich to the middle class, the Welfare Federation a victory for order and organizational efficiency, the Cleveland Foundation a unique attempt at policy research, and SASS a model of what could be achieved through institutional cooperation. The entire wealth redistribution edifice was a triumph over both sectarian charity and philanthropy and government interventionism.

But the Corporate Regime did not survive its successes, and, as it turned out, it ended more with a whimper rather than a bang. The founders of the regime got old, retired to the suburbs, or simply moved on to other venues. There was a sense also that the job was finished. Economic development policy would go on as before. The public land use controls were in place or soon would be. The new city manager system in government would be a trusted vehicle to implement land use controls and deliver services efficiently. And the new wealth redistribution system was working beyond anyone’s best expectations.