

ticism about "general propositions" seems in some way removed from the spirit that governed most analyses of modernization in the early years of the behavioral revolution, when the search for regularities and universal propositions was earnestly pursued. In a stimulating conceptual chapter, Pye discusses some of the ways in which his thinking about the modernization process has evolved since that time.

10. It is striking that both Samuel Huntington and Myron Weiner chose to conclude their contributions to the retrospective analysis they recently edited of scholarly thinking on political change in the Third World with a strong assertion of the need for greater attention to comparative analysis of the cultural dimensions of modernization. See Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington, eds., *Understanding Political Development* (Little, Brown & Co., 1987), pp. 28 and 60.

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The State and Its Study The Whole and the Parts The Third Annual John Gaus Lecture

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John Gaus gave me my first job as a political scientist, one with the National Resources Committee (later rechristened the National Resources Planning Board). His group's report, *Regional Factors in National Planning and Development*, included two chapters that constituted my first professional publication. Our frequent contacts thereafter were marked by the kindness and generosity on his part that so many of my generation found inspiring. His scholarly perspective and reflectiveness shaped the work of younger scholars. He so defined the horizons of public administration as to invite us to be political scientists and social scientists, not just narrow specialists in our subdiscipline.

He would be surprised, I believe, by the current tendency to view bureaucracy as dominant in the state. He would worry on two grounds. First, it misperceives the real-world situation. Second, it unduly magnifies the role of students of public ad-



The three Gaus Award recipients: l. to r., Dwight Waldo (1987), James W. Fesler (1988) and Herbert Kaufman (1986).

ministration at a time when the prospect of divorce from political science threatens to narrow their concern for the state as a whole. He would also fear that talented political scientists in other fields would neglect administration, leaving it to the specialists.

The scope of administration is determined by the scope of governmental functions, which is decided politically.

This may be a propitious time in which to address these concerns. We are now celebrating the drafting, adoption, and performance of the U.S. Constitution. Inevitably this turns our attention to the State that independence and the Constitution created, to the governmental institutions acting for the State, to the Preamble's commitment "to promote the general welfare," and to the history through which the Constitution, its State, our governmental institutions, and the general-welfare concept evolved. For several decades none of these has been of high fashion in political science. Current attention to them may be merely an aberrant departure from regnant style, bound to last only for the brief, celebratory period. My hope is that this will not be the case. This hope is buoyed by a number of thoughtful political scientists who, independent of the celebratory mood, have proposed bringing the State, institutions, the public interest, and history back in.¹

I venture to explore the grounds for this hope. After a preliminary look at the supposition that the U.S. system is distinctively dominated by the bureaucracy, I should like to reflect on the reintroduction of the State, its institutions, and history, and examine more fully the relation of bureaucracy to the other institutions. Then I shall invite your consideration of the public interest as a concept that revival of the State entails. Finally, I shall

attempt to explore the symbiotic relation of political science and the study of public administration.

The scope of administration is determined by the scope of governmental functions, which is decided politically. One measure of what a government does is its share of the society's gross domestic product. A little over a third of our society's GDP is accounted for by American governments at all levels. Contrast that to the roughly half to two-thirds of GDP accounted for by the governments of Canada, West Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries. That ranks us tenth (OECD Economic Outlook December 1987, 187). Another measure of the scope of administration is the number of governmental employees. Here, again, comparative data are instructive. In 1982 American governments employed about 17 percent of the country's workforce. That was about the same as France's and Germany's, and lower than the United Kingdom's 22 percent, Norway's 23, and Sweden's 32.²

It is in administration that complexity imposes the most familiar example of relations between the whole and the parts.

For the last twenty years our national executive branch employment has been almost constant, wavering within the narrow range of 2.8 to 3 million. In the last ten years the increase of almost 200,000 was more than accounted for by the Postal Service, the Defense Department, and its alumni office, the Veterans Administration. Their swellings, exceeding the total increase and only marginally related to claims of a bureaucratic state, were largely

compensated for by cuts in domestic departments, with Health and Human Services the biggest loser. (U.S. Congressional Budget Office 1987, 27). If these data tell us anything it is that among modern democracies American government least warrants designation as a dominantly bureaucratic state. I shall return to this issue after addressing some broader concerns.

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My interest is twofold. One is the real world of governance. The other is the analytical world of political science. The two worlds should not be far apart. Both the practice and the analysis of government involve the relation of the whole to the parts and, by necessary implication, the relations among the parts. This is obvious in the American government. I think it equally obvious in political science, where the centrifugal pull of subdisciplines threatens to negate our common responsibility.

The State is distinguished from the society despite extensive interplay between the two.

To be sure, our common discipline has enjoyed, if that is the right word, a succession of paradigms—pluralism, behavioralism, structure-functionalism, and public choice. Each was introduced with fanfare and broad claims that it was the master design of public life that all political scientists should adopt. Each eventually moderated its claims and was absorbed into our discipline as among the alternative ways of pursuing analysis.³ The parallel of these cycles with the cycles of real-world government is striking. Planning-Programming-Budgeting, Zero-Based Budgeting, Management-by-Objectives, and other massive reforms were similarly trumpeted as nostrums for the body politic. Each failed to fulfill its exaggerated claims. Yet each left a

deposit that continues to inform the conduct of public affairs. So, too, in political science, each grand model helped to integrate our subfields into a vision of the whole. No doubt, yet another paradigm is waiting to be born. My hope is that it will not so focus on inputs to the system that it neglects outputs and, so, administration.

Individual officials make the decisions. This they do, however, within the constraints imposed by their trusteeship of values, by history, by organizational cultures, and by power structures.

It is in administration that complexity imposes the most familiar example of relations between the whole and the parts. Division of labor on the one hand, and, on the other, the need for coordination and bureaucratic responsibility require a hierarchy, tight or loose, as an organizational necessity. Much of my own work, I tardily realize, has focused on the relations of the administrative whole and its parts, whether manifested in centralization and decentralization, federalism, field administration, executive branch organization, or interaction between the political- and career-executive echelons. Such standard concerns of public administration I leave aside now preferring to reflect on administrative agencies' and other institutions' interactions as parts of the whole that is the State.

Bringing the State back in is not universally applauded. Let me distance myself from some of this controversy. I am not invoking an image of the State in any mystical sense, nor reviving sovereignty as a concept. What I have in mind is a short-

hand term for the political system in a restricted sense or the government in a broad sense. The State is distinguished from the society despite extensive interplay between the two. I use the term "the State" simply to stand for a whole, composed of a multitude of large and small parts, whose articulation is a problem for effective government and for political-science teaching and scholarship.

A constitution of a modern nation seems legitimately described as a constitution for the State, as it indeed seeks to legitimate the State.

In the case of both the State and its institutions one can reasonably hypothecate five interrelated characteristics. First, they take actions, a given in international relations and, I would argue, an observable fact domestically. This is not to reify the State or a governmental institution. Individual officials make the decisions. This they do, however, within constraints imposed by their trusteeship of values, by history, by organizational cultures, and by power structures. The second characteristic is the distinctive set of values that inhere in the concept of public office as a public trust. Third, the State and its institutions have a history whose impact on the present we too often ignore. Fourth, both the major and minor institutions of the State have organization cultures, themselves the products of history, which through recruitment and socialization of their members assure a continuity of outlook that canalizes individual behavior. And, finally, the State and its institutions have power structures, reinforced by sanctions—generally expressed as hierarchy and authority. I should not like to be misunderstood. If these be norms, they are sometimes violated. But our capacity

to identify violations and to distinguish gross from minor violations is itself acknowledgment of the norms.

Bringing the State back in means also bringing history back in. Our custom is to use the terms "political system" and "the government" in a strictly contemporaneous sense. Each nation-state, though, has a history of development marked by both continuity and change. The State appears to be the proper term to express the nation's continuity, while acknowledging as well the changes that it and its institutions have undergone. In any contemporary nation-state having a century or more of history, the present, if properly examined, reveals the persistence of traditions, some of normative orientations, some of institutional arrangements, some extending to societal orientations about such matters as able youths' aspiration for public service. A long perspective reveals, too, such alterations as shifts in the class origins of recruited public servants, as is notably demonstrated in the administrative histories of France, Britain, and Germany. Both these phenomena of time—continuity and change—are more readily captured, I think, by a sense of the State as an entity with a past and a future, as well as an intervening present.

A constitution of a modern nation seems legitimately described as a constitution for the State, as it indeed seeks to legitimate the State. A large part of any such document or set of documents establishes the major governmental offices and institutions. Another important part, though, establishes individual rights, protecting them from impairment by government or, as with the abolition of slavery and the on-again, off-again treatment of intoxicating beverages, from impairment by individual persons.

The great parts of the American State are the three branches of government. Their intricate interrelations are mapped by political scientists, though often from the confining perspective of subfields primarily concerned with individual branches. Whether from a broad or narrow perspective, our task is daunting. James Madison anticipated our problems by writing,

Experience has instructed us that no skill in the science of Government has yet been able to discriminate and define, with sufficient certainty, its three great provinces, the Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary; or even the privileges and powers of the different Legislative branches. Questions daily occur in the course of practice, which prove the obscurity which reigns in these subjects, and which puzzle the greatest adepts in political science. (*The Federalist* No. 37)

I do not propose a lengthy tread along these well-worn paths. Each branch is an institution, has a history rich in traditions, and enjoys a distinctive organizational culture. This I take to be indisputable in the case of Congress, each of its houses, and the Supreme Court.

Curiously, the presidency seems least attentive to institutional history,—in contrast to much of our current scholarship. The neglect is a result, I suspect, of the other branches' continuity of membership and so of memory. Memory is an asset of "the permanent government." That government comprises most members of Congress, some long-serving congressional staff aides, many members of congressional staff agencies, judges, civil servants, and military officers.⁴ In sharp contrast is the temporary incumbency of the President, the White House staff, and members of the Cabinet and subcabinet. Rapid turnover at the top levels of the executive branch deprives the institution of memory unless the resources of senior career civil servants are tapped. This is a condition not satisfied of late.

The agencies engaged in public administration occupy an ambiguous status. They are certainly not "a fourth branch of government," as some have proposed. They are parts of the executive branch, but depend on Congress for their existence, functions, appropriations, staff, and procedures. And they are subject to judicial nay-saying when they stray beyond constitutional and statutory limits, as perceived by the courts. They are parts of a whole, but the whole is not just the executive branch but the government and, if you will permit, the State. That is to say, the

best of them derive much of their tradition from the premises of democracy, the higher authority of the major institutions of the State, and the obligation to pursue the public interest. They socialize their staff members in such State-based premises, which by definition are other-regarding rather than self-regarding.

The people's confidence

in the State and its

institutions requires not

only that officials avoid

unethical conduct but that

they avoid the appearance

of such conduct.

Administrative discretion, some argue, has so swollen as to threaten the State as Americans have conceived it. What this charge misses is its parallel with the expanded exercise of discretion by legislative bodies and courts. This expansion reflected their efforts to relate public expectations of ameliorative action to new, obdurate, technically freighted, and future-oriented problems of public policy, many of them egalitarian in spirit and seeking internalization of the costs of externalities.

Administrators perceive their discretion as tightly restricted. Though some respected scholars take a different view, Congress, the President, and the courts all impose constraints that were less, not more, in evidence in earlier periods. In economic regulation, Congress vested authority in independent regulatory commissions, with only such statutory guidelines as "fair and reasonable rates," "public interest, convenience and necessity," and "fair methods of competition." In the newer, social-regulation statutes, such as those protecting the environment and workers' health and safety, Congress incorporates an astonishing amount of details, a practice characterized as micromanagement. Con-

gress specifies priorities for investigation of specific, suspected pollutants, it sets zero tolerance levels for substances inducing cancer in man or animal, it specifies fuel-economy standards to be applied to automobiles, it sets deadlines for administrative elimination of named evils, as it does for intermediate actions. The laws for the Environmental Protection Agency contain 38 mandatory deadlines for issuance of rules and regulations and 36 deadlines for completion of studies, guidelines, and reports (Thomas 1986). Congress has imposed on agencies 3,300 requirements of recurring reports to itself, four times those of 1970 (U.S. General Accounting Office 1988, 1).

The "rediscovery" of the State and the "new institutionalism" are scarcely conceivable as enterprises without incorporation of the administrative operations of government.

Congress and the courts have required that agencies' new regulatory initiatives be accompanied by extensive consultation with affected interests, opportunity for individual citizens to register their views, and full documentation of the agencies' responses to all significant comments received. Sunshine, Sunset, and Freedom-of-Information laws all change the setting of administrative discretion. Congressional committees, and especially subcommittees, reinforced by large staffs, provide more substantial oversight than in earlier periods. Riders on appropriation acts and committees' reports accompanying bills give enhanced opportunities for control. Statutes and their implementing regula-

tions on budget administration, procurement, personnel, printing, and travel so confine administrative discretion that, it is said, managers can no longer manage (National Academy of Public Administration 1983).

The judicial, as well as the legislative, branch has, despite some oscillation, greatly expanded opportunities for citizens and public-interest groups both to challenge actions that agencies have taken and to force agencies to act. In some areas, such as schools, prisons, and mental institutions, the courts have occasionally taken over administration from the authorized agencies.

Presidents in the last 15 years have instituted review mechanisms over regulatory agencies' proposed actions. The power now exerted by the Office of Management and Budget in this field is unprecedented. Whatever one thinks of its virtues and defects, it unquestionably limits agency discretion. Meantime, White House staff members have eagerly implemented their principal's conviction that a rampant bureaucracy must be brought to heel. Much of this activity reflects a belief in a president's electoral mandate, which, however, is a myth, as Robert Dahl has demonstrated (Dahl forthcoming).

These many external controls of discretion are supplemented by self-regulating mechanisms within the bureaucracy itself and reinforced by organizational incapacities to embrace contemporary policy problems. "The bureaucracy" is itself a misnomer, for what we have is a multiplicity of bureaucracies. We have no government-wide elite administrative corps, such as those in Britain and France; the Senior Executive Service has failed to promote interagency career paths. Though this tends to make civil servants identify with their individual agencies rather than with the executive branch or the government as a whole, their agencies rarely enjoy autonomy. Policy concerns intermingle domestic fields and interlink domestic fields with international fields. Defense contracts shape a large part of the nation's industrial sector and absorb much of our scientific and engineering talent. Acid rain results from regional flows domestically, but it is also a high-priority feature of Canadian-United

States relations. Much of the domestic economy is hostage to foreign trade and foreign investments. The result for bureaucracy is that fragmentation is the fact, interpenetrating jurisdictions the commonplace, and reciprocal watchfulness the mode. More significantly, the overlaps among agencies and among their bureaus force decision-making upward, from bureaucrats to agencies' political appointees and the White House. Thus, the altogether-ness of everything reinforces external control of the bureaucracy.

III

A consequence of readmission of the State and institutions to our vocabulary is revival of the concept of the public interest. In international relations we have little difficulty with the concept of the national interest (Krasner 1978). But the public interest in domestic affairs has long been under a cloud. A myth, it is called, and here the usage is meant to suggest falsity, the incapacity of proponents to specify the content of the term. Even among neo-institutionalists the term is often displaced by a proxy such as community interest or common good or general welfare.

The simple fact is that the public interest is an ideal. It is for administrators what objectivity is for scholars—something to be strived for, even if imperfectly achieved, something not to be spurned because performance falls short of the goal. If there is not a public interest then we must denounce the idea of ideals. The public interest is not something you pick up in your hands. It is not something whose height and breadth and weight can be measured. If it is illusory, so are justice, liberty, and integrity. If these and other ideal values cannot be absolutes, but must be reconciled when in conflict in concrete cases, the public official's responsibility is to seek the balance among them that most nearly approaches the public interest so far as he can perceive it.

As Isaiah Berlin puts it, "Both liberty and equality are among the primary goals pursued by human beings through many centuries; but total liberty for wolves is death

to the lambs, total liberty of the powerful, the gifted, is not compatible with the rights to a decent existence of the weak and the less gifted." Yet he goes on to say that "we must not dramatize the incompatibility of values—there is a great deal of broad agreement among people in different societies over long stretches of time about what is right and wrong, good and evil. . . . in the end it is not a matter of purely subjective judgment; it is dictated by the forms of life of the society to which one belongs, a society . . . with values held in common, whether or not they are in conflict" (Berlin 1988, 11 ff).

If we cannot precisely define the public interest, we do know when it is flouted. Does anyone doubt that corruption is against the public interest, however sophisticatedly we explain its transactional advantages in developed societies or its cultural rooting in developing societies? On the positive side, as recent events suggest, a good place to start is the oath taken by every federal employee, "that I will bear true faith and allegiance to" the Constitution of the United States. The President's constitutional mandate "to take care that the laws be faithfully executed," might well be read as incorporated in employees' oaths. The public interest goes beyond this, of course. The people's confidence in the State and its institutions requires not only that officials avoid unethical conduct but that they avoid the appearance of such conduct. No-one who has served in the government, as I was privileged to do, could suppose that the behavior of career civil servants can be summed up as simply self-regarding. Some is that, and it varies with individuals and settings. But it is a narrow vision indeed that disregards public servants' commitment to the search for the public interest and its reflection in their actions. The best of them have, in Cato's words, "Capacities large enough to judge the Whole of Things . . . and superior minds, elevated above private interest and selfish views" (Schmidt 1988).

The search for the public interest is not simply a task performed by individual officials in isolation. There are ways to organize the bureaucracy and to establish procedures that enhance decision making

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in the public interest while simultaneously reinforcing bureaucratic responsibility to the President and his appointees, to the Congress, and to the courts. Decisions of moment, instead of being left to specialized units, can be drawn upward in the hierarchy so that other relevant units' information and analyses are folded in and the conclusion is reached by an official with a capacious view and responsibility to political executives and to Congress.⁵ The exceptions proving the rule are agencies subject to capture by single-interest groups. Confirming cases are World War II's Office of Price Administration and War Production Board. They succeeded in establishing organizations and procedures that countered any industry divisions' impulses to serve their industries more than the State.

IV

In the study of the State public administration and other fields of political science have a symbiotic relation. We may well start with the disturbing definition of symbiosis: "the relationship of two or more different organisms in a close association that may be but is not necessarily of benefit to each." Some public-administration students have concluded that our relationship with political science is not of benefit to our field. Their conclusion, in many cases, rests on entrancement with generic administration, public *and* private, and on a related belief that other disciplines contribute more than political science to understanding this genus. Other factors enter as well. The position, it seems to me, reflects too much the unhappy relations some colleagues have experienced on their campuses. It fails to perceive parallels with other fields' troubles in the political-science community. It confuses the professional training for public-service careers with the scholarly and teaching task of developing understanding of the administrative province as a part of the governmental world. And it assumes that public administration is unique in features that in fact are common to other fields.

Allow me to put aside the graduate-level, professional training of public administrators. Schools of public affairs and ad-

ministration are comparable to the law schools that train even more of our discipline's recent undergraduate majors, many of them destined to devote all or parts of their careers to public service as judges, legislators, and administrators. My concern is not professional schools but the subfield of political science that, though incidentally educating some students for administrative careers, seeks primarily to develop a grasp of the theory and practice of public administration.

There is a complaint that political science has expelled public administration and a proposal, in the nature of a preemptive strike, that public administration should secede from political science. Political science departments exclude or disdain public administration, I understand, because it is practical in focus, out of phase with behavioral, quantitative, and other regnant modes of the mother discipline, and often disconcerting to the balance of a department because it attracts too many students, some of them career-motivated. It is not, and I would agree, central to the discipline; and, if not central, it is thought to be dispensable.

If we can put aside the emotional traumas, though their costs to colleagues are not minor, much of the rationale is shared with other fields of political science. Though international relations courses are not so "practical" as public administration courses, their enrollments, I dare say, are not unrelated to students' improbable aspirations for entry to the Foreign Service; only 200 of the 18,000 examined in a year are appointed (Spiers 1987, 27). Not all teaching and research are in the behavioral and quantitative modes. They cannot be. Only certain fields are blessed with readily available measures—of elections, congressional votes, public opinion, Supreme Court votes, and others. Students of the presidency confront the $N=1$ barrier to quantitative analysis (sometimes expanded to $N=9$ for the last half-century).⁶ So do students of administration sensitive to situational variables, including agencies' cultures, external environments, and leadership. Students of political philosophy, certainly not "practical," have endured traumas of rejection and disdain.

The secessionist argument, if freed from

its rejectionist pique, rests heavily on the proposition that the field of public administration draws on many disciplines. True, public administration as a field draws on social psychology, sociology, economics, law, history, business management, and other scholarly disciplines. In this, though, it is not distinctive. Surely, the same disciplines (save perhaps that of business management) enrich the work of students of public opinion, electoral behavior, Congress, the presidency, the judiciary, international relations, and comparative government.

The winds of change bring fresh connections between past and present and between public administration and political science. We are broadening the grooves of academe. The growth of political scientists' interest in the evolution of regimes and their administrative institutions, in the role of critical elections, and in public opinion's constancy and variation over time signify an openness to the historical dimension. No longer need the historical be disguised under such rubrics as "diachronic," "longitudinal," "time-sequence," and "developmental." The "rediscovery" of the State and the "new institutionalism" are scarcely conceivable as enterprises without incorporation of the administrative operations of government. The constitutional bicentennial and illegality in high places have been accompanied by, and perhaps prompted, a fresh interest in the relation of public law to public administration. The same phenomena have sparked a spirited effort to explore the ethical dimensions of administration, an undertaking that must call on political philosophers for help.

I may misjudge what is happening in the discipline. I am impressed by the decade's yield of comparative-government scholars' studies of comparative administration or bureaucracy. Well done, as most of them are, the contribution is not just to the public-administration subdiscipline but as well to our understanding of states and of relations among their component institutions. That positive view, however, contrasts with the teaching of graduate-level core courses in comparative politics. Only a sixth of such courses include "bureauc-

racy" or "administration" in their syllabi (McHenry, Jr. 1988, 5-6). I worry that this neglect may influence the agenda of the next generation of scholar-teachers.

Let me put it simply. Administration is an integral, interactive, and subordinated part of the government, a part of the whole. That being true, it cannot be understood apart from understanding government. Such understanding is the task of political science. It follows that the study of public administration is a part of the larger political science enterprise.

V

Let me reassure you. I am not just peddling another paradigm. I do not propose that we repeat the errors of the past. Bringing back in the State, its institutions, the public interest, and history does not mean displacement of all that we have learned from other approaches. Rather, it invites broadening of our sense of relevancies. It means fresh awareness that the State and its institutions are not simply dependent variables of interest groups, public-opinion polls, purely self-regarding motivations of political actors, and other societal-based influences. Yet it does not deny that the directional arrow frequently points that way.

The suggested reorientation means that just as in the real world the State and its institutions invite attention to the relation of the whole and the parts, so we as political scientists need to rise above our disciplinary fractionation, foster flexible linkages, and conceive ourselves as engaged in a common enterprise.⁷ It seems not too much to ask that we do as the other large-brain animals do. These, the dolphins and chimpanzees, "live in an extremely fluid and flexible community, referred to as a 'fusion-fission society,' where individuals may join temporary parties of varying sizes, instead of operating in one relatively closed or rigid group." (Booth 1988, 1273-74).

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tion for the 1988 Gaus award appears in the "Gazette" in this issue.

Notes

I am indebted to Rogers M. Smith for perceptive comments on a draft of this paper.

1. Alfred Stepan, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 3-45; Stephen Krasner, "Review Article: Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics," *Comparative Politics* 16 (January 1984), pp. 223-46; Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78 (September 1984), pp. 734-49, and "Popular Sovereignty and the Search for Appropriate Institutions," *Journal of Public Policy* 6 (October-December 1986), pp. 341-70; Rogers M. Smith, "Political Jurisprudence, the 'New Institutionalism,' and the Future of Public Law," *American Political Science Review* 82 (March 1988), pp. 89-108; Joseph White and Aaron Wildavsky, "The Concept of the State," *Journal of Political Theory*, forthcoming.

2. Peter Saunders and Friedrich Klau, "The Role of the Public Sector," *OECD Economic Studies* No. 4 (Spring 1985), p. 63. Another calculation shows a larger gap between the United States and European democracies, and notes that the latter increased public employment by 11 to 23% over 30 years, while a 10% increase occurred in the United States. Richard Rose et al., *Public Employment in Western Nations* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 11.

3. Public-choice theory is in an early stage of moderation. An example: "To the extent that the individual reckons that a constitutional rule [i.e., one "within which ordinary politics is to be allowed to operate"] will remain applicable over a long sequence of periods, . . . choices among rules will . . . tend to be based on generalizable criteria of fairness . . ." Further, "It is almost impossible to construct a contractual calculus in which representatives of separate generations would agree to allow majorities in a single generation to finance currently enjoyed public consumption through the issuance of public debt that ensures the imposition of utility losses on later generations of taxpayers." James E. Buchanan, "The Constitution of Economic Policy" *Science* 236 (June 12, 1987), pp. 1433-36. This is adapted from his

lecture on receiving the Nobel Prize in Economics.

4. Beyond the State, Washington law firms, interest groups, think tanks, and some individual lobbyists and consultants also have long memories.

5. This is no argument for centralizing decision-making in the Executive Office of the President. For a sophisticated demonstration of my main point, see Thomas H. Hammond, "Agenda Control, Organizational Structure, and Bureaucratic Politics," *American Journal of Political Science* 30 (May 1986), pp. 379-420.

6. See, however, Gary King and Lyn Ragsdale, *The Elusive Executive: Discovering Statistical Patterns in the Presidency* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1988).

7. Our discipline may have become too segmented to reverse its direction. I may be charged with nostalgia for the years when there was sufficient common ground for me to be a one-man program committee, first for the American Political Science Association, and later for the American Society for Public Administration.

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The Long Voyage Home—Begun¹

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Editor's Note: This is the first part of a two-part article dealing with the academic job market.

As the Czech novelist Milan Kundera has aptly noted, we rarely know exactly what it is we want or if we are making the right decision at any given point in our lives.² Many really important acts in our lives we perform but once; we are destined thus to make mistakes that cannot be corrected later. Applying for one's first permanent full-time academic position following completion of the Ph.D. is terribly important and has great potential for error. Most of us aren't exactly sure what we want in a position or an institution beyond "something good," and the experience is not repeated. It is not such a bad thing to get it as close to right as possible the first time.

My own experience, casual observation of graduate colleagues, and conversations with recently appointed assistant professors suggest that a substantial mythology surrounds the beliefs held by graduate students about the process. Sources of these beliefs are several: the inevitable naivete and optimism of youth; the fact that many tenured faculty now in their forties, because of boom conditions obtaining in academia when they completed their doctorates, never experienced the recruitment process as it works today and do not necessarily give sound advice to their students; and the traditional facade with

which academia papers over the practical details of making a living—political scientists just do not seem to devote the same systematic attention to practical professional development as they do to research.³ Furthermore, political scientists (somewhat ironically, I think) seem to have a considerable investment in down playing the role of self-interest, power, and coalitional politics in the day-to-day workings of academia. Collegiality, decency, and accommodation are important norms to which we may aspire, but they are not the only factors affecting recruitment and hiring behavior. Gaining sound advice about the process, other than through informal chats with those recently completing the process, can be difficult.⁴

I offer here some of my own experiences in, reactions to, and perspectives on the job search process.⁵ I do not pretend to make an exhaustive survey of the process, I address only those aspects that held surprise value for me. My remarks are restricted to the process of gaining an initial academic position. They apply neither to lateral movements from one institution to another, nor to senior hires, processes whose characteristics look to me markedly different but about which I know little.

The search for one's first permanent academic position has several basic components. One needs to develop a standard placement file, to find out about openings and whether there might be a fit between oneself and the requirements of any given position. An application must be sent to the recruiting department. That department develops a short list of applicants to be interviewed. If one makes that cut, a visit to the department for an interview is arranged. One then decides whether one is interested and the department decides whether to make an offer. Negotiations over the offer commence and ultimately one decides whether to accept the position.

Finding an Opening

Once you have determined to seek a permanent academic position (or "real job"), the first question to be answered is when to go on the job market. Compared