



# Battling the scourge of defilement: Necessary in tending to the predicament of poor people

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## Abstract

Throughout the history of civilization, government has been criticized for failing to curb poverty, inequality, and corruption and blamed for their perpetuation. This paper shows how these three phenomena have been linked and how the conventional approaches of sharing, charity, moral obligation, and welfare have fallen short on a global scale. The one exception, that of the democratic welfare state that has been successful domestically in fewer than 10% of sovereign states, finds itself caught in the midst of an ideological divide over the very nature of government itself and is stalled. The current revision of the Millennium Development Goals presents an opportunity to move on growing international support for New Democratic Governance going beyond good governance. It promises to revitalize the role of public administration in which the public might be given greater opportunity to be more participative and choosy, management less authoritative and more people friendly, and delivery more innovative.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Good Governance, Inequality, New Democratic Governance, Poverty

## INTRODUCTION

That there have always been much poverty and misery among people cannot be denied for that has been the lot of humankind at least until the beginning of this current century. Only now has the world resolved through the United Nations and its Millennium Development Goals to meet the challenge of addressing the plight of the poor by attempting to eliminating global poverty altogether (or at least that of the poorest of the poor) within the next few generations. Of course, this is easier said than done as the obstacles that have to be confronted require no less than the transformation of the contemporary world order, in particular the resurrection of the original ideals of the United Nations Charter and the curbing of divisions (inequality), indulgences (privilege), and indignation (at widespread global corruption).

In the spirit of scientific inquiry, one only has to ask the

poor themselves what needs to be done. They point out that they are denied the same comforts, opportunities, and connections as those better off enjoy and take for granted. They are unfairly treated and discriminated against. They are largely discounted and ignored in public policy: whenever they take dramatic steps to draw attention to their plight, they are met with force for potentially threatening to disturb the peace. In short, many social and institutional arrangements are designed to ensure that they poor are kept in their inferior place, deprived of their true desserts, and made to accept their lesser lot in life (Caiden, 2014).

In response, the better off see things quite differently. While admitting that there those who do exploit their power, position, and status, guilty of wrongdoing, such unworthy and badly behaved individuals are found

everywhere, including among the poor too. Their own good fortune is deserved because they happened to be better endowed than most others by pre-ordination or special personal attributes or just being in the right place at the right time. Many people have no chance to succeed because they are handicapped in many different ways and their context defeats their efforts to overcome adversity. In any event sheer self-preservation makes most cling to what they have to avoid slipping backwards and strive for more whenever the opportunity arises. Narrow self interest does clash with the common good and can harm others. But the common good also can demand self-discipline, restraint, sacrifice, and hardship from everybody.

Here in a nutshell is the perpetual clash between the haves and the have-nots. Today, the gap between them economically is measured via Gini points which illustrate the material divide (Milanovic, 2011). A whole host of other cultural, economic, political, and social indicators are used to illustrate a growing list of societal differences between one group and another. Not all subscribe to the inevitability of these comparisons, contrasts, and divisions. There among the very prosperous, a few who renounce their fortune just as there are among the poor, those who do not aspire to become wealthier for themselves and their loved ones. There are idealists who renounce fame and wealth and believe in share and share alike, egalitarians who advocate the abolition of all disparities among peoples. Their utopian voices are often discounted as being too unrealistic or way ahead of their time.

What appeals more is the injustice of institutional rewards that go to those who are considered guilty of wrongdoing and corruption, thereby depriving everybody else and perpetuating, so it is believed, much needless poverty if only there were fairer distribution, less disparity, and more representative governance. Indeed, if corruption were completely abolished, there would be no poverty (Aquino, 2013). However, the contemporary world order is far too indulgent and permissive. Unless corruption is checked, the planet will be paying an increasingly heavy price, possibly leading to unimaginable disaster, that today's "major legacy will be an unjust and unstable world, tipping the outcome of uncertainties about the future in an ever more dangerous direction", citing the evidence of failed states, trade in weapons of mass destruction, and hunger amidst plenty (Cockcroft, 2012: 231).

## THE CHOICES

Until now, there has rarely, if ever, been enough to go around to satisfy everybody. Unless there is a cap on the very rich, nobody else will ever be able to catch up. The gap will only widen, as will the disparity, the jealousy, the

indignation, and the discontent, at least between the richest and the poorest. All that can hope for is that future development is sustainable and that even the poorest are content with their situation. This is as much as could be achieved in the past through four major strategies, namely, (a) sharing, (b) charity, (c) moral obligation, and (d) welfare, none of which were fully up to the task of eliminating want amidst plenty although they still provide much thought for public leadership and public policy and management.

(a). Sharing. Intriguing still is how primitive hunters, gatherers and herders were able to survive and progress in the state of nature. Nobody could reproduce alone. No babies could survive alone. No children could learn to survive on their own. No adults could survive without sharing their skills, labors, duties and obligations. The community could only survive by sharing what it had and following enforced social norms. In modern terminology, the keys were adaptability to the environment (Darwin), mutual trust and reliance, and sharing as in "from each according to ability, to each according to need" (Marx). Everything was held in common. All had to follow what was agreed upon. In theory, all were treated equally but in practice some reward had to be provided to those considered most deserving and some penalty had to be imposed on those most undeserving. "All for one; one for all" did not quite cover all the nuances of social intercourse. However, to survive in changing circumstances, sharing alone was insufficient. To this day, it has left a legacy of common bonding, patrimonialism, gift-giving, and celebrity.

(b). Charity. Once people settled down into permanent residences, the state of nature was replaced by civilization that required sovereign government, laws, records, taxes, public goods and services, and regulating private activities and property. Despotism amassed huge funds to spend on public works, religious shrines, armies and navies, public health and education, and on all manner of public amenities that could be enjoyed by all, including the poor who like all other subjects could be enslaved and sacrificed at any time and also rewarded for loyal public service, invention, exploration, and colonization. Nonetheless, in addition to public largesse, charity from any source was welcome although as with discretionary and arbitrary public funds, it was uncertain, sporadic, discretionary, and manipulable, subject to both fear and favor, and usually insufficient when most needed. Accepting charity was sometimes seen by the independent self-respecting poor as a step above degrading begging. To this day, attitudes have not much changed.

(c). Moral Obligation. Ethicists, deriving many of their ideas from religion, preach that everybody owes a duty to

help others in need, obligated to look after one another and to avoid causing anyone harm and humiliation. Under the skin, human beings are all the same with identical universal rights. Thus, all should receive the same consideration and judged fairly and impartially without fear or favor. This is the spirit of how all social relationships should be conducted under an implied binding contract of mutual trust and accountability, applicable to all human activity and social institutions. It should empower the poor and protect them against exploitation, cruelty, and bestiality. Unfortunately, realpolitik works otherwise for power holders have never quite seen things this way. For this reason the ethicists have held them to even higher moral standards than those expected of their subordinates.

(d) Welfare. Organized efforts to improve the living conditions of the needy also have deep historical roots and again were voluntary, discretionary, arbitrary, and largely partial. There never seemed enough to go round and never the means of guaranteeing inclusiveness. Power holders looked after themselves and their favorites so few of these could be considered needy except the lowest compensated killed or dismembered while on business. Almost everyone else would be expected to assume responsibility for their own welfare so as not to become a burden to others. The poor as a class would not be given special treatment unless they became a threat to others and what would be provided would not be exactly inviting. Such was the situation until the great transformation in ideology, social policy, and welfare delivery brought about the evolution of the welfare state to replace the welfare society (Robson, 1976).

Conventional methods of dealing with the plight of the poor were clearly inadequate as long as scarcity, discriminatory attitudes, and corrupt governance prevailed throughout the globe. In time, they grew increasingly outdated despite many diverse initiatives and reforms. Inequality widened, corruption worsened, and unavoidable poverty without relief spread to more faultless inhabitants (Picketty, 2014). Who were the poor? Why were they poor? Which of the poor deserved most help? What help would best overcome their need? From whence would that help come from on a permanent, guaranteed, and affordable basis?

In the early 1870's, the pragmatic ruler of a united Germany (Otto Bismarck) came up with a solution that would quickly escalate into the more satisfying welfare state. He first chose the helpless elderly who would be provided legal pensions by right (not privilege) from a government insurance scheme imposed on the employed. Other needy groups who felt they were more entitled to permanent relief then put in their claims which were accepted and institutionalized. Other prosperous countries followed and extended welfare benefits to additional categories of the poor. At the same time, they

attacked the root causes of poverty, extended welfare coverage to include even the undeserving poor, and thereby assumed government responsibility for the welfare of all residents provided by reformed public agencies run by impartial professionals on rational lines. Their thinking was much influenced by the early socialist Fabian Society in the United Kingdom whose members strongly believed in democratization, empirical social science research, public entrepreneurship, social justice and human rights, and the primacy of the public good (Cole, 1942), and later by the welfare democracies in Scandinavia and Australasia. Their success, even before the Second World War, was part of their endeavor to steer a middle course between liberal (unregulated) capitalism and totalitarian rule, to create a more egalitarian society, and to reduce corruption to a minimum.

## **THE WELFARE DEMOCRACY AS SAVIOR**

Since the Second World War, the growing number of welfare democracies and their emulators has become something of a model of what could be achieved elsewhere in fighting inequality, poverty, and corruption. But they have since run into trouble and their confidence has been much undermined by their failure to convince other countries to follow their example (Quah, 2013). As much as they try to hold out against regression, they find themselves being drawn into a world being overwhelmed by even worse forms of inequality, poverty, and corruption than ever before. They are still managing to hold the line but they are in some retreat as once more the world moves on and they have to reconsider their position and readjust to changing circumstances. In so doing, they and all others have to evaluate past experience and examine what may have gone wrong and right with the four main strategies.

(a). Sharing requires something to share, reciprocity, and putting community over the individual. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there really was not that much available to share to cover basic human needs to survive. Around the globe, scarcity and maldistribution still haunted humankind even in the best of times. Communism on a large scale promised more than it could deliver. Outside the reality of war and invasion, its totalitarian methods to force cooperation were abhorrent. Reciprocity was not forthcoming and resentment was expressed in dysfunctional ways that evidenced distrust and low morale. Individuals looked inwards and put a false front on the notion of a sharing community. On a much smaller scale, sharing has not been any more successful with the exception of other ideologues committed to a common cause, partisan groups fighting for their lives, and various collectives, communes, and cults, and then only for a

short duration for the simple reason that there have been too few holds over voluntary members. The able could not contribute enough to sustain them while the slackers could not be disciplined for failing to pull their weight. It appears that few like sharing with the undeserving or with anyone with whom they cannot bond.

(b). Charity is too discretionary and at the whim of the donor who can pick and choose to whom to give. It is uncertain and unenforceable. Small donations cannot go far or offer much relief to the needy while big donors may have hidden agendas and expect favors in return. The beneficiaries may even end up worse than they expect. Charity may go to causes that benefit the rich more than the poor and in a mysterious chain of events result highly profitable to the donor. Foreign aid, for instance, may not be so generous after all and end up impoverishing the recipients more than refusing it. In any event, in the scheme of things, charity rarely gets to the core of why the poor are so needy. It is a temporary palliative at best.

(c). Moral obligation is probably the major value behind most religious and humanitarian organizations urging people to be virtuous, do good deeds, and be ennobled by helping the needy. It is based on the assumption that most people do not have to be told. If by the time of adulthood they don't already know, others will readily remind them. Against this premise, gaining an advantage over others is all too tempting, especially when done in secret so that nobody else will ever know. Even when done brazenly, there may be no repercussions at all. Such defiance of social norms, uncaring attitude to what others think, conscious and presumptuous bad behavior, and contravention of established standards of integrity, truthfulness, responsibility, and propriety is at the root of corruption. In the popular mind, corruption is associated with degeneracy and disharmony and "presents a vital threat to the larger social fabric ...of shared values [that] is necessary to undergird societies and governments" (Underkluffler, 2009, pp 37-9). Clearly, moral obligation alone falls far too short.

(d). Guaranteed universal welfare as provided by the welfare democracies with their ethos of a rising safety net for the needy, continuous efforts toward greater equality, and improving democratic governance point the way to what can be achieved. They have been fortunate. Most other countries claim with some justification that they are still not in any position to copy their example. They do not have the resources, ability, or capacity to deal with their many needy even if they have the will and substantial help from outside. Many still have more faith in the welfare society and self-reliance, want to do things their own way, and just to blame corruption for their backwardness is an oversimplification. They point out that the welfare democracies are having second thoughts

about having gone too far by being too generous to their needy, approving of so much egalitarianism, and having less democratic governance than they thought. So, whatever the international community advocates, in principle, many countries, rich and poor alike, find ways of exempting themselves, reserving their exceptional circumstances for exemption, adding "non-self-executing" clauses and caveats, dragging out discussions for years, carving out non-applicable areas, and hypercritically ignoring the provisions of signed agreements.

## **PART TWO: Public Administration in the Welfare Democracies Caught in the Middle**

The welfare state was developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century within the liberal democracies in Western Europe and Australasia mainly by political parties formed by reformist labor movements in alliance with socialist thinkers. They sought a middle way between the revolutionary Communists on their political left and their conservative and reactionary rivals on their political right. They were too liberal and moderate to involuntarily replace free enterprise capitalism and opposed to totalitarianism of any kind, colonialism, plutocracy, the exploitation of unorganized labor menial workers, and the neglect of the needy. Their chosen instrument was the administrative state already in place implementing public policies and laws in general and delivering welfare programs in particular through administrative rationalism and professionalization whose public spirit could be traced back to 18<sup>th</sup> century progressives and idealists.

The new welfare laws and services were not farmed out to the private sector. They were to be government run and allocated to specialized bureaucracies administered on the typical Weberian style departmental model separating politics from operations. At the apex were the political executives, both elected and selected, without tenure directly accountable and responsible to the public. They would not have tenure but would be subject to re-election or reappointment. Under their supervision would be career officials with tenure appointed on the basis of competence and shielded from unjustifiable removal. The departmental silo would operate like a well ordered military formation following instructions down the line run as a well oiled machine avoiding needless routine, officiousness, and an impersonal touch. Unfortunately, it was more used to dealing with forms, figures, and paperwork than with people with personal needs. So, with bureaucratic remedies went bureau pathologies.

The social democratic parties perked up when in response to the Great Depression, a liberal economist, John Maynard Keynes, presented an alternative that called for government intervention to help the needy become consumers to stimulate demand and provide relief for the unemployed. He even envisaged the day

when technological progress would eventually free humankind from the burdens of work and want to enjoy more free time doing more pleasurable and artistic activities and hone their latent skills. This kind of thinking was just what social democrats wanted to hear as it was the kind of world they wanted to bequeath to their children once elected to office. Their opportunity to plan and implement their brave new world came on the ruins of the Second World War. Fifteen years of misery, suffering, and sacrifice had turned the tide in the favor of welfare democracy, public initiatives, and an energized administrative state eager to take on the challenge of postwar reconstruction.

## KEYNES TO THE FORE

Other middle-of-the-roaders also became Keynesians for the next 25 years and carried the day. This was when the administrative state became the center piece of public administration and the welfare state was embraced as a solution for the needy by institutionalizing the womb to tomb policies of the welfare democracies. The political debate was not so much whether such policies should be implemented as to how far they should be taken. The administrative foundations in place had been tested and had proven themselves in war and peace so that a dependable safety net could be provided for the poor by clean democratic governments dedicated to the public good. The welfare democracies used a host of instrumentalities to implement their detailed plans seen as communal responsibilities. Concessions and compromises were made with opponents to achieve success.

As predicted by Keynes, full employment was restored, productivity climbed, and pent-up demand, following years of deprivation and destruction, boomed and also with it so did the private sector. What Keynes did not foretell was the rise of consumerism whereby wants escalated into new needs as living standards rose. As private demand competed with public demand, so the rivalry between conservatives who still hankered for a return to prewar free enterprise policies and the radicals who wanted still more communitarianism, intensified. The new found prosperity was pulling many of the working poor out of poverty and strengthening the safety net. More people could take their minds off of an insecure future and spend more of their income on the new comforts of life. Keynesian economist John Galbraith warned that this new affluent society would probably be both unsustainable and undesirable by increasing private consumerism at the cost of public investment (Galbraith, 1958) but his insightful strictures were over-ruled.

Already, a new economic guru, Milton Friedman had emerged to restore faith to the heirs of classical liberal economics who much resented the enlargement of

government intervention and direction in economic policy, the enlargement of the public sector and employment, and the increasing strength of organized labor. His alternative to the Keynesians would restore market capitalism as *the* instrument of economic development, and reverse the social trend back to more personal responsibility (Friedman, 1962). Friedmanism soon became the new orthodoxy of the free world, adopted by many disciples in the business world, international finance agencies, and government agencies handling economic and financial policy. Few of these needed persuading for they had always opposed the notion of the welfare state or they had become disillusioned with its reality or they thought that free market capitalism would do a better job at creating new wealth and adjusting to changing circumstances than dogmatic social democrats. Behind them was the backing of powerful private pressure groups and the popular disillusion with autocracy in the unfree world.

## THE TURN-AROUND

The turnabout came quicker than anyone expected when in 1970 the world's richest country, the United States abandoned the postwar Bretton Woods international monetary system to deal with an economic recession, a situation worsened by the 1973 oil embargo. The welfare democracies were already having difficulties with their public finances, their fading egalitarian ethos, and mounting criticism of welfare recipients. Public sector deliverers of welfare services were being criticized for their reputed "take it or leave it" impersonality, acting more like gatekeepers than caregivers which offended the new upward mobile who now had access to affordable private alternatives. This leveling up occurred when self-employment was declining and the elderly and others skilled in the wrong trades had difficulty finding alternative employment and resented the discouraging ring of parasitism about welfare from the more successful who credited their own unaided initiative.

Meantime, the postwar world had not stood still. The U.N. Charter which envisaged international cooperation and harmony was dashed from the start. Liberal countries had to divert considerable resources to defending the free world and avert another disastrous global conflict. Decolonization soon doubled the number of sovereign states headed by their own elites unused to governing but liking the perquisites of power and office, commanding their own people unversed in democracy and welfare, and unwilling to join either the liberal West or the communist East. While the newcomers were going through their transition, they were unlikely to make other radical changes or ameliorate poverty, inequality, and corruption. That last task was still way beyond the resources, capacity, and power of international public

agencies and any association of wealthier countries.

The welfare democracies that might have led the way were too engulfed in their own successful postwar transition to detect the shifts within their own societies away from greater uniformity and equality. The Keynesians had no ready answers, first, to popular resentment to regimentation entailed in statism and bureaucratism, and second, to dealing with the pressing economic problem of stagnation. As to the former, the equalitarian ideology that was intended to make birth, social position (class) and wealth (income) irrelevant (Tawney, 1931, 1938, 1952, 1964) had overlooked social and cultural issues that remained after many legal disabilities had been abolished particularly concerning women, minorities, and youth. In general, people wanted a greater choice in their life styles, how they children were brought up, what family arrangements they made, where they lived, and how they spent their leisure time (Caiden and Caiden, 1995). They wanted public policy to be more sensitive, representative, and participative. Friedmanism and the new institutional economists claimed that the answer was a return to updated neo-liberalism that involved unregulated global capitalism, rescuing public policy from arrogant technocratic public professionals, containing public intervention, defanging the administrative state, reducing the public sector, and depowering organized labor. They wanted more individualism, self-responsibility, and self-initiative. Both rival ideologies agreed that they wanted a different kind of public administration, one with greater emphasis on the human touch, less rigidity, and "more for less."

Public administrators in the welfare democracies thought they had been doing quite well. They saw little reason to change beyond traditional incrementalism. They had faithfully implemented public mandates, policy and laws. They had adapted to changing circumstances without much dislocation. Many of the complaints against them were unjustified and reflected ignorance of just how difficult, complex and complicated their multiple tasks had become to execute to satisfy everybody. Suddenly, they were out of step when the political spectrum moved against them and they were the traditional scapegoats to blame when things were not going right. Still, they were confident they could hold their own because government insiders knew how valuable and necessary they were in running public organizations. Their aloofness became part of their undoing.

The public professions as a whole had been aware of the transformations that had been taking place in their specialties, remarkably so in the physical sciences as a result of government investment in R. & D. The intellectual scene had shifted to embrace their positivist approach and the social sciences had not lagged far behind. The caring professions that had long supported collectivism and humanitarianism, the backbone of the welfare state, had shifted back to focus more on

individualism, commercialism, measurable outcomes, and empiricism. Their attention turned to the specific needs of their different clienteles and their own need to justify funding and accreditation. What mattered were results on the ground as ascertained by scientific processes affirming "attitudes of objectivity, impersonality, disinterestedness, and political neutrality" (Meenaghan et al., 2013: 3). Such usable knowledge improved information underlying purposeful action and improved its quality. Alas, public administrators rarely copied their example, lacking the funds and urgency to do so (Caiden, 1969, 2007).

## **IDEOLOGICAL THATCHERISM**

So came as something of a surprise to public administrators when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1979 became leader of the United Kingdom targeted them as part of her cure to the country's ails following the trauma of having to be bailed out three years by the International Monetary Fund on condition that public expenditure be reduced, wages restrained, high interest rates retained, and some public assets sold. She, a disciple of Friedmanism, no longer believed in society, discarding community altogether. She set about restoring laissez-faire capitalism by shrinking the administrative state, clamping down on welfare, and hollowing out public administration (Caiden, 2013a). Her platform was a deliberate halt to prevent political democracy moving further toward economic and social democracy. On the surface, it appeared simple enough, directing the government to eliminate unnecessary activities, outsourcing what could be done by the private sector instead, economizing on public employment, and making public organizations more attentive to stringency, efficiency, productivity, and client satisfaction and their executives more attuned to business-like thinking.

Thatcher's vision was hardly innovative. Its roots went back certainly to the pre-war conflicting views of how the Great Depression might be overcome. In public administration, they could be traced even earlier to the scientific management movement predating even the First World War and before that to progressive administrative reformers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. But this was on a much bigger scale, more comprehensive, and possibly not reversible. Thatcherism, like Friedmanism, split public administration theorists and practitioners apart between the traditionalists who venerated the profession's identification with the public (general, community) interest and this latest wave of reformers who wished to change its outlook and ethos which came to be called New Public Management (NPM).

NPM became the excuse to adopt long overdue reforms that had been resisted by public managers and employees alike for some time. Quite a few were

unrelated to Thatcherism, Friedmanism, and the curtailing of the welfare state and had more to do with a whole range of machinery of government arrangements whose time had finally come. NPM was a catch all title for popular innovative ideas and practices applied to public organizations at every level of government. Some countries like the Anglo-American group went much further than others which were barely touched. Even within the welfare democracies there were wide variations, particularly within Western Europe and the Commonwealth, where governments suspected they were being drawn into the web of global laissez-faire capitalism and might be risking much of what they had achieved. Outside the charmed circle when the liberal West tried to extend NPM through international networks, they failed to convince poorer countries which claimed that it only made matters worse for them.

Nevertheless, the NPM movement claimed that it had pulled off one of the most successful administrative reforms in history. It had changed the dominant paradigm in the study of public administration and had a profound impact within governance, another new term for those who now saw NPM replacing traditional public administration by including all who might influence government decisions. Like all reform movements, it had gotten quick results because initially it had selected the most obvious targets of public maladministration, and concentrated on partial quick fixes without waiting to see what transpired over the longer period. However, few could dispute that NPM tried to spare public managers from time-wasting internal parochial in-fighting and conservative pragmatic resistance to experimentation and reform not matter how rational, cost-effective, and productive elsewhere.

Meantime, the critics have never let up. They maintain that NPM is a front for an anti-statist and anti-government neo-liberal agenda that eventually will replace communal objectives and values with private regarding narrow selfish interests that have little to do with genuine freedom and democracy. It will open the way to the invasion of partisan consultants, lobbyists, and contractors into government to grab public spoils, thereby enhancing political and administrative corruption while weakening public trust, transparency, accountability, and integrity. Much of NPM will be inapplicable and undesirable in the public sector and its underlying managerial values of economy and efficiency (more for less by letting the managers manage) should not be allowed to demote more socially desirable values. After all, government is not a business and much that government does, even its business enterprises, cannot be compared to business and other private organizations. The administrative state is still performing quite well in the circumstances without dislocation and inconvenience. It is taking on additional and novel activities and responsibilities. Within, it had been instrumental in

inventing practices that business and non-governmental organizations have copied without attribution. Business has grossly exaggerated its superior productivity and performance and fails to mention its debt to the public sector for providing the conditions under which business prospers. NPM has gone too far too quickly and misunderstands the basic nature, role, values, objectives and essential bureaucratic heart of public administration (Hood, 1991).

## THE POLITICAL DIVIDE

Which side could put up the more convincing case? There was no match. The tide of public opinion favored getting public administration off people's backs, achieving more public value for public money, and less governmental aggrandizement and bureaucratic interference in people's daily affairs, reining in the administrative state that was getting out of control. The public sector was eating up more of the gross national product, engaging a higher proportion of the working population, and inflicting more bureaucratic irritations on individuals. It was spending more on ventures that could not be seen or whose worth could not be properly calculated by the tax payers, such as disaster preparedness, rearmament, public infrastructure and amenities, R & D, and environmental protection. The ordinary citizen could not see the connection between these activities and investment in furthering the community and individual benefits. On the other hand, people could feel the financial burden, and the failures that government was supposed to prevent, such as crime, unsafe products, and epidemics. If only Big Government could deliver like Big Business, things would be much better, so mass media preached to a willing audience.

Public polls revealed that trust and confidence in government were declining after the 1970s. Governments were troubled by growing criticism of their performance both in policy making and execution. Solutions to public problems rarely seemed to work out as planned or expected. Government did not seem as capable as it once was and public leaders did not seem as so outstanding. Party supporters were tired of the same old policies and practices. Blunders were expensive, and politicians were too often caught short. The practitioners appeared too fixed in their ways, too sure of themselves, too unbending, and somewhat deaf to outsiders. Fresh thinking was needed. Thatcherism and NPM were opportune. Successful businesses and their many admirers had been urging for some time that they had better answers than the official experts and could do a better job. They emphasized the virtues of economic prosperity, materialism, and consumerism and asserted that the assumptions of Friedmanism were more realistic

of political and economic behavior than those of the Keynesians (Haque, 2007: 180). There was sufficient truth in these arguments to convince the electorate to support the transformation of “the relationships between market and government, government and the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy and the citizenry” (Hughes, 1998: 242), not just public management in democracies but as *the* one best way to apply globally in the structural adjustment programs of poor countries as part of the irreversible convergence toward globalization.

The drawback of NPM was that its agenda was not universal. It could be interpreted narrowly as just applying more business-like methods to public organizations to broad instantaneous institutional transformation of poor countries that had not been prepared or even warned in advance. So to please the international authorities, many of them just went through the motions. What they most disliked about it was that it ignored the limitations and faults of free markets and the mystical belief in the invisible hand of competition to result in the common good and business obsession with making profits by hook or by crook. It exaggerating boom and bust cycles that involved imbalances, instabilities, and inequities, recessions that resulted in high unemployment, intensification of work processes, declining real wages and employment opportunities, and disappearing social benefits. It increased the potential of economic interests to dominate political institutions, government, public affairs, information technology, and community relations that strengthened the elite rule behind sham participative organizations that could not prevent the conversion of public property into private property. “Why fight for something else when it turns out that it is roughly the same thing with another label or a different, though no lesser form of exploitation?” (Singer, 1999: 230).

Unfortunately, NPM blocked serious thinking about possible alternatives to global capitalism because it really had boosted productivity, spread available wealth, and energized poorer countries. Some clouds had appeared on the horizon but caused little stir. Things were going well in general. The welfare democracies in their continued search for the middle way had shifted off their previous center more to political Right and public administration had adjusted itself to its new circumstances to be more user friendly, more cooperative with its private partners in service delivery, more financially stringent, less bureaucratic, and more performance conscious. Yet, there still seemed to be more wrongdoing possibly because public business was more transparent and open than ever before and the taboos surrounding corruption had been breached. If anything, corruption was worse than ever, so brazen that it was undermining the new world order. However, the emerging corruption industry investigating the causes, consequences, and effective methods of containment was prodding the international community to be more

active in the fight against corruption. Its efforts culminated in several agreements to curb corruption that started off the new millennium (Caiden, 2013b, Quah, 2013, Rose-Ackerman and Carrington, 2013).

Otherwise, the future of public administration was stuck in the new middle ground bound up with fundamental questions about the nature of governance, the role of government and the public sector within it, the extent of the reach of public intervention, the activities that public organizations could best perform, the partnerships that could effectively deliver public goods and services, and the public values that should be most prized and promoted. The previous consensus before Thatcherism and NPM had now completely fallen apart. The opposing sides were less prepared to retreat from their hardening positions, the one standing by the welfare state and the other wanting to replace it with a different conception of the welfare society more reliant on individualism and private entrepreneurship. Even so, compromise was still possible. But the 2008 global financial crisis threw everything into disarray when the whole debate was intensified as the unforeseen Great Depression descended on the globalized economy. How did it happen? Who or what was responsible? What should be done to halt further collapse? How could quickly could the situation be reversed? Which strategy for the longer term would work better, that of stimulus or austerity? Where in all this stood public administration and how would it emerge?

### **PART THREE: Democratic Governance, Welfare, and Corruption**

Although the world stage cannot be ignored, the focus is now narrowed here just to the welfare democracies even though the future of the globalized economy, the changing nature of international relations, the likely impact of contemporaneous human discovery, and the changing fads and fancies in the social sciences including public administration itself will profoundly impact them. Part One indicated that there is much continuity in the conduct of public business, that poverty, inequality, and corruption are not going to disappear, and nor will the provision of welfare. Part Two showed how public administration was the chosen instrument of the social democrats and labor movement though Keynesian economics and the welfare state to replace laissez faire capitalism as their choice to lead postwar reconstruction. They were successful for about a quarter of a century until Friedmanism and Thatcherism reversed the situation to restore revitalized liberal capitalism as their chosen instrument of economic development to replace the administrative state. Initially, for another quarter of a century they too were quite successful until 2008 when public opinion was no longer prepared to trust them to



restore global prosperity for all to share.

In its heyday, welfare state had not done so. There remained pockets of poor and needy. Welfare did not reach all supplicants and the safety net had too many holes in it and was not raised high enough to match overall prosperity. Corruption had not been eliminated and had begun to trouble people when greater transparency revealed that wrongdoing was more common and institutionalized than previously suspected (Caiden and Caiden, 1977) in both public and private sectors. Structural unemployment had appeared and worsened and then was joined by the deliberate downsizing of the work force. Real wages slowly stagnated or declined as the labor movement lost its bargaining power. Frequent revelations of corporate and organized crime, international and domestic bribery, illegal trafficking, and political scandals in what used to be considered virtuous circles were disturbing. So too were growing concerns about the general debasing of public life, a growing culture of selfishness and greed, a spreading attitude of getting away with conduct unbecoming as long as one did not get caught, and far too much leniency if one did.

## THE GAP GROWS

Underplayed was growing dissatisfaction by those who felt being left behind, marginalized, or abandoned (Edelman, 2012), victims of increasing inequality (Klugman, 2007; Stiglitz, 2012) and social injustice (Dorling, 2010), denied a voice in governance, and unable to enforce their legal rights (Jong and Rizvi, 2008). Escalating inequality was undermining political democracy and the weight of the middle class political weight, polarizing ideological divides, reducing social mobility, and strengthening the favored wealthy oligarchy (Bartels, 2008). As unemployment rates climbed, welfare alone was unable to cope. Stiffened financial regulation, needed to head off another recession, was being blocked (Corder, 2012: 133). Workable solutions to all these issues were known but vested interests were bamboozling the inept electorate.

The experts were split among themselves and the public had lost confidence in them for failing to heed warnings about what might be in store and did happen. But nobody can anticipate the future with any accuracy or forecast unknowable events or know everything they should be known or blamed for being fallible. Because everything in this universe is somehow connected, every decision affects others in unexpected ways. However, public professionals can be faulted for neglecting much of past history that is full of wise advice that is still relevant, for being so busy that they have neglected to conduct research on themselves and their professional affairs, and for being reluctant to press for funds to find out

whether their results are as valuable as they maintain. They are blameworthy for isolating themselves into cliques jealous of preserving their specialties, their air of superiority bordering on elitism, terminology not understood by laypersons, and in-group protectiveness. But they are not self-employed. They are public servants. They have to follow the orders of their political masters and to defy their superiors is to risk retribution. To some extent, they have to be obsequious and deferential, toe the line, and keep things very much to themselves. Only the exceptionally talented can get away with taking risks and mistakes. All this can be taken for granted. What is questionable as regards the delivery of welfare services is why public caregivers have been so slow to overhaul the silo model. For limitations of space, only three are touched on, namely (a) bureau pathology, (b) street level delivery, and (c) non-collaborative organization.

(a). Bureau pathology. Administration on any scale employs bureaucracy that concentrates power at its apex. Those at the top usually enjoy a different lifestyle than those at the bottom from whom they are often isolated and protected. They take their superiority for granted and set the tone for the organizations they govern. Impressed with their sense of self-importance, in time "they become insular and tone-deaf about public concerns...[clinging] to solutions that ... don't mesh with the values and experiences of those who must live with the results" (Johnson, 2005: 27). They forget that they exercise public authority only because they execute public policy, provide distributive public services, and operate on trust (Spicker, 2009, p 977). When they operate autonomously, they invariably perpetuate bureaupathologies.

In welfare bureaucracies, the administrators provide services to the unfortunate in society, people who lack power, desperate for help, and grateful for what they receive from public employees limited by the rules. They have to take what they are given which is degrading. Since welfare bureaucracies are often inadequately funded, entitled beneficiaries may be discouraged from applying by excessively complicated procedures and unpopular groups may be discriminated against. They may be unable to respond adequately to client need and excessive attention to the rules may not allow for special circumstances or equitable treatment (Jong and Rizvi, 2008, p x). They have never been exactly popular and their low standing may not help in advancing careers or avoiding political and administrative minefields. Even the best of caregivers have prefer to keep in the shadows and do the best they can in the circumstances without fuss and attention. Correspondingly, their street level staff is modest and unassuming, gets on with the often thankless job as best it can be done in the circumstances, and really do true to help. The bureaucracy's reputation depends a great deal on how

the street level staff treats its client and how the clients regard the treatment received.

#### **(b). Street Level Service**

Actual delivery depends on what the law permits, the organizational culture shaping staff attitudes, and the quality and competence of street level staff. Public organizations are expected to be strictly law-abiding and adhere to social norms whereas their private counterparts have much greater freedom of action as long as they do not draw undue public attention to themselves. But things are not always what they appear to be. Self-preservation may come before public service: self-interest may have priority over the public interest and exemplary care of the needy; foul as well as fair means may justify aggrandizement. Practice varies across the board from welfare bureaucracies that are painstakingly honest, trustworthy, and fair, and those on inspection that are not. Welfare services have never been a public sector monopoly. Today, there are a variety of suppliers in both public and private sectors and “a dizzying array of additional tools... each [having] its own operating procedures, its own skill requirements, its own delivery mechanisms - indeed its own political economy... [imparting] its own twist to the operation.” (Salamon, 2005: 8). In the private sector, there are saintly and evil capitalists, good and bad employers, honest and corrupt owners, generous and tight-fisted executives, and committed and indifferent workers and volunteers. In the public sector can be found conscripts, military units, preventive and emergency organizations, social justice advocates and public safety officers and the like who are not commonly associated with caring for the poor and unemployed. These different entities are blurred when joined-up in complicated delivery systems, defying “comprehension, let alone effective management and control” (Ibid., p 9).

The needy have many sympathizers within and without welfare bureaucracies (Lipsky, 1980) and in common cause they fix matters to mutual satisfaction irrespective of the official rules (Garfinkel, 1967). Reality is much more complicated than disclosed. Outside watchdogs turn a blind eye to violations. Executives do not welcome bad news. Supervisors are kept in ignorance of informal practices. Peers take a vow of silence not to disclose operational norms. From a strict Weberian view, this is institutionalized deviance. Clients are helped to get around the bureaucratic maze and get what they want through obliging staff. They are treated with dignity and respect and may receive as special cases more than they are officially entitled. Such encounters can now be halted via the latest technology that avoids any personal contact altogether. But once automated systems break down, the users are lost, and the clients feel more insignificant, dehumanized, and annoyed than ever before. Welfare

still requires a human face.

#### **(c). Non-collaborative Organization**

When government was smaller, it was easier to direct and control and most public agencies could collaborate within court circles on what had to be done. It hired private contractors, employed temporary mercenaries, and borrowed from private bankers and wealthy owners. It did not offer much in the way of welfare and what was provided was strictly monitored at local level. Once the administrative state developed, coordination and supervision became much more difficult with the multiplication of semi-autonomous entities. Elaborate countrywide schemes were established by law and administered by separate self-contained welfare bureaucracies that operated independently with their own tenured local staffs. Such compartmentalization made policymaking more awkward. Expert advisors and professional administrators at the bureaucratic apex collaborated as best they could but often did not have the time or inclination to consult with outsiders and their own street level staff.

Although countries copied their typical bureaucratic top-down structures, few shared the details of their operation. This form of organization rarely had horizontal relationships within let alone with outsiders. Inside government departments, the divisions behaved like rival cliques, each one competing for priority, attention, funds, and praise and trying to steal a march on the others. Outside, they rarely communicated officially with other public and private organizations with whom they overlapped, even though they were in the same field and provided similar goods and services and shared common interests. Welfare bureaucracies were no exception. The bigger they grew, the more rigid they became. They tended to treat their clients more like subjects than citizens. Their street level staff, as the living constitution, too often overlooked the fact that they were fundamental to enforcing human rights and seeking social justice. They, of all public officials, could make a real difference in people's lives, providing hope as well as relief as models of human kindness and good will. No doubt many did.

Thatcherism and NPM presented a real challenge. Political policymakers were not longer satisfied just listen to the professional experts and brought in a wider array of advisors. They approved of multiple delivery systems replacing dependency on single source providers, resulting in overlapping redundancy. The needy now had a greater choice of deliverers when governments encouraged philanthropists, charities, and private donors via tax deductions to support private sector caregivers who promised better service. In any event, they wanted a reduction in public welfare expenditures by shifting responsibility back to the individual and private

enterprise. Clearly, traditional welfare bureaucracies were too set in their ways; they too closely guarded their turfs; and their leadership was too aloof. While they stressed technical innovations within their specialities in sub-system optimization, the overall effect was to hinder system optimization and create administrative messes. Inter-sectoral collaboration was inadequate and public organizations lagged behind more effective business practices in several ways (Clayton, 2013).

The departmental silos exaggerated conflicts, made for distrust and ambiguity, and blocked beneficial partnership between public and private. The welfare system, like other governmental activities, needed complete review and overhaul. But, then, so much else in public administration and management did. A thorough overhaul was required in public-private relations, including the failure to curb rising political, economic, and social corruption in all walks of life and at every level of government and business. Governments were so busy putting out fires that they rarely had time to deal with redesigning structures and institutions and whatever plans they produced were heckled to pieces until cast aside or amended in such detail beyond comprehension. Even administrative reform proved inadequate and too slow. Innovation and reinvention might prove more appropriate. NPM did open the way to questioning government operations and finding remedies for what ailments. But, given the state of the contemporary global society, NPM and other new thinking dealt more with symptoms than with deeply embedded causes. Promising was growing international support for measures that would reduce poverty, inequality, and corruption. Prominent is advocacy for New Democratic Governance (NDG) that returns to the original hopes behind the United Nations Charter and the spirit of public service that enthused its framers. For public administration, such a return to public spiritedness might restore it to its former grace.

## THE PUSH FOR NEW DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The need for good governance has been advocated in international circles for over a decade and is no longer strange in governmental and administrative circles. It is now standard fare in the free world as a universal way of improving government performance by democratization, honoring universal human rights, establishing meritorious public services, and reducing corruption. However, good is no longer good enough. It also has to be genuinely democratic, representative, and bring public participation much more into the public's business. NDG is an updating of the philosophical idealism of the UN to build a better global order, a refashioning of institutions, and re-examination of human values and priorities. It constitutes nothing less than the modernization of the cry of the 1789

French Revolutionaries of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

(i). Instead of *liberty* from tyranny, bondage, and oppression, there is the appeal for freedom from want, misery, and suffering, freedom to express and associate, freedom to think, create, and innovate, freedom to trade and bargain, and freedom to share in the common fruits of humankind instead of experiencing deprivation.

(ii). Instead of *equality* under the rule of law, to be represented, and to be heard, there is the extension to impartial treatment and consideration, an end to discrimination and prejudice, the recognition of the universality of individual rights and inclusiveness, greater opportunities for the underprivileged, and greater stress on equity.

(iii) In addition to the spirit of *fraternity* and community, there is the inclusion of humanitarianism, the exercise of human compassion and tolerance, the recognition that all peoples are worthy of consideration and justice by reducing powerlessness, marginalization, and exclusiveness, and an end to callousness and contempt for strangers.

This update is intended to reduce many disturbing features in the global society. One of NDG's first manifestations was seen in the Millennium Development Goals which were and remain an advance on anything that had preceded them. Their revision set for 2015 has reawakened debate about the world's needy because it is acknowledged the poor still lack sufficient access to opportunity, public amenities, fair consideration, and social justice. Government intervention remains crucial, and once more the welfare state and public administration will be required to take front stage again in "dynamic, transboundary, and forward-looking arrangements for solving socioeconomic problems in a fast-changing world" (Conteh and Roberge, 2013: 8).

Indeed, one such path is carefully laid out in the proposition that NPM be replaced by New Public Governance (NPG) whose objective "is to place citizens first or, at least, to incorporate citizens as equal partners in the formulation and implementation of public policy" (Ibid., p 24). Public administration needs to return to its tradition of social protest and rethink its ethos and sense of purpose (Ibid, pp 152-153). Among its priorities as always remains the fight against political, economic, and administrative corruption and all the other kinds of wrongdoing that takes place in public business. This requirement that the profession stand strongly behind its traditional public values and integrity is clearly an essential ingredient of the anti-corruption campaign of the United Nations Development Program and other international organizations, and the movement for New Democratic Governance embracing both public and private sectors. Even ideologues of different persuasion

should be able to agree on this common objective, unless traditional politics inevitably intervenes as has happened through human history.

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