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Politics and Public Servants in Belgium

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I. THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN BELGIUM

Till recently social scientists in Belgium devoted poor interest to public bureaucracy as a field of investigation. The approach to public service, even in Political and Social Science Departments of the Universities, was mainly oriented to Administrative Law, stressing and enhancing the judicial framework of the administrative process (1).

This can be explained by the Continental Lawsystem frame of reference and through the fact that Political and Social Science Departments are still emancipating or have just emerged out of the structure of Law Faculties.

With regard to this situation it seems to be natural that the administrative process was analysed as a formal set of rules and through administrative jurisdiction.

Moreover this process was compared in its judicial and morphological patterns to foreign systems, with poor reference to Sociology of Law and empirical investigation.

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(1) BUTTGENBACH A., *Théorie générale des modes de gestion des services publics en Belgique*, Bruxelles, Larcier, 1952, 463 p.; DE VISSCHER P., *Algemene theorie der rechtshandelingen van het Openbaar Bestuur*, Antwerpen, De Standaard, 1966, 191 p.

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On the other hand, principles and techniques of organization to be applied to the public service are borrowed from Schools of Commerce.

Especially practitioners are struggling with the application of Fayolian and Tayloristic principles in their public bureaucracies, trying to attenuate these precepts by american human relations philosophy of which they almost see the manipulative risks they are hiding.

Difficulties were emerging from the fact that both concepts and patterns of action were transposed out of management- and organizationtheories who emerged from the practice of business-organizations in a foreign cultural setting and who even in their own environment were hardly tested or proved, although they are advertised with an universalistic make-up.

Started from this apriorism poor results were chiefly ascribed to a lack of competence of public servants and never the idea emerged that there could be other reasons. The difference between the introduced means of action and the specific structure as it existed in its social, economic and political environment could be one of those reasons.

Neither this was investigated, nor was an attempt made to adapt concepts and patterns of action to the global system. Till now there was no systematic research concerning the effects resulting from the introduction of these factors upon other variables in the administrative process.

The awareness of these problems and of the neccesity to get into a broader approach to handle management and organization of the administrative process toke rise in the Business and Public Executive Training Centers at the Universities.

With regard to their training activities for civil servants of the highest level, these autonomous centers are co-ordinated by a central Institute, independant from the public bureaucracy itself, but working with governmental funds (2).

Their aim is not only training but also to provide basic and action research in which training is integrated as a factor of change.

The interdisciplinary staffs of these centers, as they were confronted with high-ranking civil servants in their training sessions, became soon conscient of the fact that the traditional judicial approach

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(2) BRASSINNE J., *Le perfectionnement des dirigeants des administrations publiques belges, Res Publica,* vol. III, nº 4 (1961), pp. 404-410; VAN BEYLEN A., *L'Institut Administration-Université: une expérience en matière de perfectionnement des fonctionnaires dirigeants,* in: *Revue Internationale des Sciences Administratives,* vol. XXXI, nº 2 (1965), pp. 132-138.

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could be of poor use in order to inspire change. The behavioral and decision-making approaches were enhanced to get clearer insights in the variables of the process. On the other hand it became evident that the insertion of principles and techniques borrowed as such from Business Administration did not work or provoked new dysfunctions, if they were not completely readapted into the specific public environment where they have to fit in.

This was the origin of interdisciplinary action-research on the management process and on organizational change in the Belgian Public Bureaucracy, build as well upon economic, sociological, socio-psychological insights as on political science.

So to speak, this way the monopoly-position of the judicial approach to the administrative process is seriously disrupted. This does not mean however that there existed no other previous studies, but they presented primarly a descriptive, statistical character or got into normative speculations using some good choosen examples as evidence.

This situation can maybe partly be explained by the state of sociology in Belgium, who remained rather essaystic or descriptive till very recently, with poor interest as well in theory-building as in testing hypotheses.

On the other hand political scientists mostly sticked to historical fact-gathering.

Newer is the study of the party phenomenon as an instrument of power-acquisition and research concentrated on elections (3). Wielding of power, policy-making and the way policies are pursued in the framework of the political-administrative system get little attention by scholars.

One attempt trying to analyse the solution of some key-problems of Belgian politics through the case-study-method (4) remained in its conclusions rather general, confirming or making dubious some previous insights. In no way a new perspective to a more systematic approach build upon broader theoretical basis was opened. One could call this a first exploration in a wide field which still hardly needs to be thigtened up to a more rigid set of concepts and frame of reference.

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(3) DE SMET E., e.a. *Atlas des élections belges, 1919-1945,* 2 vol., Bruxelles, Institut de Sociologie, 1958, 298 + 96 p.; DE WACHTER W., *De wetgevende verkiezingen als een proces van machtsverwerving in het Belgisch politiek bestel,* Antwerpen, *De Standaard,* 1967, 392 p.; DE WACHTER W., *General elections as a process of power-achievement in the Belgian political system* (in this volume).

(4) MEYNAUD J., LADRIERE J., PERIN F. (eds.), *La décision politique en Belgique,* Paris, A. Colin, 1966, 403 p.

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Lacking systematic research, mislead by the normative or descriptive character of fragmented studies, reform-commissions in fact ran into a death end. Subsystems they judged to be of any utility to the own political-administrative system and about which they were informed through comparative administrative law or through the normative contemplations, mixed up with unchecked subjective interests, were fitted into the administrative process. They did not take in account that the sociological environment in which these fragments were functioning could possibly differ from their own (5).

This global sociological context finaly disrupted the expected results creating new problems.

Another typical attitude of reformers was a lack of interest in the insight into micro-sociological and socio-psychological findings. So there actually exists a tendency, i.a. to fight the politization of promotions in the civil service, to intensify and extend bureaucratic rules organizing new examinations for those who wish to promote to the highest level in the hierarchy.

With the psychologist one could question the possibility of testing leadership-capacities and-potentiality through examinations in such a diversificated organization, but the more, a few decennia ago Merton already pointed out how stressing bureaucratic rules, one accentuate also dysfunctions and that everybody conforming to strengthened rules, in this case with regard to promotion-examinations, the final objective aiming to get an output of outstanding administrative leaders can be missed (6).

It could happen that the promotion to the level which demands leadership-capacities, will depend upon success in scholar examinations and not on merit and achieving-attitudes proved through job-performance. If knowledge is tested in formal examinations, there exists no check to predict if the man will be in fact able to apply his knowledge in real management-situations within his specific organization.

There exists indeed a danger in the treatment of public service-problems amongst practitioners and publicists in Belgium when they utilize generalizations from the british, french and US public bureaucracies and on which the action of reformers is based.

By this implicit analogical transposition the insight in the own situation is misrepresented and at the same time valuable methodo-

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(5) See with regard to this problem: DEUTSCH K.W., *The Nerves of Government. Models of political communication and control,* Glencoe, Free Press, 1963, pp. 15-16.

(6) MERTON R.K., *Bureaucratic Structure and Personality,* in MERTON R.K., e.a., *Reader in Bureaucracy,* Glencoe, Free Press, 1952, pp. 361-371.

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logy through which generalizations are made elsewhere, are overlooked and not utilized for the analysis of the own system.

As a result of this, there is a constant flow of contemplative literature by practitioners pleading to take over foreign institutions or subsystems, without care for possible ecological differences between these bureaucracies and the own public service (7).

One of those is the repeated and insistant plea for the transposition of a french-type « Ecole Nationale » in the Belgian system in order to cultivate amongst high civil servants their own specific culture (esprit de corps), without worrying that such institution has his roots in the French educational system which presents a fundamental difference to the Belgian system. In no way the question has been put if this closed cultural system would not rather be an obstacle for a responsive and democratic bureaucracy, where Belgian pluralism calls for (8).

That way it was impossible to manage adaptation and change from the perspective of the own global system, although foreign scholars stressed this approach in the international literature, especially in the field of developmental administration.

In his statement : « on a l'administration que l'on mérite », Professor Molitor (9) pointed out that public servants in Belgium as a group represent a microcosm of the total group of citizens. One could complete this, formulating the hypothezis that this relationship has no sense for effective democracy if the organization- and management-systems where they live in are not adapting themselves referring to this relation and to the contemporary global environment.

Up there the reforms and adaptations which were made did not care too much abouth relevant variables. Too often also they are made in a conservative spirit, conceptualizing them with reference to the idealized image of a pure executive bureaucracy which existed one hunderd years ago and not with the perspective of a society where men are living in today and where-in they will live in the days afther tomorrow (10).

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(7) See: GAUS J.M., *Reflections on Public Administration*, Alabama, University of Alabama Press, 153 p., pp. 1-19; RIGGS F.W., *Administration in Developing Countries*. The Theory of Prismatic Society, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 477 p., pp. 426-429.

(8) DEPRE R., *De vorming van leidinggevende ambtenaren in België en Frankrijk*, Brussel, IAU, 1966, pp. 227-261 (french summary).

(9) MOLITOR A., *L'administration dans la société belge*, in: GREGOIRE M. (ed.), *Aspects de la société belge*, Bruxelles, éd. Librairie Encyclopédique, 1958, p. 132.

(10) CHAUMONT M., *La participation politique*, in: GILSON A. (ed.), *Pour une démocratie efficace*, Louvain, Libr. Universitaire, 1965, p. 88; SEELDRAYERS E.P., CRABBE V., *Les composants de l'état moderne*, Bruxelles, éd. Librairie Encyclopédique, 1955, pp. 6-7.

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II. THE BELGIAN SETTING

As compared to other systems the Belgian situation presents an ambiguous character which renders analysis often misleading. Finding some similarities with other systems, the temptation is great to transplant foreign subsystems as such. As they start functioning there is much chance that a lot more different characteristics have been overlooked and that precisely these characteristics reveal themselves in the action as essential factors.

This ambiguity has also been discovered by Almond as he pointed out that neither the Low Countries, nor the Scandinavian Countries did fit in his general classification distinguishing a continental European political system and an Anglo-American political system (11).

Although mixtures between the two systems, this does not mean however that these countries are just in-between phenomena. It would be interesting to investigate if they do not demand a specific approach as specimen of a distinct category resulting from their own historical and cultural back-ground.

If this is the case, they would present the integration of secularized political culture, with its multi-valued, rational-calculating, bargaining and experimental character (12) into the continental political subcultures (13).

This integration would bring so to speak into the Anglo-American type of « game »-politics an ethical dimension as ultimate valuation of political action.

It would provide also to the Continental type of political system a more inductive and factual bazis, as compared to the german, italian or french situation. Maybe one could call this category, the Political System of Democratic Welfare State.

Nevertheless, the question still remains if such typology does not demand more previous empirical findings about conflicting and interacting variables, rather than building them upon general system theories which set forth equilibrium as an axioma, as means and as an ultimate end of explanation without care for the conflictual processes.

In fact one can agree that the Belgian political-administrative system presents an ambiguous picture with characteristics of both of

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(11) ALMOND G.A., *Comparative Political Systems*, in: EULAU H., ELDERSVELD S.J., JANOWITZ M. (eds.), *Political Behavior. A Reader in Theory and Research*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1956, p. 34.

(12) Ibid., p. 36.

(13) Ibid., pp. 40-41.

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Almond's types. The trouble however is that this expedient can only be used for descriptive purposes of political culture. roles, institutionalization but learns nothing about why it is as it is and how specific interrelationship between a broad range of variables gives rise to different or similar policy-making or institutionalization as compared to other countries.

Here lies in fact a wide, fallow field of investigation for a more penetrating empirical sociology of the Polity, which could provoke further generalizations and sound general theories.

This point brings at the same time a warning for the interpretation of following reflections on politics as related to public servants in Belgium : there exists till now neither initiating empirical inquiries on that subject here, neither elaborated theory.

In the first place one finds back in the struggle for power in Belgium the different political subcultures, with their specific roles and political myths charachteristic to continental political systems. On the other hand this formal superstructure is in fact infiltrated by groups who are crystallized around specific economic, political, social or cultural interests. These groups tend to influence the wielding of power through pressure, compromise, and manipulation, from inside and outside the formal structure, responding to a common rationality and moving to an empirical policy-making which gets his formal consensus through the formal political subcultures.

Sometimes arrangements are made directly between interested groups with the implicit agreement of formal political rulers even if these decisions affect the whole community (14).

These groups maintening their own engaged researchunit, rationalize their interests in ideologies and find that way response in the political subcultures gaining there at the same time influence.

Bureaucratic and oligarchic trends in parties and groups (15) cause at the grass-roots a certain political apathy with regard to the wielding of power, while in the struggle for power at the elections citizens remain socialized by their political subculture.

This attitude is stressed while policy-making tends to the further development of a welfarestate in which only refracted and unorganized minorities contest the acquisition and wielding of power because

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(14) DELPEREE A., *Corps médical et assurance maladie,* in: *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie,* no 3 (1964), pp. 463-492; DELPEREE A., *La prise de décision dans l'administration,* in: *Res Publica,* vol. IX, no 2 (1967), p. 213.

(15) LIPSET S.M., *Political Sociology,* in: MERTON R.K., BROOM L., COTTRELL L.S. (eds.), *Sociology Today, Problems and Prospects,* 2 vol., 2d ed., New York, Harper Torchbook, 1965, pp. 88-91.

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of material or cultural frustration in the appeasement of their needs or because of insight in the oligarchic character of decision-making in a bureaucratized society.

The ambiguity of the system however gives to decision-making a greater margin of freedom of action. Things who do not get their solution on the formal level can easely be diverted to the underlying decision-structures in order to find a pragmatic solution, through compromising between interested groups as influenced by their mutual power. The trouble for the political responsible is that things that way run often out of financial control.

On the other hand superstructure fulfils three functions : the legitimation of policy, build-up out of the balance of power between groups, arbitrage in the power-struggle between groups and valuation following the changing constellation between political subcultures with regard to common good.

Party-organizations of political subcultures also are infiltrated by these rational interests.

Hence a first compromise can be operated within the parties provoking politization of interests but at the same time depolitization of political subcultures, as groups insert their own rational decision-criteria into the traditional political value-patterns.

This brings the ambiguity into the rolestructure, as there exists overlapping in the roles, which makes prediction of behavior difficult. Following the situation divergent expectations are fulfilled with regard to different roles.

For civil servants are also involved in this process, this seems to be very important dealing with the relationship between them and politics.

III. THE GOALS OF GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM

The role of government in Belgium, as elsewhere in Europe, was limited in « l'état gendarme » to defense, foreign relations and the care for interior order.

This task created the framework in which « laisser faire, laisser passer » could operate as a natural regulator of existing economic and social relations.

The ruling interests crystallized in a topelite monopolized economic and political power. This elite showed an oligarchic character, claiming factual freedom for itself in a tailor-made political structure. The top of public bureaucracy, reference-group as well for the

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lower levels, was participating in the value-patterns of the ruling elite.

Governemental affairs being not intricate and managed by a surveyable set of rules, the top bureaucrats were not involved in politics, but there was a natural convergence in their decisions and behavior while they were identifying with the ruling elite.

Although unchecked, some private statements of the Left demonstrate that still now higher civil servants belong to a more conservative elite and that a more progressive elite finds hardly its way to the top of public bureaucracy. A latent factor of crisis in the civil service till today is its struggle to find its way out of the old structures, which are sediments of the former society and in which external and internal resistance to change is still vivid.

The tension between bureaucratic rules and reglementations and the necessities of modern management keeping pace with change in society is still growing.

A constant appeal, i.a. with regard to personnel management, to a logic of formal, intricate reglementations in elaborating new action-patterns to meet the needs, paralyses dynamic action which has to keep step with new tasks.

Hence the laborious toiling regulating and re-regulating while ever being a war too late in the attainment of goals. Never the financial charges resulting from this were calculated.

The more it influences greatly spirit and action in a negative sense, while responsibles think with the flemish poet : « Thuis van elke reis, vóór elke reis begon (Back home from each voyage, before voyage ever began) ».

For instance in personnel management, one has always to take in account a bulk of reglementations with regard to a multitude of interrelated and ballanced interests promoting priorities between categories which deserved well to the nation, from veterans of the world wars to former colonial civil servants.

As a matter of fact the challenge for Belgian government is to become an active instrument for the attainment of goals leading to the development of the Welfare State. The point is how Public Bureaucracy, in its narrow shackles of the « Rechtsstaat » with pronounced characteristics of a closed system and of Weberian Idealtype, with its dysfunctions and oligarchic and technocratic tendencies. could efficiently participate in, and promote dynamic leadership of a democratic welfare state.

Dynamics of management at the state level in a Keynesian economy, put growing demands of refined knowledge and achievement

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on the political-administrative system, striving for all citizens to participate in the highest possible social welfare in the framework of harmonious economic growth. Even foreign and defense-policy can get new dimensions in this social-economic perspective with regard to peace and the relations with countries in a lower stage of growth (16).

A permanent technological revolution and its corresponding need for fast changing cultural patterns, broadening and staggering of education, permanent adult-education are underlying promotors of growth to political, economic and social democracy and give rize to permanent, cumulative acceleration of change. All this constitutes objectives which the Belgian governmental system tend to realize in a higher or lower degree.

The recent tendency of humanization of massification and bureaucratization through the rediscovery by social-psychologists of the self-realising individual as a part of the community opens new perspectives.

Creating the possibility to the responsible adult to realise himself with the others with regard to the collectivity in all its components and this with positive results for the efficiency of the organization if this organization is able to create the proper situation to it (17), poses a fundamental problem to structure and action of present bureaucracy to contribute as a change-agent to the growth of the democratic welfare state.

The ever accelerating decision-making process demands of public servants a greater responsivness with regard to the community, the more that they have a monopoly of technical equipment and information in their key-position in the elaboration of policy.

The importance of Public Bureaucracy and the public servants is ever growing under the stress of the complexity, technicity and interdependency of policy-making and its material and social technology (18).

There has taken place a displacement from parliament to departments in the elaboration of policy. Since 1929 an average of 13 laws

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(16) See in that connection: RÖLING B.V.A., *De keuze tussen oorlog en vrede*, in: *Res Publica*, vol. VIII, nº 3 (1966).

(17) See: LIKERT R., *New Patterns of Management*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1961, 279 p. MAC GREGOR D., *The Human Side of Enterprise*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1960.

(18) THOENES P., *De elite in de verzorgingsstaat*, Leiden, Stenfert Kroese, 1962, 268 p.

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were voted in Parliament and elaborated by the Executive and only one proposed by Parliament itself (19).

This is a normal evolution resulting from the high technical knowledge and information monopolized by bureaucracy and needed for the management of the community. Rather exclusive indeed became the regulating-power of Belgian state in education, scientific research, infrastructure and socio-economic care.

Striving for an harmonious social change it staggers out over culture, recreation, medicare and urbanization.

The technical optimum, the ends and values of political subcultures conditioned however by technical necessities, the plurality of groups striving in a rather generally accepted game to participate in the wielding of power, constitute the bed for the torrent of decision-making.

One could formulate for the belgian situation the hypotezis that change grows out of the conflictual confluence of these three poles in the going action.

Political subcultures and the values they stand for as well as their institutionalization move on and change as they are infiltrated and influenced from within, both by technical norms and value-patterns of Public Servants and by the interacting forces of groups searching their mutual way to a compromise with regard to the attitudes and interests of their members or of their institutional goals.

Both political subcultures and groups try to get into control- and power-positions in the public bureaucracy where at least raw materials for policies and decisions are prepared and where the execution lies. That way they hope to force bureaucracy to innovate and adapt to environment.

As mediators between groups and public bureaucracies, political subcultures and their value-patterns provide ultimate valuation to compromise and to decisions and urge groups at the same time to take in account changing common interest.

The interaction of these three forces in the management of change in the framework of this Welfare State provides, to compromising politics and action of conflicting power-centers, through their appeal to the traditional political subcultures, a general valuation and formal democratic validation, while public bureaucracy furnishes factual validation.

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(19) DEPRE R., e.a., *Coördinatie van het Overheidsbeleid in een evoluerende maatschappij, Brussel,* IAU, 1966, 238 p., p. 163.

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This does not mean however that this process is composed of those distinct and separated components. There is rather osmose and overlapping in a sense that those levels of action interpenetrate each other. This is the reason why groups and local interests can get into a growing awareness of common interest at the crucial decisional moments and bargaining situations (20), that value-patterns of political subcultures change in the action, that to some degree their projects have integrated projects of groups and local interests and that the technocratic and bureaucratic tendencies in the public service are attenuated at their roots.

This way Belgian political action tends to a satisfizing optimum and the individual has so to speak in this context the possibility to break through the bureaucratic alienation of the organizations with their oligarchic tendencies, to the extent he has margin of manoeuvrability between those three levels of action, but also to the degree these organizations tend to develop a more open and participative internal management-process and organizational structure as set forth by social-psychologists. But this is another question.

IV. PUBLIC SERVANTS AND POLITICS

Separation of Powers has been fixed in Belgian Constitution and formaly one can characterize belgian public service as a « Leistungsburokratie » (merit-bureaucracy) (21) if the since 1937 established recruitement-system and the planned promotion-policy tending to enhance objective criteria, are taken in account.

Although ministers, as heads of departments are generally spoken political agents recruited out of parliament of which they need permanent confidence, separation between political and administrative power is formaly stressed.

Criteria with regard to personnel policy are choosen following this basic principle.

This is in fact the case for recruitement of civil servants in the traditional central bureaucraties. There exists so to speak no political interference in recruitement.

The underlying philosophy remains that, which political options

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(20) In the medical sector some groups did not yet integrated and still a lag exists between them and the system.

(21) See: MORSTEIN-MARX F., *Einführung in die Burokratie,* Neuwied, Luchterhand, 1959, 243 p., p. 88.

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might be have taken, the civil service has to be the neutral executing apparatus of those options.

Whoever maybe in power, the civil servant, protected by a special statute, in his acts allways must show a strict neutrality. Hence patronage in the recruiting-proces must be avoided.

However there seems to exist a slight contradiction in this matter. Before 1937 recruitement proceeded by patronage, but in the foregoing period before and still after the turn of the century the reputation of bureaucracy was to be neutral. After 1937 though, when recruitment was based on merit, politization of bureaucracy is growing.

The point may be that in fact neutrality has never existed. The ruling elite, in fact predominantly jurists, could perfectly handle the rather simple management-problems ; hence elaboration of objectives in rules was easy as compared to the contemporary situation and control was perfectly managable. Since this elite was the mean reference-group of public servants who tented to integrate and participate in their value-patterns, and the rules being simple, they aimed more to conserve, keeping vested order, than to change. Patronage was abandoned for merit-recruitement from the moment that the pressure of new contesting elites ran out of control and attempted to inject new values into the system.

Although recruitement was organized on a merit-basis, the fact that the minister in last resort has the power to decide which one of civil servants, proposed by bureaucracy, will in fact be promoted, political isolation of bureaucracy becomes merely a myth. This explains the contemporary tendency of bureaucracy to politization, not in the sense of one set of political values as it was before, but through the break-down of a monopoly by different value-patterns.

In fact this process is the application of the logic underlying Montesquieu's separation of the then existing powers of which jurists have made a dogma.

If separation was in the mind of Montesquieu a means to a reciprocal moderation and control of powers and a regulator to prevent monopoly of power in one hand (22), then one could say that through politization, in the sense of introducing a plurality of values existing in society within bureaucracy, the logic of reciprocal moderation exists, but this time also within the executive power itself, whose policy-making-role became essential.

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(22) FINER H., *The Theory and Practice of Modern Government,* 4th ed., London, Methuen, 1961, 982 p., pp. 94-101.

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The growing power of bureaucracy, based on expertise and on a near-monopoly of information got to be moderated somehow. On the treshold (23) of a welfare state in a dynamic, pluralistic society, a bulk of fast changing factors breaks down the old relationship between politics and administration.

The elaboration of economic, social and technological policy in a welfare state in its interdependency and complexity can only be handled by experts. Political power meanly stuffed with generalists was urged to appeal to the expertise of public service for the elaboration of policies. No coherent policy can be elaborated if not based on its preparation in the public bureaucracy. From a bare executive role public servants became necessary agents of policy-making.

The former deontology, crystallised in the pseudo-ethics of the neutral servant of a vague concept of common good and to the public servant often still a rationalization to hide behind, changes in the new context into professional ethics based on logical-positivism. The more the conscience is riping of a distinct power-position based on expertise, the more this professionalism stands out against political generalists.

It would be dangerous however if the development of a proper ideosyncratic valuepattern should provide the exclusive criteria for decisions, which could be the case if no new means of control are provided to political power in order to moderate the so called executive power.

Altshuler distinguishes three conceptions of administrative rationality. The first is a rationality of technical expertness presenting valuable alternatives of action to the politicians in the framework of clear objectives. The second is a « general evaluative rationality : the capacity to evaluate means in the absence of clear and unambiguous knowledge of end », and finally « inventive rationality » the capacity to widen the range of options by redefining problems and conceiving hitherto unthought means to their solution (24).

It is rather evident that in the two latter conceptions value-judgements with political implications are concerned, but also the first, presenting valuable alternatives, does so, if one agrees that the Simon distinction between value and fact only is made for purposes of analysis and to make distinct the criteria of validation, thus a

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(23) We do not want to go into be discussion, wether in Belgium welfare state is already completely realized.

(24) ALTSHULER A., *Rationality and Influence in Public Service*, in: *Public Administration Review*, vol. XXV, nº 3 (1965), pp. 226-233.

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distinction with analytic character only (25). In fact political value-decision and administrative rationality are interwoven at each stage of the planning-programming-execution and control-process (26).

Hence, if policy-alternatives, as elaborated by public bureaucracy, would be valuable for political decision-makers, they must show as well professional rationality as responsivness, the more since the objectives, the belgian civil servants get, are vague.

One could agree with the statement of N.E. Long : « In practice the dogma of separation of policy and administration has been abandoned, but the church erected upon it has failed to crumble » (27). For Belgium also one could say that the dogma still gets lip-service, but that behavior inside the church is higly undogmatic.

Since it is hard for politicians to find out from outside, because of their technical handicap, where administrative rationality ends and where politics begins, they apprehend the fact that beneath expert alternatives might hide political values which are not theirs and which could be rationalizations of interests from within or outside bureaucracy.

As a reaction to this, some advocate to provide parliament with a proper research-departement for policy-making as a counterpart (28), or to develop the research-units of the parties. Several pressure-groups have their own research-staffs whose findings attempt to influence policy-making as well within bureaucracy as in the political parties.

In fact parties as well as financial, social, economic, linguistic and local pressure-groups apply informaly for collaboration of public servants in order to master policy-making. Those are generally eager to accept since this may result in a pretty fast going promotion through the party to which they provide their aid.

Other rewards may be the so called « cumuls » (29) in education, commissions, missions, etc. Hence it is quite natural their political color getting known.

In some cases civil servants in order to pay allegiance to their party, for instance in allocating subsidies to local communities, infor-

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(25) LANDAU M., *The Concept of Decision-Making,* in: MAILICK S., VAN NESS E.H. (eds.), *Concepts and Issues in Administrative Behavior,* Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 201 p., pp. 19-20.

(26) POULLET E., *Program Budgeting.* Instrument de la direction par les objectifs dans le secteur public, Bruxelles, IAU, 1967, 87 p., pp. 20-21.

(27) LONG N.E., *Politicians for Hire — The Dilemna of Education and the Task of Research,* in: *Public Administration Review,* vol. XXV, nº 2 (1965), p. 115.

(28) DEPRE R., e.a., *op. cit.,* p. 73.

(29) Additional jobs during or beside service hours.

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maly proceed through local politicians of their party even if this is supposed to be a pure administrative proceeding. That way it is rather clear that those politicians create a quite abnormal good-will for themselves and their party with the aid of civil servants and hence state-funds.

As a rationalization for these proceedings the ideological motive is advertised.

In other cases civil servants in order to increase their own power-position with regard to political responsibles, form a coalition with represented interests in commissions and slow down the elaboration of advice-reports on which the ministers had to make urgent decisions which announced to be not favorable to the represented interests. Gaining time that way decisions had to be postponed for a year with the hope for these interests that till then majority would change.

This way parties and groups tend to get hold of men in power-positions within public bureaucracy in order to condition the elaboration of administrative policy.

The national trade-union-bureaucracies as they take also care for the interests of civil servants, and as they have also great influence in some parties, are playing a predominant role in these proceedings. Corresponding to their functional field some departments are also infiltrated by groups with special interests in that particular field. In that case one could almost speak of a direct client-relationship between public servants and the interested. This of course does not promote the elaboration of a coherent and co-ordinated action program and throws, through often irresponsible pressures, financial control and financial planning in the short and the long run into disorder, with nefast results for public finances.

If one arrives as « temporal » (30) minister at the head of such politized department, he feels a natural mistrust in the expertise of his collaborators on which he has to rely in the elaboration of his policy. He will suspect undesired and hidden value-orientations in the proposed alternatives. Hence he surrounds himself with collaborators from inside or outside the civil service in his ministerial cabinet, some kind of spoil-unit not belonging to the bureaucracy. They will be experts of which he knows they are engaged and also reliable with regard to his values.

Because this cabinet is not permanent and as it is understaffed for that purpose, it is impossible that it could elaborate a sophisticated

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(30) DEPRE R., e.a., *op. cit.*, p. 71.

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policy with clear objectives. The more it is generally in a latent conflict situation with bureaucracy as it gets often involved in execution-tasks.

This mistrust however could also be sound in a system where no manifest politization of public bureaucracy happens. It is sociologicaly irrelevant indeed to think of public servants as to remain closed to all facets of their society and not be influenced by divergent values living in that society, at a time they are more and more integrated in their community as common citizens, stripped from their special status and feeling equal to other professionals.

The hypothesis could be formulated that according as to the degree public servants are participating in different groups, the more the possibility exists of deviant values and behavior as compared to those of their colleagues and those of the rulers temporaly in power.

Divergent value-patterns, consciently or unconsciently present amongst public servants, and those of political rulers, might be partly different, partly overlapping, following the constellation. If conscient, this influences their mutual strategy.

Public bureaucrats are not only interested in politics as « ruling servants » but also as clients, to the degree they are participating in grouplife within their community. Their role-set is build upon the different positions they take as well in the public service as in their community, in party-organizations and other groups as any citizen and thus exposed to, and tending to realize divergent value-patterns following the roles they play and the role-expectations made by their co-participants within the different groups.

The different value-patterns to which they are exposed in the groups where they participate in, influence their role-performance as public servants as well.

Following the situations where the civil servant is confronted with as he is involved in the administrative process, his judgement will at least unconsiously be also influenced by his other values, rather than exclusively by the one he has to take in account as a civil servant. The trouble is, that most of those patterns not only have a own vision they want to actualize with regard to the political-administrative system itself, but also specific ideas about the output of the system.

Is this a tribute to be payd to an highly pluralistic society, wherein continental-type political subcultures are interwoven with a multitude of bargaining groups ?

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Nevertheless at this stage, the minister is confronted with a bureaucracy where he knows to exist divergent value-patterns, besides the bureaucratic one itself.

He knows also they originate in political subcultures, in philosophical, religious, professional and local groups, who can constitute for his civil servants reference- or in-groups.

Hence he will try to handle his essential problems with men of which he suspects they agree in a higher degree with his set of values and he will reward them for that through promotion, closing that way the vicious circle of politization.

This is true for ministers of all ruling parties which results in agreements between these parties dividing positions and vacancies. And it is not uncommon to see that during years some vacancies remain unoccupied, till the time, the party got the right public servant in the right position to get him there, frustrating the man who did in fact the job for years.

In the new bureaucracies, the so called « parastatalen », this distribution of positions between parties is more evident, but the greater autonomy they were invested with in the sense of a « inventive rationality » (31), showed to be disastrous with regard to financial expenditures.

It is not the place here to suggest solutions to this huge problem. There is only one thing to add to this picture. This is the case of a system in transition, which tries to adapt to the dynamics of our society, forging new tools, new men and new structures in order to make change more managable in a democratic way according to the underlying basic value.

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(31) ALTSHULER A., *op. cit.*, p. 231.

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