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Public Managers and Politics

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I. Introduction

Politicians not seldomly swear at their top administrators; the Prussian 19th C. reformer vom Stein regarded them as "interestless scriveners", and Bismarck - as well as others afterward including Hitler - showed deep contempt for bureaucrats. On the other hand, central government personnel usually awaits the advent of a new minister with curiosity as to the time it will take them to educate the minister in leading the bureaucracy and accepting departmental policy views. A minister, who is publicly esteemed a strong politician, might occasionally be regarded chaotic by the bureaucracy; and a former German chancellor, who was extremely capable of managing the apparatus without frictions and appreciated by the civil service as an expert on a lot of policy issues, is apostrophied at least by his political opponents these days as "just a charismatic secretary of state" compared to his successor.

Obviously, politicians and public managers are likely to hold contradictory role expectations. It remains, however, a matter of empirical research to answer the question to what extent political leadership and civil service are functionally integrated, thus enabling the politico-administrative system to work effectively, if not even smoothly and without personal tensions When dealing with the relationship between public managers and politics one is immediately caught by the intricacies of political theory, constitutional traditions, and orthodox administrative science views, which customarily treat the problem under consideration in the framework of the politics-administration dichotomy. Although most administrative scientists today might agree that this classical framework is a descriptively misleading conception of two separate realms of politics and administration, we can hardly abandon the dichotomy for theoretical reasons, as we might run into intellectual difficulties when trying to draw organization charts with horizontal lines to indicate hierarchical relationships or having top executives sit on the ground floor of their office building and the clerks on the top. Even in problematizing the politics-administration dichotomy on empirical grounds we rely - occasionally

for the sake of paradoxical formulations - on this very distinction; titles like "the politics of bureaucracy" (Tullock 1965), "the politics of the budgetary process" (Wildavsky 1964), or the "politicization of evaluation research" (Weiss 1970) emphasize the political aspects of processes, which in the frame of the classical theory were supposed to be technical and non-political. On the other side of the coin we face the problems of political control over bureaucracy, matching expertness with legitimate power, linking civil service neutrality to parochial politics, or ultimately relating efficiency to democracy.
In this essay I shall employ some traditional conceptualizations of the politics-administration dichotomy relating to Max Weber, using it, however, as a heuristic tool and theoretical point of departure (Dunsire 1978) in order to empirically analyze some aspects of the complicated relationship between public managers and politics. It is worth to draw attention to the historical differentiation of the polity,that brought about the separation of powers and led to the emergence of distinct political and administrative roles (II). In a functional analysis (III) the facts-values distinction is to be confronted with empirical findings revealing the degree of objective involvement of top administrators in the political process. We shall proceed to examine to what extent public managers today subjectively hold a classical, neutral role understanding or rather regard themselves as actors in the policy process (IV). Subsequently (V),I shal elaborate measures of personnel policy,which serve as mechanisms for politically controlling bureaucracy and which might account for the merely gradual difference between the roles of political actors and public top managers. Finally (VI) it should be asked, if the introduction of management techniques has been helpful in solving the political control problem.

II. Polity Differentiation and Emergence of Distinct Roles

The politics-administration-dichotomy is intellectually rooted in the doctrine of separation of powers as a system of political checks and balances (van Hassel 1985), in which the executive branch draws its legitimacy from parliament. It is, however, not merely a normative theory, which had a strong bearing on most

civil service codes and in particular implied that the neutral execution of written law should guide administrative decision-making, but it also reflects the change which was undergone by most western political systems during the last two centuries: the coming into existance of parliaments and political parties, organized interest groups and mass media. The absolutist state on the continent was transformed and the polity differentiated into various subsystems, among which bureaucracy remained but one, albeit important power center exposed to an increased number of conflicting interests and rivalling expectations. Although the absolutist bureaucracy, for instance in Prussia, was occasionally far from being merely the obedient servant of the King's "personal regime", but was itself rather an agglomeration of conflicting provincial and societal interests (Koselleck 1967; Rosenberg 1968), with the advent of constitutional monarchy, even more within republican states and competitive party systems, the relationship between "political master and staff for domination", to put it in Max Weber's terms, became more complicated. Whereas under absolutist rule top administrators not seldomly were politicians and ministers juridically civil servants, roles became formally differentiated as (at least prime-)ministers were elected and supported by a parliamentary majority and stayed in office for a limited number of years. The by then **tenured, professionally trained, appointed,** and **salaried full-time** civil servant, who went through a career to the top of the administrative hierarchy, faced the **elected, transitory amateur** as his political master, who after the introduction of equal suffrage not seldomly was brought up under working class conditions. The **structural** differentiation of the polity coincided at least after revolutionary constitutional changes with a **social differentiation** of politicians and higher civil servants, when republican governments under social democratic leadership had to work with a ministerial bureaucracy predominantly recruited from nobility and still monarchist in orientation as in Germany after 1919 (Runge 1965). Even today top administrators not only fall grossly short of corresponding to the idea of a socially

representative bureaucracy, but also are more likely to be upper middle class in origin and university trained than politicians (Aberbach et al. 1981, 47-67). On the other hand, both groups of politico-administrative actors have become assimiliated, since politicians, as already Max Weber had observed, increasingly tended to "live from politics than to live for politics". Despite this professionalisation of politicians the career path of both elite groups remained quite distinct with a predictable career and job security in the one case and more "entrepreneurial", competitive, uncertain political careers and transitory maintenance of top positions in the case of politicians.

There are, though, marked national differences in the degree to which there occurs **horizontal career mobility** between the realms and arenas of politics and administration and the other way round, depending basically on the institutional **safeguards** developed **to secure neutrality** of the civil service. Whereas some countries practice total ineligibility and even non-affiliation with political parties as a norm (Great Britain),others allow public servants to become members of political parties as their civil right and even to run election campaigns while formally in office (e.g. Germany, France). In this case, at least the norm of **incompatibility between office and mandate** on the same level of the (federal) political system is applied and the respective civil servant, once elected, is suspended from office while being member of parliament. Consequently, with **eligibility** given some countries have a relatively high percentage of civil servants in local, state, and national parliaments, although regularly not top administrators. France, however, is the exception to the rule; ministers not seldomly have gone through administrative careers (Suleiman 1974; Timsit 1985). In any case, with eligibility civil servants tend to become members of political parties,too, and the more likely are **politicians to reveal at least a distant civil service background**, thus making the **structural differentiation** between politics and administration functionally questionable. **Mobility from politics into top administrative positions**, however,

is regularly less frequent and, if occuring, presupposes that there are legal wholes in an otherwise closed career system of the civil service. Again we observe national differences as to the degree top administrative positions may and actually are staffed with external recruits from politics or other elite sectors. The motives for allowing exceptions to the career system are twofold; on the one hand, external recruitment is justified by the functional need to bring special expertise into an administrative system, which is normally staffed with generalists (Ridley 1983). Secondly, top administrative positions, are occasionally (as in the USA) filled with candidates formally politically appointed (Heclo 1977). But even with the possibility of external recruitment for top positions we seldomly find prominent party or parliamentary politicians in administrative positions, but at best party or interest group functionaries or career civil servants,who are members of the particular party in government. Obviously, there exists a **goal conflict** between preserving **neutrality**, non-partisanship (historically: incorruptibility), and **expertise** in particular with respect to executive agencies, and, on the other hand, securing **political responsiveness** of the ministerial bureaucracy to leading politicians. In any case, the circulation of elite members between politics and administration and vice versa bears not only the potential for party **politicizing** the - *in normative prescription* - neutral bureaucracy, but also for **bureaucratizing politics** (Mayntz 1983). Judged against these norms reality must appear problematic; it should, however, not be overlooked that the very notion of separation of powers, at least as far as the relationship between parliament and government is concerned, has become historically weak, since in reality most European countries are characterized by party government with ministers being regularly members of parliament [1)]; the more so,as additional positions like parliamentary secretaries of state or junior ministers have developed. To the extent the notion of **linkage rather than separation of powers** applies better, we notice that, at least *in some countries*, the actual **threshold between politics and**

administration is located somewhere below administratively defined top position; the exact borderline depends on the extent to which political criteria may be or actually are applied in staffing these positions, to what extent subjective role understanding is political rather than bureaucratic, and on the degree of civil servants' involvement in the policy process.

III. Top Administrators and Politicians in the Policy Process

What in systems perspective means separation of powers or - more generally speaking - differentiation of the polity, implies in organizational perspective the emergence of at least two distinct types of positions and actors. Let us again turn to the classical conceptualization of Weber. Apart from the ideal-typically juxtaposed properties of being elected vs. appointed, being in a transitory position vs. receiving tenure, and being - in principle - the dilettant or amateur confronted with the professionally trained expert, Weber (Weber 1919) in particular pointed out, that politicians act in public and in parliament as their **arena**, while administrators stay in bureaus and boards, that their **medium** is voice, whereas bureaucrats rely on the written word and records, that their imperative is **fight for power** as opposed to the **obedience** of disciplined officials working sine ira et studio. Furthermore, Weber regarded the typical politician as an actor who tried to persuade and to **convince** people, with **passion** and occasionally with **charisma**; the administrator, on the other hand, was supposed to **argue**, to be a scientifically trained problem solver opposed to the preference changer; and he - in principle - would play this role **impassionately** and impersonally. [2)]

Clearly, these characteristics refer to the policy process and the functioning of both groups of actors in politics. Rather organization sociologists than the original Weberian theory of political domination have emphasized an additional implication: politicians are regarded as the goal setters, while administrators are supposed to select adequate means to achieve these goals and to implement political visions. In other words:

politicians cope with what may be called **normative complexity**, while the function of civil servants can be seen in reducing **factual uncertainty** by relying on routines and applying professional expertise stored in the records. In this view only politicians are in a position to bring about **substantive rationality**, whereas civil servants produce at best **formal rationality**. [3] This means-ends- and facts-value dichotomy is, however, a **logical distinction** highly inappropriate to conceptualize the interaction between politician and administrator. It has severely been questioned by Herbert Simon (1947) on psychological grounds and must be rejected on polito-logical grounds, too (Gawthrop 1969); it rather reflects the logic of legitimating administrative decisions than it depicts the legitimizing process. It can serve us, however, as a starting point to shed some light on the mutual functioning of political and administrative actors in the decision process beyond the characteristics Weber had regarded typical.

A good deal of what a ministry does is - apart from policy implementation and control of the implementation process - **devising new policies** and programmes, which not seldomly have to be legislated. Be it that these new policies are innovative, be it that they are incremental or pre-programmed by previous decisions, the **initiative** to deal with a problem, defining the problem, and devising (alternative) ways to its solution often originate in the operative sections at the bottom of the ministerial hierarchy. Of course, to a certain degree the decision-making process is fuelled by problems and policy proposals from party and election programmes; but already government declarations are regularly a mixtum compositum of political initiatives and bureaucratic suggestions (Böhret 1979). In any case, central political initiatives as well as decentral bureaucratic proposals have to be **mediated** into the operating units and onto the political layer, respectively. Gearing both sides to one another is basically the function of the two top administrative levels in the hierarchy. For top administrators this means either to **operationalize**

policy goals, to specify the (basically normative) **decision premises**, and to anticipate **constraints** as well as **political feasibility**, or to filter decentral initiatives through perceived or anticipated decision premises of the minister. Even routine matters, which normally would not involve the minister, but are decided on by officials, have to be evaluated with respect to potential **political repercussions.**
Matching political preferences and administrative professional and procedural expertness (Fachwissen and Dienstwissen, to use Weber's distinction) requires **vertical communication.** Contrary to the classical mechanistic model of hierarchical top-down decision-making and bottom-up reporting the process of adjusting normative and factual decision premises is a **dynamic, iterative process** (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975, 100). In addition, it is **highly selective**, as the intensity of vertical communication varies with the stage in the process and with **issue salience**; whereas entire divisions in a ministry may work on auto-pilot (Rose 1985, 3), there are issues of particular political attention, for which the minister is held accountable, with which he identifies, and in which he wants to become renowned as a competent policy-maker. This means that the intensity of communication between division heads and minister will increase. For instance, a recent empirical study in German Länder ministries found out, that 16 per cent of division heads speak to their superior once a week or even less often, while 78 per cent communicate twice or three times a week, and 6 per cent even had daily interaction (Derlien 1985, 75).

Not only are top civil servants more involved in internal vertical communication, but the **frequency of external contacts** to other ministries including the office of the head of government, to parliamentary bodies, interest group representatives, and press relations increases the higher the rank of a civil servant (Aberbach et al. 1981, 209 ff.). The **arena of policy-making** changes, too, as we move up the hierarchy: whereas the operative units basically communicate with sections in other departments

or with subordinate authorities and exchange information, top administrators are more likely to be engaged in parliamentary or cabinet committees (often accompanied by section heads to assist them) or - depending on the political culture - occasionally appear in public; even more so does, of course, the politician. A German minister not seldomly spends only one third of his working hours in his department (Wagener 1971, 6). While his function is predominantly **representing** and "selling" departmental policy in order to reach at a consensus and to secure party support as his most important **political resource**, the top manager is rather involved in **resolving conflicts**, which are engendered in lower level internal and external horizontal communications. The mechanism to shift controversial matters up the hierarchy, which is well known from the process of settling budgetary disputes, also shifts power upward (Downs 1966, 148). In so far the decision patterns follow the management by exception model.
As the typical form of conflict resolution: bargaining implies changing the political preference structure, this **power shift mechanism**, thus, serves to politically control lower level coordination and transports consensus building onto hierarchical levels, which are normally more informed about the politician's willingness and limitations to compromise, and are better legitimized to bargain.
Only the most essential matters then are referred to the minister for decision, whereas issues of minor political importance are accomplished by top administrators. This function of filtering the vertical flow of information presupposes that top administrators have developed sensitivity to recognize what might be of political importance and should be reported to the political top.

There is, however, not merely a gradual, but also a qualitative difference between top administrators and politician, when it comes to **managing a department** with respect to **organizing, staffing,** and **budgeting**. Not taking into account those ministries which are functionally specialized within government to deal with budgeting (Finance, Treasury) or staffing (Civil Service

Department) as their professional policy field, management tasks within a department are to fulfill subsidiary functions for policy development and long term maintenance functions for the effectiveness of the apparatus independent of specific governments and their policies. It might be generalizable that politicians are involved in management functions merely in cases, which again are defined as exceptional (setting overall budgetary priorities or bargaining a percentage of budget cutbacks with the finance minister) or which formally have to be authorized (major reorganizations). Of course, there are differences between ministers with respect to their management capabilities and interests (Heady 1974), but in general the initiatives originate in the department and proposals are elaborated in close contact with the top civil servant, before a minister is informed or gets involved. It is, one could say, the priviledge of the permanent top administrator, as opposed to the parliamentary secretary of state or the minister, to control management decisions implying the maintenance of **administrative resources.** Only to the extent these questions have an important bearing on substantive policy matters, the minister is asked a decision or takes an active stand in them, although it is questionable, if politicians care about organizational matters for more than symbolic reasons (March/Olson 1983). Complementarily, it is rather the top administrator who considers the resource implications of substantive policy issues. Undoubtedly though, politicians are seriously concerned with the appointment of their closest collaborators, the top administrators.

The importance of management decisions in shaping the role of the top administrator does not mean that they are pre-occupied with management problems; their involvement in policy development is regularly too time consuming to specialize solely on the "administration of administration". This might explain why heads of the management division of German federal ministries do not have a better chance to be appointed secretaries of state than heads of line divisions (Derlien 1986).

So far we have characterized the role of the top administrator vis à vis his minister as differing with respect to amount, arena, and mode of external contacts, involvement in policy development, and caring about house-keeping functions. This stylized picture is more complicated in reality, when we take into account that there often is not merely the bipolar vertical relationship between minister and top administrator or the latter and division heads, but that there can be more top actors involved in the running of a department. Depending on the formal organization structure of government departments and the variety and number of top positions **different configurations of roles** and forms of division of labour can develop between political and administrative actors, which would modify the simplified picture drawn so far. Owing to the increased number of public tasks and the grown size of central government departments in most European countries not only the number of top administrative, but also of political positions has grown. Some German departments have acquired **additional secretaries of state** in the late 1960 like in Britain deputy secretaries of state were introduced. Furthermore, **staff units** occasionally fulfill important coordinating functions instead of top line administrators, most prominently so in France (Thullier 1982). Secondly, there have developed additional political positions besides the minister; **parliamentary secretaries of state** were institutionalized in Germany in 1967 (Laufer 1969) in adopting the British model of junior ministers and ministers of state. In France and the Netherlands (Committee NL 1980, 48; Kooiman 1982) secretaries of state are political positions even outside the formal hierarchy. Apart from assisting the minister in his external relations, representing him in cabinet, parliament, or public, these additional political actors, however, tend to acquire functions of **project managers**, as they promote certain key policies within the department or - in coalition governments - serve as guardians of the political partner. Furthermore, when **staff units** take over coordinating functions or more top civil service positions are installed, departmental management tends

to deviate from the classical monocratic model, because the function of, let's say, a German secretary of state as departmental coordinator might change into that of a super-division head, occasionally even allowing the parliamentary secretary of state to concentrate on management functions in the narrow sense (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975, 86; Schmidt/Treiber 1975, 122). As the relationships at the top of a ministry are seldomly formalized and cooperation to a great extent depends on the personalities of the actors, formally monocratic political authority can factually be transformed into **colleagual modes of leadership.** When the configurations become more complex, formal positional differences are blurred and the qualification of actors as rather political or bureaucratic is even more difficult in terms of their empirical function in the policy process. Whatever the actual configuration, public managers have a broader range of **political discretion** than would have been attributed to them in the classical notion. Thus, the empirical evidence available shows that the ministerial bureaucracy in toto and the role of the top administrator are **functionally political.**

IV. Top Administrators' Subjective Role Understanding

If policy is a joint political and administrative product involving both sets of actors and if politics and administration may therefore be regarded as overlapping worlds (Aberbach/Rockman 1977), this does not necessarily mean that the subjective role expectations are mutually consistent. To what extent are the differently structured actors, who nevertheless factually participate in the policy process, attitudinally integrated with one another? Or do their ideal-typically dichotomous properties, in particular the normative conflict between neutrality and partisanship, between common-wheal-orientation and interest representation engender role conflicts?
The "classical bureaucrat" was found in top executive positions in all major European countries at the beginning of the 1970s, although to a different percentage in the various national systems, compared to the "political bureaucrat". While generally

the political bureaucrat dominated and the classical seemed to be retreating [4], Italian top administrators appeared to be rather classical on average (Putnam 1975) and Dutch top civil servants revealed at least some classical attitudes (Eldersveld et al. 1975, Eldersveld et al. 1981). In general top administrators did not regard bureaucracy as the sole warden of a satisfactory public policy, but rather **acknowledged the role of parties and parliaments** in bringing about the collective well-being. Quite contrary to the classical model, technocratic attitudes derived from the awareness of expertness were not dominant. Consequently, the interference of politicians and the clash of particularistic interest groups were not regarded disturbing or illegitimate, nor was party competition viewed as exacerbating political conflicts (Putnam 1975, 101). An Index of Tolerance for Politics indicated that British and German top executives were more sympathetic towards features of the policy process than were their Italian counterparts. Furthermore, "three out of five British and German respondents reported that on balance they **enjoyed the political side of their work**, while roughly two in five reported ambivalent or negative feelings" (Putnam 1975, 103). In addition, top administrators displayed **programmatic commitment to policy contents** and were not just concerned with organizational efficiency and incremental policy adjustments or legalistic in outlook.

Compared to parliamentary politicians, however, senior administrators exhibited a more technical role understanding, emphasizing expertise in problem solving; their role understanding was also more accentuated that of a broker, mediating between conflicting interests. Parliamentary politicians, on the other hand, were quite in line with the Weberian model in more strongly conceiving their role as advocates of broad interest groups and as partisan, or even stressed the facilitator aspect of protecting the interests of specific clientel groups (Aberbach et al. 1981, 86-91). Despite these differences common aspects of political and bureaucratic role understanding existed, too: there was hardly a difference in the percentage of legalist and trustee role understanding, nor were both groups distinct with respect to the most fre-

quent role focus: that of being policymakers. In other words, both groups of actors share a political role understanding, but politicians are more concerned with managing inputs into the policy process, whereas top executives deal with them during the conversion process, when elaborating a policy. [5)]
The bureaucrat's surprisingly high involvement in the policy process is compatible with the politicians' expectation; however, the latter "claim center stage for themselves" (Aberbach et al 1981, 105) and ascribe rather instrumental functions to the administrator; they also become sceptical about more activist functions of administrators in the policy process.

National differences in attitudes of top civil servants in the Aberbach et al. study, the most comprehensive available so far, could in part be deduced from particularities of the national polities; for instance, the extremely high functional politicization of American political executives and senior civil servants can be explained, among others, by the system of fragmented subgovernments, or the Italian and - in some dimensions - Dutch classical traits could be inferred from the fragmented party systems and governmental instability (Eldersveld et al. 1975, 157; Putnam 1975, 110). On the other hand, British and German top administrators were extremely **similar in their high degree of political role understanding despite strong institutional differences** in the way the staffing of top positions is exposed to political influence (Ridley 1983). In the German case of 1970 we would have expected also differences in role understanding with respect to the so-called "political civil servants", the two top ranks who can be temporarily **retired** (Derlien 1984), and the heads of subdivisions, as in the Washington sample the **political appointees** were slightly different in their views from career administrators (Aberbach et al. 1981, 64). [6)] Though, another study for Germany in 1972, intellectually indebted to Putnam (1973), informs us, that political bureaucrats were more likely to be found in these very positions, which also tended to be externally staffed with non-career people, who in addition more frequently belonged to one of the (governing) parties

(Steinkemper 1974). From the degree of politicization possible in top positions due to institutional mechanisms of recruitment and promotion, we would have expected more differences within and between national administrative elites than could be proved.

These findings, furthermore, urge to ask the question, if there has occured a **historical change** in role understanding independent of formal regulations for staffing top positions, as was suggested by Putnam's (1975) tentative thesis of a generational change in the German case. I should put forward the hypothesis that subjective role understanding might well have changed as to the extent the myth of the classical administrator is fading away and top civil servants have become aware of their actual functions in the policy process. The classical role conception, on the other hand, is still being adhered by some jurists and civil service unions, as it was maintained in Weber's days by Schmoller, although there is and was ample historical evidence, that neither the ministerial bureaucracy in toto nor individual top administrators were ever that classical - at least during the last 100 years of German history - as Weber's ideal-type extrapolated from the rationalization of occidental political domination might have induced some administrative scientists to believe. In any case, the rather political role understanding of top civil servants corresponds highly to the functional politicization of the government bureaucracy in the policy process.

V. Political Control by Personnel Policy

Is the high compatibility of subjective role understanding of top administrators and (parliamentary) politicians brought about by their operating in a functionally politicized context? Is political role understanding, so to speak, automatically produced, once ideologies and myths have become unbearable? Presupposing such an automatism, which would result in prestabilized harmony of both sets of actors, could lead us to underestimate the problem of politically controlling a huge bureaucratic appa-

ratus like a government department and preventing it from emancipating itself from its political master. Even when excluding from our consideration cases of bureaucratic illoyalty or sabotage (Brecht 1937), information leakage and withholding information from a minister, political responsibility of a minister today cannot be fully exerted, as complexity of tasks and openness of decision making prevent a minister from knowing all and everything that goes on in his department. The law of requisite variety limits his attention and information processing capacity vis à vis an apparatus of overwhelming expertise, renders political control necessarily selective, and enables the bureaucracy to become politically self-controlling, as Max Weber had already observed. The politician, therefore, will tend to broaden his control capacity.

One way to do so is to build up **staff units**; the French cabinets ministeriels are the proto-type for a **structural solution** to increase the political control capacity, however, resulting in an impairment of the top executive's line authority. In most European countries and the United States, furthermore, the staff solution can rather be observed on the level of the chief of government in order to secure interdepartmental coordination (Rose/Suleiman 1980).

Another solution observable in a number of countries consists in **super-implanting more genuine politicians** onto a closed civil service career system with inamovability of top executives. The politically neutralized, although not a-political, Whitehall bureaucracy then might function quite smoothly, because there is a great number of MPs appointed to political executive positions; surely, the 60 sub-cabinet positions and 36 unpaid parliamentary private secretaries also serve patronage functions to the parliamentary faction (Rose 1971; 1980, 6), but they, nevertheless, allow to delegate external relations and to broaden the internal political control capacity. Increasing the number of political appointees in the executive branch may, however, create coordination problems and problems of balancing the division of labour in departmental management we were referring to above.

A functional alternative as well as an additional device to enhance the control capacity of ministers over their bureaucratic staff of domination is **selective promotion of political trustees** within the civil service career system. Be it in staffing the ministerial cabinet, be it in appointing top line administrators, ministers all over the world try to select those candidates whom they regard valuable collaborators in the policy process, because they supposedly share normative convictions with the minister. This congeniality reduces the need to communicate normative political decision premises and allows the politician to rely on the candidate's political self-control. Selective, politically motivated promotion is possible even in a closed career system, as the recent change in personnel policy in Whitehall indicates (Fortin 1984; Ridley 1985). The widest range of politically motivated staffing is notoriously opened in the American **spoil system** (Heclo 1977; Brown 1982; Fesler 1983), where political appointees as well as the senior executive service can be removed from office and new trustees appointed to vacancies from within and without the career service. Other countries like France and Germany (Johnson 1983, 189 ff.) know merely the "political civil servants", who can be **temporarily retired**, an institution that is particularly made use of after changes in government (Derlien 1984; Timsit 1985; Maisl et al. 1985). Here vacancies are predominantly, though not exclusively, filled with insiders. Of course, with public employees instead of tenured civil servants (as partly holds for the personnel in French cabinets) it is even easier to purge important positions. The most modest form of gearing top career civil servants to the political requirements of the day is to **re-shuffle** them and bring those looked at with disgrace into politically less sensitive positions. If re-shuffling is not possible because of strict inamovability, **new positions** might be established and filled with trustees in order to circumvent or control mistrusted office holders.

These are not only the basic mechnisms to practically substitute communicated political decision premises by socialized convictions; in my view they also contribute to explain, why top administrators on average fit into a functionally politicized environment and exhibit a role understanding, which is grosso modo compatible and partly congruent with that of politicians. The wide range of **informal** devices available for political control by personnel policy could also help to explain, why there are hardly differences in subjective role understanding of top civil servants despite different **formal** prescriptions for recruitment into top administrative positions. Even the formally most extreme cases of staffing top executive positions, Whitehall and Washington, can actually converge towards a "white-wash" system. [7] Politically motivated staffing, thus, bears the **potential for degenerating into party-politicization**. The more party affiliation or party membership becomes the sole criterion of recruiting into top executive positions and expertise looses importance, the more career civil servants will be de-motivated to strive for promotion, and therefore the still most effective traditional mechanism to safeguard expertise **and** loyalty will be jeopardized. Also will the frictions in case of a change in government be multiplied, when party-politicization has gone on for a longer period of time (Aberbach/Rockman 1976), the result being on the long run acceleration of the process and ultimately a spoil system or a system of **proportional politicization** like in Belgium (Moulin 1975). But these potential long term implications even for career systems should not be used by classical bureaucrats to denounce every promotion of talented career civil servants, who manage to combine expertise with political knowledge and are particularly aware of their function in the differentiated politico-administrative system. [8]

VI. Political Control by Management Techniques?

Having elaborated the political environment of public managers, the structural context, their functional involvement in the policy process, their concomitantly accepting a more or less

political role understanding, and various mechanism of personnel policy, which to a certain extent might have brought about a fit between these elements, leads us back to **systemic** questions. From a functionalist point of view we clearly observe a high degree of **interpenetration** of the legislative and the executive subsystems of the polity (Mayntz 1983). The more politicians hold functions in both of the systems, the more top administrators share segments of their role with that of their minister, the more they engage in political parties, gain parliamentary mandates, and are appointed top administrators because of these very properties, the more politics and ministerial bureaucracy as formerly also socially and careerwise differentiated systems become **de-differentiated.** At least, the borderline between the two systems has shifted deeper downward into the executive branch, since ministers are recruited from parliaments and top civil servants become party-politicized. To the extent party membership overrides expertise as the decisive criterion for recruitment into top administrative positions, one could even state a **regression** of the system towards its 18th C. state, when ascribed properties like social class or family bonds were dominant recruitment criteria.

On the other hand, it is arguable that the systems are still being kept separately, as political and administrative careers are distinct and inter-sectoral mobility is low or one-sided,as long as rather (junior and lower) civil servants enter politics. What may have appeared as de-differentiation or regression,then, could also be interpreted as a state of the system, in which **internal complexity has been increased** by mutually incorporating elements of the other system in order to cope with the increased complexity of the administrative and the political environment, respectively. Functional role differentiation within parliament (bureaucratic skills and positions) and within administration (political roles and skills) yet require more complex forms of information processing.

It is within this context (together with the general trend of expanding state activities) that the various attempts to improve the **managability** of the executive branch since the late 1960s are rooted and can be understood. Integrated planning and budgeting systems of the PPBS type, cost-benefit-analyses, and programme evaluation were meant to rationalize policy and policy-making in order to replace traditional piece-meal engineering, incrementalism and ad-hocracy by goal-oriented, comprehensive, and long range planning. Management by objectives, performance appraisal, payment schemes, and new recruitment and staffing procedures brought about by civil service reforms aimed at increasing productivity in government. These reforms (Caiden/ Siedentopf 1982), however, often failed, were implemented half-heartedly, or reduced later on, leaving the traditional system basically as it was before - except the increased number of staff positions as well as analytical specialists in these positions.

Among the multiple reasons for the failure of most reform attempts two are of theoretical significance here. Planning systems, which follow the logic of decision making and aim at comprehensiveness, were bound to fail within a turbulent political environment creating contradictory and instabile normative preferences incompatible with established executive plans. Secondly, organizational models and instruments for personnel policy (as well as decision tools) were often borrowed from business administration and followed the logic of hierarchical, closed decision making inappropriate to the open system of politics and the cognitive uncertainties and fragmented powers operating there. Therefore, the hope of coping with the problem of politically controlling the ministerial bureaucracy by introducing management techniques and by moulding the role of the top administrators towards the model of the manager in private industry was at least shattered. Top administrators remained "reduced" politicians, and these management techniques, as far as they were perpetuated, were carried out by people in staff units. The **dilemma** yet is that they on the one hand strengthen the control

capacity of the top vis à vis the apparatus, on the other hand the control problem, although to a lesser degree, is duplicated in so far,as the ancient question of who is to control the controllers arose. The answer, in my view, very often was given by politicizing appointments to important staff and line positions in order to keep the management specialists under political control.

Footnotes

1) In France ministers resign from their parliamentury mandate on the national, but not necessarily on the local level.

2) Weber, however, in his practical political assessments did not go as far as Schmoller to maintain that civil servants represented the common wheal materializing the Hegelian Vernunft. It is often overlooked that the Weber brothers were politically extremely hostile towards the bureaucratic machine and castigated Schmoller's apologetic positions as "state metaphysics" (Alfred Weber 1950).

3) One could even delve deeper into Weberian thought by referring to the antinomy of ethics of conscience (Gesinnung) and of responsibility (Verantwortung).

4) Because of missing longitudinal data, it is questionable if age related attitudinal differences indicate generational or career effects (Putnam 1975, 115; Aberbach et al. 1981, 40 f.)

5) These differences in role understanding between legislators and administrators in European countries do, however, (according to Aberbach et al. 1981, 94 ff.) not hold for the USA, where both sets of actors are different from their European colleagues and extremely similar to one another; bureaucrats thus were qualified as pure hybrids - a result explained by institutional and process features of the American polity.

6) Aberbach et al., although interviewing senior civil servants of 6 different ranks in Germany including high-fliers and top administrators (below the level of secretary of state in the German case), concluded: "Rank is related only to an administrator's enjoyment of the political aspect of his job... but no strong generic claim can be made that political attitudes are linked to particular functional or hierarchical sectors in Western bureaucracies" (Aberbach et al. 1981,225). Rank-effects could, however, be shown in Japan (Muramatsu/Krauss 1984).

7) I owe this expression to Bert Rockman, Pittsburgh.

8) There seems to be a tendency to complain about party politicization after left wing parties have taken over government as in France in 1981 (Bodiguel 1983), in Germany 1969 (Derlien 1985a), in Finland in 1966 (Ståhlberg 1985), or - more generally - when main-stream policies are to be replaced by policies based on firm principles and ideologies like in Britain 1978 (Ridley 1985).

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