

Article: "1998 John Gaus Lecture - The Human Side of Public Administration"

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The Human Side of Public Administration

To avoid any misunderstanding, let me say at the outset that the remarks that follow are selective impressions brimming with bias, the product of what one of our earlier distinguished colleagues, George Graham, described as old-fashioned armchair research. To talk about the human side of public administration is a good opening salvo designed to attract attention, but what I really want to focus my comments on is a thread that is woven deeply within the fibers of administration, and that now, more than ever before, needs to be brought to the surface and recognized explicitly as an integral aspect of our democratic heritage. Specifically, I am referring to the humanistic imperatives that democracy historically

weaves into the fabric of public administration.

The fascinating thing about history is the never-ending flow of irony that

fills its pages. This is particularly true insofar as the primary focus of this lecture, presented in honor of one of our most distinguished former colleagues, John Gaus, is concerned. For example, as Dwight Waldo noted some years ago, "there is an intricate and intimate relationship between civilization and administration. . . . Administration was present 'at the creation.' It was an integral part of civilization whenever and wherever civilization developed; and without the foundation and framework it supplied, civilization would not have developed" (1980, 17, 24-25).

Indeed, civilization and administration are virtually indivisible. In the earliest records of the most primitive and elementary social systems, there is evidence of decisions being made and implemented concerning issues of governance, however that term may have been defined. As the notion of governance was developed and extended, the expanse and influence of administrative systems grew. With the steady amplification of rudimentary social

systems into increasingly elaborate systems of governance, the notions of politics and political systems became increasingly linked with the concept of a *public* administration designed to implement the policy decisions of ruling regimes or governments. Thus, it is in this context that the aphorism "politics is the lifeblood of administration" takes on a distinctive meaning, and the relationship between politics and administration becomes just as intricate and intimate as that between civilization and administration.

As Waldo (1980) pointed out, this ever-widening, dynamic development of an administrative presence began in the earliest of the ancient civilizations and continues to the present day. Yet—and here is where the irony occurs—for all intents and purposes, the development of public administration in the United States has been essentially a twentieth-century phenomenon. To be sure, administration was present at the creation of the Republic, as well as throughout the nineteenth century as Leonard White (1943, 1951, 1954, 1958) comprehensively recorded for us in his four-volume administrative history. In so many very important respects, however, the mature elements of the public sector administrative systems in the United States did not become fully developed until the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In this regard, I am thinking primarily in terms of

1. The development of a self-conscious sense of professionalism
2. The development of public administration as a field deserving serious scholarly study
3. The explicit disciplinary commitment to the formation of a science of administration
4. The persistent emphasis placed on the politics-administration and fact-value dichotomies, and the emergence of well-defined perspectives

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concerning the validity of these presumed dichotomies

5. The continuous efforts to resolve the clash between the values of democracy and the canons of management.

Of course, many of my colleagues date the beginnings of modern public administration in the United States to 1933, which marks the beginning of the New Deal and the emergence of the positive state. In this connection, the British political scientist Harold Laski observed

As soon as the American democracy moved into the epoch of the positive state, it could not afford the luxury of dull government. For it is an inherent implication of dull government that the dynamic of national life is *not* profoundly affected by its operation; and it is to the inherent dynamic of the positive state that the operations of government *are* profoundly important. From this it follows that the government of a positive state—if it is to be successful—must necessarily be a *thinking* government. (1940, 270–71; emphasis added)

A similar note was struck by Felix Frankfurter in his 1930 book on administration and democracy, *The Public and its Government*. Frankfurter drew on the traditions of public service in Great Britain and cited an 1854 report on civil service reform authored by Sir Charles Trevelyan. The “Organization Report,” as it was referred

The responsibilities for involving citizens in the democratic processes of governance and developing in them an enriched sense of community, civility, and the common good, rest squarely on the shoulders of public administrators. Viewed from this perspective, democracy, at its best, takes the form of an ongoing pedagogical process that reflects something similar to the Platonic notion of an “intelligent love”—i.e., a type of love based on the notion of a transcendent good that, in turn, serves as a guide for action.

to, anticipated very closely the conclusion reached by Laski, in the sense that the report

was based throughout upon the *positive idea of government*—that is, upon the idea that government must be carried on by men who *think as to what ought to be done* instead of merely doing that which must be done. (Frankfurter 1930, 141; emphasis added)

Gaus and the other distinguished political scientists of his generation viewed administration as an integral component of such a “thinking” government and, even more, as the impetus for nurturing and nourishing a thinking democratic polity. Gaus understood the role of the citizen to be that of a direct participant in the processes of democracy and this was especially true insofar as the

role of the citizen in the administrative process was concerned (1947, 122). With the emergence of the positive state, Gaus argued, a healthy and satisfactory life for the individual could be obtained only through varied and extensive political arrangements, and these arrangements were largely administrative in nature. Thus, reciprocal relationships had to be developed between administrative officials and the citizenry to facilitate the exchange of information and to enhance the qualitative levels of a thinking government. As Gaus noted, “Some have called this kind of political society ‘the service state’ or ‘the administrative state’. . . whatever term we may give it, *administration ultimately is education*” (123; emphasis added).

* * * *

This is an interesting proposition and, although it may sound somewhat like a quaint and prosaic soundbite to our more sophisticated and jaundiced ears, it does seem to suggest that the operations of a positive or thinking government rely upon ongoing public education, the responsibility for which falls primarily on the shoulders of administrative personnel. As another distinguished political scientist, Marshall Dimock, argued in this connection, “administration is more than a lifeless pawn. It plans, it contrives, it philosophizes, *it educates*, it builds for the community as a whole” (Gaus, White, and Dimock 1936, 133; emphasis added). In other words, in the context of a positive, policy-oriented state, administration becomes the primary service-delivery system for democracy and, in effect, the principal manager of democracy’s end products. In regard to the delivery of tangible goods and things, this understanding of administration has become commonplace today. Our colleagues of nearly sixty years ago, however, seemed to be urging something quite different. They seemed to be suggesting that the basic end product of government is its capacity to educate, that is to say to inform, to impart knowledge, to increase citizen comprehension of (and appreciation for) the humanistic imperatives of democracy.

In my recent writing (Gawthrop 1998), I have focused extensively on the relationship between democracy and public service and specifically on the informational (or educational, if you will) relationships that must prevail among public servants and the citizenry if the basic democratic values of freedom, equality, justice, and responsibility are to be realized. Such a position does not seem too far removed from that taken by Gaus and his distinguished contemporaries who argued that an informed and “thinking” body politic could be realized only through the concerted efforts of the principal delivery system of government. From their perspective, and mine,

the primary “thing” to be delivered by the administrative system is education designed to enhance the qualitative well-being of the citizenry by constantly integrating the fundamental humanistic imperatives of democracy into a viable and dynamic sense of community, civility, and the common good.

In other words, the responsibilities for involving citizens in the democratic processes of governance and developing in them an enriched sense of community, civility, and the common good, rest squarely on the shoulders of public administrators. Viewed from this perspective, democracy, at its best, takes the form of an ongoing pedagogical process that reflects something similar to the Platonic notion of an “intelligent love”—i.e., a type of love based on the notion of a transcendent good that, in turn, serves as a guide for action. Such a love demands serious reflection and, of course, its true meaning is derived only when it is directed toward enhancing the well-being of another self. Its reality, in other words, is attained only through its relation and, as the American author, essayist, and critic Lionel Trilling has argued, “the deepest and truest relationship that can exist between human beings is pedagogic. This relationship consists in the giving and receiving of knowledge about right conduct, in the formation of one’s character by another, and the acceptance of another’s guidance in one’s own growth” (1980, 77).

Following Laski, my argument to this point has been that the emergence of a positive state demands the development of a thinking government, and the primary component in such a democratic system must be a thinking administration. An essential element of such a proactive administrative system is a perspective that encourages one to view democracy as something more than a procedural set of mechanistic contrivances designed to maintain an orderly society. Just what that “something more than” is may have been best defined by John Dewey, the American philosopher and educator, in a lecture delivered over seventy years ago. According to Dewey, “Democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself. It is an ideal in the only intelligible sense of an ideal: namely, the tendency and movement of something which exists carried to its final limit and viewed as completed, perfected” (1927, 148). Thus, democracy, perceived in terms of an idea and an ideal, created for Dewey a problem that was essentially a moral one, dependent upon the degree of intelligence and education utilized by the body politic. Democracy, Dewey observed, “is a name for a life of free and enriching communion” (184). It would seem to follow, then, that the realization of a free and enriching communion becomes a basic responsibility of a viable and dynamic administrative system committed to the humanistic imperative of an intelligent love.

Certainly this attitude was clearly reflected in the writings of such scholars as Gaus, Dimock, Wallace Sayre, Paul Appleby, Charles Ascher, and Norton Long. Each of these individuals moved directly, in his own particular fashion, to place administration in a more comprehensive setting with a clear normative emphasis on the inte-

gral relationships that must be forged among administrative practices and democratic values. As a consequence of these efforts, we are, today, once again confronted with assessing the role public administration is to play in the formation of democratic values among the body politic.

* * * *

“The sense of the importance of values,” Emmette Redford wrote in a 1950 issue of the *American Political Science Review*, “needs to pervade the study of administration” (283). Similarly, in a *Public Administration Review* article assessing the trends of administrative values during the 1940s, Wallace Sayre noted,

Our values, in one context, have moved from a stress upon managerial techniques of organization and management to an emphasis upon the broad sweep of public policy—its formulation, its evolution, its execution, all either within or intimately related to the frame of administration. In another context, our values have moved away from the confining view of an “administrative man,” responding mechanically to the imperatives of technological management, toward broader and deeper perspectives of human behavior in cooperative action. (1951, 4)

Other distinguished political scientists, such as Fritz Morstein Marx and Robert Dahl, also expressed their concerns about a value-free administrative system. “One is left with the suspicion that the purer a science of administration, the less will it be socially relevant,” observed Morstein Marx. Moreover, according to Dahl, a non-normative science of public administration involved a basic hypothesis that was “loaded with enormous and perhaps insuperable difficulties” (quoted in Sayre 1951, 5).

Even such scholars as Herbert Simon, Donald Smithburg, and Victor Thompson, who were among the leaders of those who sought to develop a science of administration, stated in their classic text that their “emphasis on the factual does not mean that we discount the importance of values.” Although the significance they assigned to values seems somewhat narrowly focused, the role of values in public administration, even from their scientific perspective, should not be ignored. “No knowledge of administrative techniques,” they wrote,

can relieve the administrator from the task of moral choice—choice as to organization goals and methods and choice as to his treatment of the other human beings in his organization. His code of ethics is as significant a part of his equipment as an administrator as is his knowledge of administrative behavior, and no amount of study of the “science” of administration will provide him with this code. (Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson 1950, 19–24)

Interestingly, the task of moral choice referred to by Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson can be viewed alternately in positive and negative terms. If the notion of moral choice is perceived in the more constricted sense of a clearly defined *code of ethics*, a negative morality is bound to prevail in a manner thoroughly consistent with the characteristics of a negative, reactive, detached state. To a very real extent, codes of ethics devised in this con-

text become sets of procedural ethics as reflected in clearly defined rules, regulations, and procedures. On the other hand, if the notion of *moral choice* is seen as encompassing the fundamental humanistic values of democracy, then a positive sense of ethical/moral consciousness can be advanced as the basic responsibility of all public administrators to insure that every moral choice is specifically intended to enhance the well-being of the citizenry.

As one legal scholar has noted, "positive liberty is a fertile land, laden with promise" (Farina 1994, 100). Similarly, a positive sense of ethical/moral administrative consciousness that has at its core the humanistic values of democracy is also a fertile land, laden with promise. In a democratic framework, the effectiveness of a positive state that evolves from a thinking government must depend directly on the substantive and qualitative efficacy of a positive and dynamic administration. A positive administration of the sort Gaus and his colleagues advanced must reflect the highest levels of maturity, authenticity, sincerity, responsibility, and caring. Moreover, if administration's principal mission is educational, as Gaus argued, its most elevated manifestation of this mission must be revealed in its sensitivity toward the sanctity of democratic communion and community.

There is a difficulty, however, in developing a positive ethic for government that is grounded in the normative values of sincerity, authenticity, caring, communion, and covenant. For example, the British author, Graham Greene, wrote in one of his novels, "caring is the only dangerous thing" (Greene 1974, 271). Viewed from an organizational perspective, the consequences of being sincere, expressing genuine concern, or truly caring can be quite dysfunctional. The danger, of course, results from the personal commitment that an administrator would be required to make either to one's colleagues or to one's fellow citizens—i.e., their clients or "customers." Like the biblical mustard seed, the tiniest bit of a personal ethical-moral commitment can amplify dramatically into a complex reticulation. Elsewhere, Graham Greene quoted from Joseph Conrad: "I only know that he who forms a tie is lost. The germ of corruption has entered into his soul" (Greene 1979, 2). What is being referenced here is the sense of moral obligation that comes to dwell in one's conscience when a commitment is made to someone or some transcendent higher good. Such a sense of obligation runs counter to the rational decision making required to ensure the continued functioning of the complex macrosystems that comprise public sector organizations. It is for this reason, therefore, that one of the oldest traditions stemming from the most ancient civilizations is the concept of a detached and objective administrative impersonality.

In administering the Biblical Law, for example, the Pharisees were characterized by French philosopher Paul Ricoeur as revealing a scrupulous consciousness, "anxious to satisfy the law in all things, without making an exception of any sector of existence, without taking into account exterior obstacles . . . and which gives equal importance to little things as to great." It is the scrupulous person who encloses him or herself in the inextricable

labyrinth of commandments, detached from any positive human relationship by the protective insulation of objective impersonality. In the process, however, Ricoeur reminds us that "obedience to a commandment because it is commanded becomes more important than love of neighbor or even love of God; this exactitude in observance is what we call legalism" (1971, 16). Indeed, it is this expression of a negative, dispassionate morality that T.S. Eliot brought to life in the speech the Third Knight delivers directly to the audience after he and his colleagues have completed their murder in the cathedral.

There is one thing I would like to say. . . . In what we have done, and whatever you may think of it, we have been perfectly disinterested. We are not getting anything out of this. We have much more to lose than to gain. We are just four plain Englishmen who put their country first. . . . So as I said at the beginning, please give us at least the credit for being completely disinterested in this business. (1938, 78–79)

This expression of negative morality is very similar to what I have described previously as an "ethics of civility" (Gawthrop 1984, 138) and to what Lionel Trilling referred to as a "morality of inertia" (1956). An ethics of civility can be viewed as a highly structured, mechanistic ethics that places democratic values primarily in a negative framework designed to insure scrupulous adherence to the law and the maintenance of order. Similarly, Trilling spoke of a morality of inertia that would seem to fit well in the overall context that Laski referred to as "dull" government, that is, negative, non-thinking government.

It is the dull, daily world of an unimaginative bureaucracy that Trilling saw as the primary source of moral inertia.

It knows that duties are done for no other reason than they are said to be done; for no other reason, sometimes, than that the doer has not really been able to conceive of any other course—has, perhaps, been afraid to think of any other course. (1956, 44)

The pithy insight Rufus Miles passed on to us from his days in the Bureau of the Budget as a career public administrator—"Where you stand depends on where you sit" (1978)—could very easily be twisted out of context and turned into a clarion cry for moral inertia. Moral choice is not an option in an environment of moral inertia, as Trilling pointed out. Necessity alone dictates actions, a necessity the administrator can neither refuse or even imagine refusing. Imposed by circumstance and maintained by habit, moral inertia negates any connection between administrative actions and the purposefulness of democracy. Indeed, it negates any connection between the reality of the present and the hopes of the future. Such a morality animates deeds performed without thought and without choice, but also, most certainly, without excitement and without love, and without compassion—or, as Max Weber would say, *sine ira ac studio*, without anger or enthusiasm (1946, 216). As Trilling described it,

The morality of inertia, of the dull, unthinking round of daily duties, may, and often does, yield the immorality of inertia. The example that will most readily occur to us is that of the good simple people, so true to their family responsibilities, who gave no thought to the concentration camps in whose shadows they lived. (1956, 46; see also Mankowski 1991, 85)

In his *Reflections on Public Administration*, John Gaus noted that “education viewed as a continuing process from youth to retirement . . . is decisive in its importance for instigating and supporting *those inner controls* which the individual, often alone on the firing line, must exercise in a world in which our very existence is dependent upon countless agents and deputies of the public” (1947, 119-20; emphasis added). As the United States enters the twenty-first century, the external controls over the government’s administrative systems seem to be fairly well in place. The fundamental issue of the degree of discretion permitted public administrators is no longer any mystery. The legislative and judicial branches of government know what buttons to push to increase or decrease the level of administrative discretion permitted in the implementation of public policy. However, as far as the inner controls that Gaus referred to are concerned, the situation seems to be less certain and not as well understood.

Over the past 100 years, administrators, legislators, and judges have become expert in confronting virtually any problem situation in government and defining *what* can be done to resolve or dissolve the problem. Moreover, they have become equally expert in defining *how* to do it. They have largely failed, however, to answer, or, in most instances, even ask the question of *why*. Without a clear perception of the moral purposefulness inherent in democracy, the *why* questions can never be answered and the “inner controls” so important to Gaus and his contemporaries can never be activated. One consequence of this basic lack of understanding is that many are quick to gloss over or dismiss the relevance of such notions as substantive due process when its counterpart, procedural due process, is so much more effective in determining the *what* and the *how* of the decision process. Moreover, many are quick to ignore the fundamental point made by Reinhold Niebuhr, the distinguished American theologian, that “any justice which is only justice soon degenerates into something less than justice” (1932, 258). This is the inertia of morality that Trilling decried and it reflects the ethical vacuum that is reflected in one stanza from a poem by Dorothy Sayers:

By lavish and progressive measures
Our neighbor’s wants are all relieved;
We are not called to share his pleasures,
And in his grief we are not grieved. (1969, 7)

* * * *

To a very real extent, the short-term future of public administration in the United States is being determined by the demand for “reinventing government” and “managing for results,” as well as the requirements of the National Performance Review and the Government Perfor-

mance and Results Act. Not unlike what occurred during the 1890s and the early decades of the twentieth century, the current trend seems focused on the separation of administration from politics, with the desired outcome being a reconfiguration or refitting of Woodrow Wilson’s 1887 model in the garb of a twenty-first-century information-age wizard. As I have tried to indicate, however, if students of administration have learned nothing else since the publication of Wilson’s quasi-manifesto (1887), they certainly have learned that the type of administration defined as *public* is *not* a field of business and is not—and, indeed, *should not* be—removed from the hurry and strife of politics. Quite to the contrary, the empirical evidence scholars have assiduously gathered over the years clearly confirms the propositions advanced by many who have spoken from this podium in the past: namely, administration and democracy are indivisible; administration is education; politics is the lifeblood of

administration; administration is caring. The truth of the matter is that well before the distinguished management scholar Douglas McGregor (1960) wrote about the human side of enterprise, one of the major accomplishments of the New Deal was to articulate an explicit commitment to the human side of public administration.

To be sure, there have always been—and still are—powerful voices in academia, in gov-

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ernment, and in society at large that raise strenuous objections to characterizing public administration in such humanistic terms. In the eyes of these critics, the appropriate role of administration in the United States’ system of democratic governance should be projected in much more attenuated, constrained, and purely reactive terms. From this perspective, administration is seen as a mechanistic and instrumental system designed solely to implement the policy intentions of the elected representatives of the people in a dutifully subservient (i.e., value-free) manner.

Despite the persistence of efforts to attain a predominantly value-free administrative system, most people, regardless of position, have come to accept the notion that every society, community, organization, and individual must be guided by some value vision, some center of worth, if civilization is to endure and cohere. To use the example of another ancient Jewish community, the Essenes (as opposed to the Pharisees), one rabbinical

scholar has noted, "represent a value system that was quite positive. There was no contradiction between morality, ethics, mutual love, and the observance of Jewish law and ritual. To them it was a unity" (Baumgarten 1989, 8). The question that I pose today is "To what extent do the components of ethics, morality, love, and justice fit together to form the substantive focus of America's value vision of democracy and of the human side of public administration?" How we, as scholars and citizens, respond will be a measure of our professional worth, to be sure; but more importantly it will also be a measure of our human worth.

As the twenty-first century moves closer, those who work and study in the field of administration need to be mindful, as noted previously, of John Dewey's observation that democracy is a name for a life of a free and enriching sense of communion and community. To be sure, this is an interesting proposition to discuss in the abstract; but discussing democracy in the abstract is like casting an unmarked ballot. Democracy needs to be transformed into action. If politics truly is the lifeblood of administration, as Norton Long (1949, 257) argued many years ago, is it not reasonable to suggest that administration is the lifeblood of democracy?

The human side of administration is evidenced when it is acting to implement the values inherent in democracy. . . . the human side of administration is the human face of democracy.

Democracy can be transformed from an abstract concept to an empirical reality only to the extent that the humanistic values that underlie the notions of communion and community are made real by positive and dynamic administrative action. Moreover, such administrative action has to be purposefully focused. That is to say, the human side

of public administration can be made visible only to the extent that the human values of democracy are made viable. Both requirements can only be met, however, if and when policy programs are implemented by an administrative cadre fully committed to the worthiness of human growth, the wholesomeness of human communities, and the holiness of human dignity. This is the essence of a "thinking" administration; one that is energized by the humanistic imperatives of democracy. Certainly this view of administration was shared by Gaus and his colleagues. More significantly, however, they intuitively understood—just as contemporary scholars must understand—that in attempting to define and describe the human side of administration, one must use one's own humanity as a means to understanding.

This point was emphasized very clearly in an address then-director general of the World Health Organization George Brock Chisholm gave when accepting the Kurt

Lewin Award at the 1948 meetings of the American Psychological Association. "Our own personal responsibility to our fellow humans is clear," Chisholm declared.

Whoever is reasonably informed in any aspect of human emotional-mental-social development, whoever can do something to clarify thinking even a little and very locally, whoever can help to remove a prejudice, soften a hate, increase the total of understanding and tolerance in the world, by that knowledge, training, insight, or ability is made responsible to do what he can in all possible places. Research is valuable but may remain sterile for long periods, and time is short. Erudite papers read to technical gatherings and published in technical journals have their important place, but may be futile unless appropriate action follows. Responsibility of the informed and technically qualified is to all people, not just to the enlightened. (Quoted in Gaus 1950, 166)

Chisholm's remarks are obviously appropriate when related to the world's health professions. The commitments made by countless doctors, nurses, and medical technicians to improve the quality of life, even on the smallest scale and in the most remote villages prompted Jan Tinbergen, Nobel laureate in economics, the father of econometrics, and internationally recognized expert in developmental economics, to refer to these dedicated individuals as "barefoot doctors." At one point he wrote, "We have seen the rise of the 'barefoot doctors;' we now must encourage the rise of the 'barefoot experts' " (1976, 109). In this connection, Tinbergen was referring to the specialists in the various social sciences and to the necessity for them to become involved at the lowest levels of third world communities where their expertise could have a direct and immediate positive impact. "Not only must specialists advocate courses of action," Tinbergen argued, "they must also more fully commit themselves to development efforts. . . . Their commitment must be total, their allegiance to a problem or community, unstinting" (109). And in this respect, the similarity between Tinbergen's perspective and Gaus's point concerning the educational function of administration should not be overlooked. Both seem to conclude that the principal mission of administration is to expand the potential for human growth and to enhance the value of human worth.

Indeed, it would seem that this is what Chisholm meant when he noted that whoever is reasonably informed in any aspect of human development is responsible to do what he or she can in all possible places to amplify the quality of life. Moreover, this relationship between administrators and citizens involves, as Dewey noted, the free and enriching sharing of thoughts and feelings and, as Wallace Sayre observed, the persistent development of broader and deeper perspectives of human behavior in cooperative action. Viewed in this context, the pertinence of Trilling's comment that "the deepest and truest relationship that can exist between human beings is pedagogic" assumes added significance. The primary focus of administration in a democracy would clearly seem to be, as Gaus suggested, pedagogical. As a consequence, it logically follows that the essence of the human side of public administration as it

relates to its citizen clientele is the reciprocal and open exchange of information about right conduct, about the formation of one's character by another, and about the willingness to accept another's guidance in one's own growth.

* * * *

Democracy is American society's way of managing itself. Moreover, in any democracy worthy of its name, it should not be unreasonable for society to show sympathy and compassion for itself. The human face of democracy is revealed by the kindness, benevolence, unselfishness, and justice embedded in its values. The human side of administration is evidenced when it is acting to implement the values inherent in democracy.

I claim no originality in stating that the human side of administration is the human face of democracy. Indeed, this notion certainly seems to be embedded in the oath of the Athenian city-state. It also informed governmental actions in fourteenth-century Florence in the wake of the Black Death. According to medieval historian Marvin Becker, the Florentines made no distinction between their role in civic life and the ethos of *caritas*.

Efforts were made to authenticate new social values and formulate codes of behavior more relevant for individuals living in greater isolation. To modern scholars, the stress on charity and love might indeed look evasive until one realizes that they surfaced with compelling force. These

virtues alone could foster the family, guard the city, and even enlarge a Florentine empire. . . . Man's dignity did not reside in solitary experience or in strategic personal relationships. Neither pride of caste nor cultivation of autonomous feelings of selfhood were sufficient to endorse this *dignitas*; instead, man's consciousness of his solidarity with all men was quintessential. (1974, 196)

Moreover, on our own shores, slightly more than 300 years ago William Penn observed:

Government itself . . . [is] as capable of kindness, goodness, and charity as a more private society. They weakly err that think there is no other use of government than correction which is the coarsest part of it. Daily experience tells us that the care and regulation of many other affairs, more soft and daily necessary, make up much of the greater part of government. (Quoted in Ahlstrom 1975, 166)

The human side of administration is the human face of democracy whenever democracy and administration are fused to form a positive and dynamic holistic system. There is no necessity to reinvent this political fact of life. But as scholars and citizens, our indebtedness to John Gaus and his colleagues needs to be reasserted and reaffirmed from time to time if for no other reason than to remind ourselves that we must follow their lead and use the humanistic imperatives of democracy to guide the human side of public administration into the next century.

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