

## THE FACILITATIVE STATE, POLITICAL EXECUTIVE AGGRANDIZEMENT, AND PUBLIC SERVICE CHALLENGES

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*Connecting public service with civic duty and advancing both as disciplines of facilitative governance are opportunities and challenges today. Making these linkages is a theme of this analysis, and theories and practices of facilitative nation states are the principal focus. Executive aggrandizement and combined complexities of a growing paradox of partisan fragmentation and seamless connections of politics, business, and government compose a second theme. Garrison state dimensions of counterterrorism are related. The final focus is on political and career service and standards of social and economic self-governance. Facilitative state disciplines of constitutional democracy are stressed in conclusion.*

**Keywords:** *consensual politics; demolition politics; devolution; executive aggrandizement; facilitative state; garrison state; May-Malek Manual; multiculturalism; new spoils; partisan empowerment; seamlessness; social self-governance; Volcker Report*

**Self-governance, civic duty, and public service** are popular themes today relative to recent decades of neglect. These enlightenment era ideals were companion disciplines of democracy that nourished development of American constitutional government, although they were only partially practiced during the nation's first century. Subsequently, with many failures and more successes, these disciplines sustained slow extension of broadening values of constitutional democracy including human dignity and reasonableness. Opportunities are now relatively open nationally in America, as well as locally and somewhat globally, for enhanced linkages of these disciplines and related values. Contemporary theories and practices of interdependent facilitative states strongly support them. But

ADMINISTRATION & SOCIETY, Vol. 35 No. 4, September 2003 379-407  
DOI: 10.1177/0095399703254941  
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simultaneous barriers and challenges to these ideals are strong in American politics and in enduring constitutional complexities that encourage partisan executive domination of government. This analysis deals with these two sets of contemporary developments; it focuses chiefly on facilitative state theories and practices, and it discusses a growing paradox of fragmented politics and seamless political and business connections that support aggrandizement of partisan executive power. It then briefly relates both of these subjects to today's challenges to partisan political and professionally expert public service and to standards of economic enterprise within facilitative frameworks.

Importance and connectedness of civic duty and public service ideals in American political reform movements are too well-known to require initial review here. However, subsequent developments in the middle decades of the 20th century warrant note. During the rise and domination of the bureaucratic state and idealized big government, linkages among social self-governance, civic duty, and public service ideals and practices gradually weakened. Such authorities as Fritz Mosher (1968), Emmette Redford (1969), and Dwight Waldo (1980) were led to ponder the reconciliation of democracy and bureaucracy—the great paradox of their administrative state era. As interest-group politics grew into a dominant reality and became embraced as the economics and political science ideals and prescriptions of transactional relationships from the late 1950s forward, the weakened connections of civic duty and public service (both civilian and military) often failed. Recall, as examples, not only widespread riots and looting of cities and military draft dodging of the 1960s but restructuring in the 1970s of both civilian and military public workforces in terms of economic employment transactions. Movements away from frameworks of duty and service alarmed public administration leaders, inspiring diverse thinkers such as Lou Gawthrop (1984) and George Frederickson (1982) to call upon the field for renewed attention to civic concerns—*civism*. Clearly, idealized transformational disciplines of constitutional democracy were becoming increasingly disconnected, if not somewhat lost in what Ted Lowi lamented first as the end of liberalism (1969) and later as a loss of representative government (1995).

Some openness to reenergizing ideals and practices of constitutional democracy followed the collapse of the Soviet bloc and earlier and later restructuring of democratic socialist societies, although both responsible self-governance and government were often neglected in favor of initial

support of laissez-faire market economics. During the 1990s, new openness to shared democratic transformation came to be strongly supported by facilitative state theories and practices that have become internationally dominant since the middle of that decade. Responses to terrorism immediately following September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington reinforced these developments in America and in many other societies. How can these new concerns for governance fundamentals facilitate improvements in public administration theories and practices, in particular, those involved with public services?

Obstacles and challenges to seizing today's opportunities of advancing transformational values and disciplines of democracy are daunting. Partisan executive powers, paradoxically fragmented politics, and seamless political and business connections are growing obstacles. Aggrandizement of executive power has defined much of American history and, most particularly, the field of public administration. Executive domination is even greater in many other societies. Such powers are often virtually or nearly without constitutional restraint. They are often defended today as being essential for global economic competitiveness, preservation of social distinctiveness, and/or political cohesiveness, stability, and decisiveness. In America in this period of local and global defense against terrorism, garrison state powers and their exercise stretch well beyond conventional wartime experience. They have broad support. Tendencies are again to embrace and enlarge administrative state trappings of the era of bureaucratic big government—fondly remembered by many as America's golden era of professionally expert public administration. However, problems in such a return to adulation of the powerful executive-dominated model are obscured in enormously important differences between the middle half of the last century and today's vital realities. These include empowering technologies and systems, factional and interest-group politics linked with high-finance elections and aggregations of wealth, and proxy government by contract—all complicated by sometimes seamless politics, business, and thickened structures of executive-spoils appointees and contractors.

Enhanced connectedness of values and practices of civic duty and public service hold some promise of coping with these difficult challenges. This optimistic theme is reinforced by broader dimensions of facilitative state theories and practices. Those constitute the next part of this analysis.

## THE FACILITATIVE STATE: GLOBAL AND AMERICAN GOVERNANCE CONTEXTS

Global contexts of facilitative governance tend to stress two sets of theories and practices. The first is an optimistic, three-part governance framework that stresses civil societies characterized by social self-governance, responsible market economics functioning in global contexts, and facilitative governments that are *strong but small* as contrasted with 20th century big government ideals. The second is an emphasis on interdependent nation states in a framework of relationships facilitated in part by such international organizations as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank. These make no pretensions to world government in contrast with the early 20th century aspiration that coincided in time with the rise of the big, bureaucratic administrative state and nations' claims to awesome sovereignty. All three elements of the first of these sets are stressed in sequence in this analysis with only brief, coincident commentary on the second. Before those discussions, however, practical and paradoxical contexts and definitions of these theories and practices warrant note regarding both their difficulties and the bases for some optimism about them.

### PRACTICAL AND PARADOXICAL CONTEXTS AND DEFINITIONS

Optimism about today's facilitative governance theories and practices warrants some preliminary reality checks. As a caution against cynicism, consider negative realities: (a) contexts of microethnic and religious separatism/pan-nationalism (e.g., Balkan conflicts, widespread tribalism, fanatical terrorism, faith-based assertions of divinely promised entitlements, etc.); (b) state nationalism and unilateralism (even uncentrism according to critics of America in 2001 with respect to Kyoto and Durban and in 2002 in the split from Europe toward Iran—broadly denounced by nearly all European foreign-affairs leaders, including Chris Patton, the European Union's [EU's] external affairs commissioner [Dempsey, 2002]); (c) global business giants (of such character that Herbert Simon rejected the tag *global market economics*, asserting instead that "modern economics are not market economics but systems of organizations, private and public, embedded in markets" [Simon, 1995a, p. 404]); and (d) growing *haves/have nots* gaps, which led the World Bank to devote

its *World Development Report, 2000/2001, Attacking Poverty*, to the paradox of poverty amidst plenty. The complexities are too challenging to expect singular flip sides to such problems. Especially, consider the enduringly dangerous example of international differences over conflicts between the United States and Iraq. Trade-offs between UN Security Council members in October and November 2002 resulted in movement by the United States away from unilateralism. Unanimity for UN policy toward Iraq followed. Also consider other mostly positive developments: (a) international mobility and digital/electronic communications; (b) scientific and cultural advances and exchanges; (c) productivity growth and some broadened distribution of goods and services; and (d) regional and global cooperation between people, private organizations, and governments and their collaborative international institutions (O'Toole & Hanf, 2002).

Among contexts for reality checks, add to the lingering democracy/bureaucracy problems and the haves/have nots quandary these other contemporary paradoxes: (a) localization and globalization/place and planet (the most stressed factors since the early 1990s); (b) massive information and limited time to digest and use it; and (c) the enduring challenge to try to reconcile accountability and flexibility, especially evident in the New Public Management (NPM). Add to those the emerging paradox noted at the outset of this analysis: partisan factionalism and political fragmentation coincident with the growing seamlessness of governments and self-serving interests in America and abroad.

Given such contexts, facilitative governance focuses on helping people and their institutions to achieve constructive purposes, including both differentiated and shared successes in creating distinctive, varied, high-accomplishment societies. In terms of constitutional democracy, ideals are to sustain and advance civilization under ennobling law to facilitate self-disciplines of human dignity and reasonableness. As noted above, today's facilitative state theories and practices in support of these ideals stress three dimensions of governance, and discussion of each follows.

#### CIVIL SOCIETIES AND SOCIAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

Civil societies and such features as social capital have been given major (but not foremost) emphasis in international development activities since the decline of democratic state socialism and the collapse of Soviet communism. Emerging themes include responsible self-governance and

limited dependence on government (harking back to centennial and progressive era American ideas); international policies and programs have aimed to facilitate cultural and institutional changes to support these ideals. Virtually every professional knows nearly similar notions in the NPM movement in former socialist states and in America. Years of attention have examined Robert Putnam's (2000) *bowling alone* metaphor and varied social-capital constructs.

In America, the contemporary emphasis on civil society and social self-governance contrasts with the distant past in several respects including an enormously crucial one: Diversity/multiculturalism and shared values/culture now constitute a favored American paradox—the old melting pot ideal has been largely displaced by a shared culture of multiculturalism. Facilitative American society is now largely understood in terms of more or less harmonious multiplication of values, goods, and services and of varied, increasingly seamless private and public means to create, distribute, and use them.

Alongside today's multicultural dimensions of American civil society, the older frameworks of popular self-governance and limited government now enjoy renewed vigor. Most particularly since terrorist attacks on the American homeland, civic duty and public service have reemerged from the darkness of neglect to the center stage of light and acclaim.

Civic duty was instantly memorialized amidst the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks by actions of civically responsible passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 who sacrificed their lives to terminate their hijackers' fanatical scheme. With no governmental involvement, popular self-governance prevailed to limit further horrors of that wrenching day. Other examples of dutiful civic actions quickly multiplied beyond count—widespread giving of time, blood, money, and loving care and shared tears, hopes, and remembrances.

From domestic and international responses to combat terrorism, three broad categories of public service also emerged with considerably restored respect: career public safety and civilian services; military career, reserve, and guard services; and, briefly, elected and appointed political services. Connections between these three—and common linkages to perceived civic duty that elevated respect for all of them—merit careful consideration along with these inquiries: How is *public service* defined by contemporary realities? How is it defined in the field of public administration? What redefinitions and related changes are needed to serve the ends and means of constitutional democracy?

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

In international development activities and other global contexts of facilitative governance theories and practices, global market economics has been the foremost theme, Simon's perceptive insights to the contrary. Despite their vast importance in this analysis, however, economic institutions are balanced alongside concerns with civil societies and facilitative governments. Repeated emphasis needs to be on the vast importance of growing seamlessness of business, government, and their linked politics.

Facilitation of responsible and productive economies in contexts of increasingly globalized organizations and markets has been a challenging dimension of governance theory and practice for over a decade, highlighted in 2001 and 2002 by the inclusion of China and Taiwan in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the veto in 2002 by the United States of consideration of Iran's bid. Clearly, the dominant role assigned to unrestrained markets was overrated during the initial transition years following the Soviet collapse; rule frameworks for private property and commerce were neglected, as governmental roles in facilitation of responsible market economics and social self-governance were discounted. Out of such experiences, agreement now is that neither command-and-control economics nor laissez-faire libertarianism succeed. Complexities now reach beyond such simple dichotomies and their ideologies. Highly developed nation states and regional frameworks among them (such as the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], the EU, and the European Monetary Union and its European Central Bank system) experience success with facilitative rule frameworks in support of sustainable social and economic improvements. Institutionalized systems now facilitate cultural exchanges, electronic commerce, negotiated rulemaking for national and transnational enterprise regulation, and somewhat shared (but greatly shaken) business and governmental accounting standards to limit economic crimes, corruption, errors, and lapses of scrutiny. These systems sometimes fail, even disastrously. Recall the cases of such international giants publicized in 2002 as Enron Corporation, WorldCom, and Arthur Andersen. Recall also earlier victimization in the 2000 to 2001 energy crisis in California—then the world's sixth largest economy and a major factor in a global economic downturn.

Most relevant to this analysis of self-governance, civic duty, and public service are two market-oriented developments that have been widely discussed and practiced since the 1980s: (a) a growing reliance on market disciplines for provision (privatization) and/or performance (contracting

out) of former and/or current public functions and (b) a contemporary permeability of nation states to transformational exchanges of practical innovations in public administration and extensive international collaboration and interdependence in public affairs. Responses to terrorism threaten to affect these tendencies adversely in North America (e.g., decisions to federalize airport security—screening personnel; erecting screening barriers to easy commercial and social movement across the borders of Mexico, the United States, and Canada). However, increasing connectedness continues to characterize EU member nations, particularly those of the Eurozone.

### FACILITATIVE GOVERNMENTS

Facilitative governments, in terms of contemporary ideals, seek to help people and their communities and institutions to achieve their own purposes, as variously determined, within shared frameworks of constitutional democracy—namely, to develop and sustain civilization under ennobling law, as noted above, by seeking governance values and disciplines of human dignity and reasonableness and fairness. Facilitation contrasts with some mid-20th-century ideals of dominating societies and economies by command-and-control government. But, as commonly defined on today's global stage, facilitative government is far from new except in its contexts. The ideals are, in some measure, postmodern (but, internationally, only barely postpositivist) versions of those that de Tocqueville identified in premodern America and that have been and are present in many other constitutional democracies, increasingly globally facilitated by postindustrial high-sci/high-tech/high-touch notions that have been around for many decades.

Two overly simple but somewhat useful formulas more or less highlighted theories and practices of facilitative governments prior to terrorist attacks of 2001. However, perceptions and some disagreements about them have been important for years, and the posture of America on both has wavered in response to terrorism.

For one formula, agreement has largely prevailed, depending on definitions, and it generally continues between advanced nation states: Small (constitutionally limited) but strong (robustly effective) government is favored with varied toolboxes of selective, supportive actions to facilitate social, economic, and governmental accomplishment. But consider the differences in definitions of constitutional limitations, particularly with respect to partisan chief executives, and the varied meanings of robust and



effective. The formula of small but strong was embraced by the government of South Korea during reorganizations required in the late 1990s at the time when that nation state celebrated the 50th anniversary of its constitution—in the midst of economic difficulties associated with reversals in fortunes of the preceding years of prosperity among the Asian tigers. The small but strong terminology stuck, more or less, internationally. Such facilitative government has worked in South Korea and elsewhere, however, only insofar as it has been framed nonideologically, balancing both fundamental national and international ideals of governance with disciplined, situational handling of hard realities. Such experience is important in defining facilitative government and, more broadly, as reflected in Korea's social and economic market actions, thereby giving meaning to the contemporary facilitative state.

A second formula generates more disagreements: devolution of authority and responsibility and situational differentiation. In recent international development activities, the United States has often favored this formula, drawing heavily on American experience. European and other international development experts have often resisted American pressures to decentralize national institutions and to devolve authority to communities because of concerns about dangers of local warlords, criminal syndicates, international terrorists, and other threats to local community and/or national unity. For example, the EU's program of Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) and the World Bank have focused importantly on development of national institutions. The United States has also, but it has commonly worked to empower communities and their people and local institutions. Since the terrorist attacks of 2001, America has shifted viewpoints a bit as toward Russia's actions against terrorism in and from Chechnya.

In America since September 2001, mixed responses to terrorism have characterized national, state, and local governments. With respect to security measures for airports, public buildings, crucial infrastructure, high-tech systems, and many institutions, garrison state strategies and tactics are more visibly intrusive than were evident in conventional wars of earlier times. By and large, these have been popularly accepted (or at least *consented to* in the parlance of political theory) as facilitative of security. But differentiation and sharing of security responsibilities and costs of homeland defense between levels of governments have been and remain relatively dynamic and flexible (in generously supportive terms), up in the air and rising (in only moderately more skeptical perceptions), and/or haphazardly fragmented and extravagantly costly (in more harsh language of

critics). In the midst of sustained domestic and international tensions (particularly Middle East conflicts), the generously supportive terminology seems most widely accepted with respect to physical security measures. To repeat, considerable command and control have become consented to as a routine way of life in America. Overwhelming majorities in both houses of the U.S. Congress supported the creation in November 2002 of the Homeland Security Department. With respect to investigative, intelligence, and justice actions related to counterterrorism and in connection with other powers exercised by the president of the United States, one may easily observe that today's garrison state supports aggrandizement of executive branch powers and big command-and-control government in selected policies and their administration.

In perspective, however, incremental aggrandizement of presidential power has characterized American government for decades, building atop powers accumulated through earlier years. Current attention to counterterrorism is finally forcing increased attention to this long-growing reality. The following part of this analysis deals with challenges to facilitative state theories and practices that are present in expanding executive powers and complicated politics not only at the presidential level but at other levels of American government.

### **EXECUTIVE POWERS AGGRANDIZEMENT: COPING WITH PARTISAN FRAGMENTATION AND SEAMLESSNESS IN POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND GOVERNMENT**

Civil service reforms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were aimed largely at limiting congressional and other legislative patronage and long ballot spoils in American governments. As all informed professionals know, focusing responsibility and commensurate authority in a single, visible, expertly empowered executive in control of articulated administrative structures came to be embraced as one formula to root out the corruption and incompetence associated with such spoils. Irresponsible government would thus be replaced by disciplines of political democracy and professional administration. Building on that theory from its origins, American public administration has remained dedicated in important respects to executive empowerment at national, state, and local levels. That tendency has been increasingly reinforced in recent decades by the fragmentation of interest-group politics and governmental

institutions and the paradoxical development of seamlessness of politics, business, and government.

Today, empowered partisan mayors, county executives, governors, and presidents are increasingly dominant. They are called upon to broker transactional relationships between often narrow interest groups and, coincidentally, to facilitate general economic development and prosperity. Facilitative state ideals and practices of constitutional democracy may thus be seen as threatened by 20th-century administrative state notions that may be paradoxical in this 21st century because of partisan executive empowerment. However, demolition politics often characterizes behaviors of legislators as instrumentalities of interest groups, and disorder is common in other public decision making, thereby lending support for executive decisiveness. Admittedly, the foregoing introduction and challenge are too easy as explanations of origins and developments of support of executive aggrandizement by the field of public administration let alone of present political dynamics. Three aspects are noted below as subjects of needed inquiry with examples from the presidency and local government: transactional politics and government as a brokerage/exchange; administrative tools and structures of partisan, executive power aggrandizement; and contemporary complexities of decision making in paradoxical contexts of fragmented and seamless politics.

#### **TRANSACTIONAL POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT AS A BROKERAGE/EXCHANGE**

Postenlightenment politics of transactional exchange is not of recent vintage, as any attentive student of civics and history should know. Politics of self-interests and governmental corruption became dominant early in the 19th century, nourished robber barons for decades, and gave rise by the centennial era to political reform efforts to restore by force of populist law some ideals of responsible self-governance in social, economic, and governmental affairs. The agrarian revolt and reform movements, noted earlier, resurrected such constitutional values as civic duty and a rule of law but only through heroic struggles against Spencerian/Darwinian laissez-faire doctrines. Reformers also embraced positivist concepts of politically neutral, professionally expert public service. Brownlow and Hoover reforms later added idealized hierarchy under executive control.

The relatively long-enduring period of somewhat consensual politics that was forged out of the political reform era during the first decades of the 20th century—and that sustained the administrative state through the

rise of big bureaucracy—unraveled between the 1960s and late 1970s. James MacGregor Burns, in his 1963 book, *The Deadlock of Democracy, Four-Party Politics in America*, lamented what he saw as “paralyzing conflict” between the president and Congress because of fragmented politics. Demolition politics came to prevail in what Robert Dahl (1994) characterized as decades of *The New American Political Dis(order)*.

Transformational idealism, in which American public administration was formerly rooted in its golden age, was not disconnected from transactional political realities. Politics was respected and embraced by reformers as a discipline of public choice/decision making (transactional exchange) on matters of social, economic, and governmental disagreement. But reform politics was also sustained by transformational idealism. American political thought through the 1940s did not fundamentally define politics in terms of exchange and interest-group brokerage as political science and economics came to do increasingly following the post-World War II years. The ever threatening bicentric international era of the cold war seemed to encourage either/or, this-versus-that simplemindedness between social scientists, even frustrating 1960s efforts to shift international developments toward polycentrism to reduce risks of ideologically driven and/or accidental nuclear holocaust. Domestically, problems that were even more difficult for most Americans prevailed including a continuing revolution in gender roles that started during wartime and struggles during two-plus generations to move from state-enforced racial segregation to social and economic integration between races. Political science shifted perceptibly from a discipline that had been most deeply rooted in political thought toward an embracement of mechanical technology, which often appeared to critics as formulaic poking-among-entrails of political actors and elections. Exchange politics, with limited remaining rootedness in transformational idealism, fell for a time into the disorder described by Dahl (1994) and others.

Reflect back in time: Neutral public service, as noted above, was created in the reform era not to escape the realities of transactional politics but to deal responsibly with them. Attempted escape from politics came later in Houdini-like illusions during years of bureaucratic state idealization of big government. Career civil servants, increasingly and correctly characterized as professional experts in narrowly specialized fields, became distanced from disciplines of constitutional democracy. Adherence to expectations prescribed by their specialized disciplines and fields became more controlling than such disciplines of democracy for many as civic duty and ennobling struggles for reasonableness under law. This

history has been sufficiently told by Mosher (1968) and others to warrant no further elaboration here.

Note, however, the contexts of Mosher's (1968) concerns. Political science and public administration in the past century often embraced parallel developments between legislators; politically elected, appointed, and career public servants; and governmental contractors and other recipients of public largesse in a nascent culture of seamless interest-group politics operating within a widely acknowledged iron triangle. By the 1930s and 1940s, the theme of conflicts between special interests and competition over partisan values came to the forefront in public administration (Herring, 1936; Leiserson, 1942). With the rise to dominance of transactional exchange and narrow interest-group politics during crucial decades of the 20th century, public service became increasingly detached from constitutive roles. Who gets what, when, where, and how became changed from a transactional reality to be studied and balanced through transformational responsibility (a dominant theory as late as the 1950s) to a prescription for the roles of elected politicians, their partisan appointees, and careerists who increasingly became expected to be compliant instruments of partisan bosses. Delivery of pork at a price of premium political fees became expected not only as a reality but as the idealized role. Interest groups and their niches, networks, and domains are now major themes of the policy field (Browne, 1998).

Institutional changes to fit and support the idealization of exchange politics and its increasing brokerage by partisan executives largely dominated by the 1970s. By Nixon's time, factionally sharp differences between presidential and congressional loyalists within the same political party, observed earlier by Burns, appeared perpetual. Strategic and tactical drives for aggrandizement of presidential power were associated with deinstitutionalization of former professionally expert management organizations. The relatively professional Bureau of the Budget (BOB) was replaced by the relatively partisan Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the factionally partisan Office of Policy Development (OPD). Despite legal provisions in the creation of professional staffing, both the OMB and OPD became what Nixon's factional partisans intended: instruments of presidential power nearly denuded of even the pretense of constitutive duties in support of disciplines of constitutional democracy. President Carter vigorously continued Nixon's path of aggrandizement but by changing the law rather than violating it. In 1978, the bipartisan Civil Service Commission (CSC) was eliminated in favor of the presidentially partisan Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Stark separation of powers between presidential and congressional institutions flourished, neglecting traditionally shared authority and responsibility through checks and balances (Newland, 1997). This reflected traditional postures of public administration during the administrative state era but in changed political contexts that increasingly stretched beyond Burns's (1963) four-party politics analysis. Reacting against Nixon's failures and because of a growing lack of trust in the OMB, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) was created in 1974, and it, too, became threatened by partisan factionalism under Speaker Jim Wright and subsequently. More gravely disappointing, the General Accounting Office (GAO)—perceived previously as an institution created to facilitate accountability of government under law in service of the general public—became somewhat identified by the late 1980s and during the early 1990s as an instrumental arm of partisan leaders in Congress (as GAO's *customer*)—a compliance and/or “gotcha” tool of factional majorities.

Among local governments, similar developments toward leadership/domination by partisanly political executives in contexts of transactional politics have been the trend of recent decades. Council-manager government—the plan of the reform era—continues to be important. However, powerful trends support empowerment of partisanly elected mayors and county executives, identified in most nonsmall jurisdictions with political parties and factional organizations that are often vertically networked statewide and nationally. Political networks are increasingly becoming instruments to support higher political office aspirations of elected local executives, city council members, and county supervisors who are sometimes more devoted to partisan imperatives of political success than to long-term local civic concerns.

Consider a prominent example from Britain, where Prime Minister Tony Blair sought support in 2001 elections for a framework of similar vertical integration of party power (Game, 2002). Under the banner of “New Labour’s Modernization of Local Government,” Blair pushed vigorously to restructure local governments along presidentialist lines under directly elected mayors, either through the party’s favored elected mayor and cabinet form or a second choice of an elected mayor as political leader with a council-manager structure. Voters overwhelmingly chose the only fallback option permitted under the Labour’s Local Government Act 2000: a leader and cabinet structure (an adaptation of frameworks more in line with parliamentary customs). In short, Blair’s reach for vertical integration of political power failed, but it is increasingly a feature among American governments.

Political party power is far from the whole story, and, sometimes, it is not even visible as a force behind initial restructuring of local government under a strong, elected executive. Perceived or alleged nonresponsiveness of bureaucracies of professionally expert government contributes to most changes, just as criticism leveled by politicians against professional career expertise in American national government does. Most generally, desired political responsiveness among local governments has been to *particularistic* interest groups and election-campaign supporters: real estate developers; business, industry, and professional groups including contractors and suppliers; public-employee organizations, particularly unions of waste-collection personnel, police and deputies, fire fighters, and emergency medical and ambulance staffs; ethnic, racial, and religious minorities; and interests in neighborhood and recreational and cultural events. Once these interests become more or less connected within an executive-dominated (presidentialist) structure in local government, further aggrandizement of power of the partisanly elected executive commonly follows.

Before closing this section on transactional politics, note positive, contrary forces. Toward the end of the administrative state century, the literature of public administration reflected rising concerns about how to reverse political exchange trends and “the triumph of instrumentalism” (Morgan, 1998). Research published in this new century seeks to correct past neglect within changed frameworks of this facilitative era. In addition to sources noted later, consider, for example, Peter Kobrak’s 2002 book, *Cozy Politics: Political Parties, Campaign Finance, and Compromised Governance*. Also examine Phillip Cooper’s 2003 book, *Governing by Contract: Challenges and Opportunities for Public Managers*.

#### **PARTISAN, EXECUTIVE POWER AGGRANDIZEMENT: TOOLS, STRUCTURES, AND POLITICAL JUSTIFICATIONS**

The most visible instruments of partisan, executive power aggrandizement have been mentioned earlier in this analysis: factional politicization of such administrative management instrumentalities as finance and budget, human capital (including political counterstaffing for partisan control of agencies), property and procurement, evaluation and accountability, and information and knowledge services. Instead of those familiar subjects, including OMB rules, commonly overlooked tools of vast executive power that have multiplied during recent decades of domination of transactional partisan politics are briefly noted here.

Presidents, governors, and many local government chief executives exercise extensive powers through mandates in the form of executive orders, proclamations, and memoranda. In pioneering work, Louis Fisher (1991) concluded, "The President's legislative power, invoked on rare occasions in the early decades, is now discharged on a regular basis throughout the year in the form of executive orders, proclamations, and other instruments of executive lawmaking" (p. 114). At the presidential level, unbeknownst to many, legislative signing statements now assert item veto-like powers beyond easy reach of congressional override. Largely invisible even to many insiders and other observant experts are national security directives that are structured and increasingly powerful since 1947. At the presidential level, these direct actions in the exercise of executive powers have been researched in depth and elaborated upon with professional expertise by Cooper in his 2002 book, *By Order of the President*.

Cooper demonstrated through numerous examples what multiplying experience has led to: The constitutional principle of shared authority among the branches of American national government through a structure of separation of powers with checks and balances has become dangerously eroded. Checks and balances often fail now as limits on stand-alone executive direct actions; separate executive power is often virtually without effective limitation.

Cooper (2002) persuasively showed two dimensions of these developments. First, he found "substantial justification" for the "rise and use of most of the tools of presidential direct action" (p. 4). Second, he demonstrated that these executive tools "have been used in increasingly problematic ways that present constitutional, institutional, procedural, and policy difficulties" (p. 4).

Justifications of aggrandizement of executive power derive especially from fragmentation of American politics. That, in turn, stems in part from the constitutional framework of shared authority among branches with checks and balances—what has increasingly become frustrating separation and fragmentation of powers. It stems further from fractured political parties. Thomas Jefferson and others had hoped for responsible parties to facilitate the connectedness of American government; instead, parties splintered. Since the 1950s, they have most often been fragmented by interest-group politics. That condition led Burns in 1984 to propose drastic political/constitutional revision to create *The Power to Lead* to deal with what he described as "the crisis of the American presidency."



Overt constitutional overhaul to create parliament-like party responsibility, such as Burns (1984) proposed, has never attracted support. However, relatively covert restructuring to empower the chief executive has moved forward with ever increasing vigor. Presidential directives following the terrorist attacks of September 2001 attracted exceptional attention to these powers of direct action that had earlier remained hidden to many people. Surprised commentators expressed alarm in a relatively modest media frenzy, but popular consent supported the president's actions.

Cooper's (2002) book detailed the tools and structures of what Fisher (1991) called the president's legislative powers—what Cooper's extensive examples demonstrated as executive direct actions. Enormous expansions of these powers occurred during the quarter-century between the first edition of Fisher's book and Cooper's research.

By what standards might exercise of essential executive powers become less problematical and deserving of public trust? Historically, both substantive and procedural guides to reasonableness have been relied upon to answer that enduring question. Underpinned by deep thought and experience, short answers have been those set forth at the beginning of this analysis: standards of civic duty and public service in support of values of constitutional democracy.

#### **RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING IN CONTEXTS OF FRAGMENTED AND SEAMLESS POLITICS**

Substantive and procedural standards of public and private decision making are such familiar fundamentals of organization-behavior and public-affairs studies and practices that, although heavy, they are touched upon lightly here. In the administrative state era, executive aggrandizement was supported in association with advocacy of professionally expert public service, positivism in decision making, and reliance on the powerful executive and governmental experts to regulate business and to take other strong actions in the public interest. Facilitative state theory is consistent with similar public service expertise and robust facilitation of the public good. However, because facilitative notions have been oriented around enhancing social and economic self-governance as a corrective to command-and-control state socialism and garrison state powers, the 1980s and 1990s decades were sometimes hijacked by self-serving partisans and laissez-faire ideologues. NPM sometimes became such a victim, willingly in some cases. Such tendencies continue. Postpositivist and

postmodernist inquiries, together with more traditionally disciplined thought, have contributed to searches for balance, but either/or tendencies of public administration have often contributed more to interesting conflicts than to constructive changes.

Among American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) professionals, Simon's acceptance of the Dwight Waldo Award at the San Antonio Conference in 1995 was a historic occasion of reflection on the controversies and contributions of both of those giants and others of the administrative state era. In a characteristically sharp critical evaluation, Simon applied to contemporary developments his classic critiques of substantive, global rationality from economics and his embrace of procedural, bounded rationality from cognitive psychology. He had earlier stated these forcefully during the Reagan years (Simon, 1985). In contrast with his youthful combativeness, Simon, (1995a) at ASPA, warmly observed the importance of Waldo's work, which drew broadly on civilization's search for standards from classic to recent times: experience, logic, popular expectations, practicalities, and much more, including disciplines of science-based facts that attracted Simon's intellect and scholarly passions.

Adherence by Simon to his positive science roots until his death in 2001—during what many embraced from the 1970s forward as a postpositivist era of a new politics (and a new public administration) of responsiveness—provided public administration with sustained critiques of what Simon saw as an embrace in the 1980s to 1990s by political science and economics of an unbounded rationality principle without tests of auxiliary assumptions. It appeared that welcome facilitative governance notions and the new public administration's concerns with equity were being dangerously undermined by actions of laissez-faire ideologues and self-serving free riders and by the thoughtless embrace of subjective license—often under banners of 1960s and 1970s flexible standards.

Results of real and/or supposed movement away from the positivist decision-making model of the era of respect for professional experts was, in short, understood by Simon and many others as a political embrace of subjective values dressed up as certainties in support of partisan interests. Under paradoxical banners of both responsive government and social self-governance, in short, fundamentals of constitutional democracy sometimes appeared to be increasingly undermined by doctrinaire and selfish interest groups conjoined by financial imperatives of high-cost, media-era politics. More deeply, in Simon's (1995b) insightful terms cited earlier, business and government organizations became embedded in markets and

politics. Consider the following examples from reports by respected media of challenging subjects of needed inquiry.

Chicago—famous under the first Mayor Daley (1955-1976) for a politically successful balance of professionally expert public servants under merit standards and of many better known political patronage employees with loyalties to the mayor—provides a case study of changes in practical politics and administration. Chicago, under the second Mayor Daley (1989 to present), has embraced government by contracting. Is present-day Chicago practicing a new form of executive-dominated spoils in support of expensive media-age elections, nationally (and/or internationally) networked politics, financial patrons and contributors, and changed interests? In *Governing*, Charles Mahtesian (1994) provided clues. He cited Donald Haider, the former budget director, who said, “Daley was born and raised in the machine. He knows its limits. The patronage army can’t deliver votes anymore. A television crew is worth an army of patronage workers” (p. 30). Along with lucrative contracts and access for private interests, some highly visible job patronage continues, particularly for support of Hispanics—the new immigrant interest group in town. In the practices of the son, Mahtesian found the first mayor’s well-known dictum still alive—Chicago’s government and partisan politics are intimately one. They are tightly woven in the actions of the powerful chief executive: the mayor. He is the facilitator in a seamless framework of government and politics in which business performs important functions provided by the government and equips and supplies public agencies to perform others. Seamless business, government, and politics? New spoils!

Next, in consideration of seamlessness and responsible standards, compare and contrast three prominent business organizations with extensive connections to governments and their politics: (a) the highly respected Carlyle Group of Washington, D.C.; (b) the now reviled Enron Corporation, Houston-based but formerly the world’s largest global energy trading operation; and (c) the global accounting firm, Arthur Andersen, Enron’s auditor, terminated from that role on January 17, 2002.

Research by Mark Fineman of the *Los Angeles Times*, reported on January 13, 2002, focused on the Carlyle Group—a private equity firm founded in 1987. Carlyle was joined in 1989 by its present chairman, respected career public administration professional and former Defense Secretary Frank C. Carlucci, a member of the National Academy of Public Administration since 1973. Carlyle, with investments of approximately \$12.5 billion in 2001, now has a roster that includes such other informed and connected leaders as former president George H. W. Bush, former

secretary of state James Baker III, and former British prime minister John Major. Carlyle has compiled a record of sustained, high returns for investors: 34% through the decade ending in 2001, including an impressive earning of \$237 million on one day in December of that year from selling shares in United Defense Industries from which Carlyle had earlier taken dividends of \$289.7 million in August and another \$92 million in November according to the *Los Angeles Times* report. Reporter Fineman concluded,

Carlyle's windfall is a result of astute business decisions, excellent connections, strategic lobbying, good timing and a bit of luck. It is also a prime example of how defense contractors got well in a hurry after the Sept. 11 attacks, in a year when the Bush administration already was planning steep hikes in defense spending. (p. A14)

Aside from the 2001 windfall, note that Carlyle's achievement of long-term, high returns for investors has been from a portfolio with only about 10% in defense and 15% in commercial aerospace. What accounts for Carlyle's sustained stature? What substantive and procedural frameworks facilitate such success? Is seamlessness inescapable in some legitimately, even authoritatively, crucial dimensions of business, government, and politics?

Contrast the above example with Enron—recently the seventh largest American corporation before it started crumbling in October 2001 and now carrying a \$31 billion debt after filing for Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. Enron stock, which traded at \$90 a share toward the end of 2000 and January 2001 during the depths of the California energy crisis, fell to pennies in January 2002 when it was removed from its stock market listing. Consider the powerful Arthur Andersen firm and its alleged destruction of records followed by cannibalistic firings in January 2002. What decision-making standards (i.e., market disciplines; personal greed of executives; facilitative state license; cozy politics, as analyzed by Kobrak [2002]; Generally Accepted Accounting Principles [GAAP]) guided Enron and Arthur Andersen into their scandals? What was the nexus (seamlessness) of politics, government, and business on their way up and now down? Enron avoided paying income taxes in 4 of the 5 years prior to its collapse using “almost 900 offshore companies as tax havens,” according to ABCNEWS.com (“Cutting Ties, Enron Dumps Arthur Andersen,” retrieved January 18, 2002). Enron CEO Kenneth Lay was prominent in the Houston Grand Old Party (GOP) Convention of the first President Bush and, together with Enron, gave \$500,000 to support the

second Bush in 2000. But seamless politics, business, and government clothed many democrats also, though less generously with perhaps one third as much. *The Economist* ("The real scandal," 2002) reported that Enron was "admirably bipartisan: three-quarters of the Senate took Enron cash" (p. 9). But *Newsweek* (Fineman & Isikoff, 2002) reported that Senator Lieberman got only \$2,000. Given the American system of financing elections, such financial patronage is expected. What is more unexpectedly alarming, as *The Economist* correctly observed, are dangerous defects in governance of capital markets. What does Arthur Andersen's performance demonstrate about America's much touted accounting rules set by the Financial Accounting Standards Board, and what does that disclose about responsible self-governance by economic enterprise in the facilitative state?

In a search for answers, consider this added example. Enron was solicited by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB)—the London-based, private organization established in 2001 to facilitate global accounting standards. The request for \$500,000 was made by IASB chairman Paul Volcker, former chairman of the Federal Reserve and a leader in American public administration and business. This example was disclosed in February 2002 by the U.S. Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Chairman Carl Levin reported that internal Enron e-mail showed that the company "was prepared to donate on condition that it could help shape the board's policies" (Peel, February 15, 2002, p. 15). No evidence was reported showing that Enron made a donation to the IASB (Spiegel & Peel, February 14, 2002), which reported that it had a firewall between its fund-raising by board members and its standards system. Note that Volcker was selected in 2002 by the Arthur Andersen firm to head its independent oversight board in an effort to establish confidence in its practices.

### **RETHINKING PUBLIC SERVICE FUNDAMENTALS: CIVIC DUTY AND FACILITATION OF RESPONSIBLE SELF-GOVERNANCE**

Bottom-line conclusions of this analysis are that disciplines of constitutional democracy have often been deficient for effective functioning of facilitative state notions of social and economic self-governance and responsible government, but these disciplines have generally worked well. Immediately following the terrorist attacks of September 2001,

disciplines of civic duty and public service in support of responsible self-governance were widely demonstrated among people and private and public organizations. Social capital to facilitate self-restrained and robust constitutional democracy, presumed by many to be lost or irrelevant, reappeared.

Prior to these positive developments, when the question, "Facilitation of and for what?" was asked, the self-serving answer often was, "Anything goes!" That laissez-faire, personal-license interpretation contributed to widespread devastation following the breakup of the Soviet Union, as noted earlier. It contributed to the \$400+ billion banking scandal during the Reagan administration. Government and law were discounted. That culture continues to contribute to demolition in America when transactional partisanship goes undisciplined by transformational purposes and processes or when business organizations embrace Enronization by running wildly unaccountable to responsible standards. Public and private spoils and corruption of the preadministrative-state sort continue to surface today (Dubnick, 2002; Frederickson, 2002), but much more sophisticated, updated relationships commonly exist (Babcock, 1990; Bowman, 1988; Sharp, 1990). At the national government level, through "thickening at the top" with partisan plums, the "president is the 'one true master' of a very large empire, indeed" (Light, 1995, p. 7). In situations like in Chicago and with Enron, WorldCom, and Arthur Andersen, frequent seamlessness of politics, business, and government accounts for challenges to sustaining responsible self-governance and trustworthy government. In short, the facilitative state becomes distorted into a seamless state of self-serving interests.

To meet these challenges, rethinking is needed into related developments in partisanly political and professionally expert career services. The growing reliance of governments on private business for services and its dependence on technically and scientifically advanced products obtained through non-arms-length procurement (including contractor involvement in determination of product and service needs, development of specifications, and product testing) and vice versa (business dependence on government) need to be intimately connected aspects of such inquiry.

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE STANDARDS IN THE FACILITATIVE STATE**

With respect to civil service institutions, several political studies from the 1970s forward have reached one common conclusion creating recurrent political storm waves to promote it: Enhanced flexibility has been

repeatedly advocated as essential in the management of public personnel and governmental programs. Disciplined inquiry is needed: Flexibility for what and how? Common answers have been to enhance partisan executive powers.

Consider examples starting with the Nixon administration in which the responsiveness of civil servants as instruments of the president and his appointees was a continuous mantra. To circumvent law, *The May-Malek Manual* was created as an unpublished how-to guide (published by *The Bureaucrat*, 1976) to provide flexibility in support of what Richard Nathan (1975) described as “the plot that failed.” Recall the Carter administration’s successful politics to create the presidentially partisan OPM and to convert the former CSC into the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)—a nearly toothless chihuahua purported to be a watchdog (Newland, 1992). Most important conceptually under the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) of 1978 and subsequently, economic motivations became stressed as the crucial factor in workforce performance, thereby shifting fundamentals from transformational values of civil service to transactional economics of public employment. Harsh partisan politicization and some disassembly of the OPM followed in the initial Reagan years, became gentler under OPM directors Horner and Newman, and then was followed by further drastic cutbacks in the 1990s. Arbitrary workforce reductions, oriented to partisan politics and politically oriented contracting out at the expense of in-house expertise, especially affected managers and other professionals during the Clinton-Gore years. On November 14, 2002, the Bush administration announced plans to place work of 850,000 of the remaining 1.8 million civilian employees in competition for privatization (Chen, 2002). Particularly under Carter, Reagan, and Clinton, partisan politicization of labor management relations elevated interest group politics above public service as the foundation of public employment (Newland, 1996), and that increased from 2001 to 2002. Partisan differences over civil service and union roles were central to the politics creating the Homeland Security Department that was signed into law on November 25, 2002.

Forceful support for enhanced public service has continued among some leading academicians and political officials. The so-called *Blacksburg Manifesto*, circulated informally in the early 1980s and published in 1990 as *Refounding Public Administration* (Wamsley et al., 1990), postulated a positive role of public administration, and John Rohr’s 2002 book, *Civil Servants and Their Constitutions*, again documented and analyzed such foundations of the field. Charles Goodsell’s powerful polemic, *The Case*

for *Bureaucracy*, led earlier in forceful support of public service in three editions from 1983 through 1994. A textbook example published in 2002 is *Managing Human Behavior in Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, by Denhardt, Denhardt, and Aristigueta, stressing the theme of new public service advanced earlier by Robert and Janet Denhardt (2000). Two examples by political leaders are most noteworthy: the Volcker Commission (National Commission on the Public Service), formed in 1987, and Comptroller General David Walker's emphasis on human capital, beginning shortly after 1999 when he entered office. In 1989, the Volcker Commission issued a briefly influential report, *Leadership for America*. It stressed three themes: leadership, talent, and performance. Like all other major reports on national government service, this report sought to "provide a framework within which those federal departments and agencies can exercise greater flexibility in managing programs and personnel" (Volcker, 1989, p. 5). Unlike most public administration inquiries into public service, the Volcker Commission also sympathetically studied partisan political service. It proposed to "clear away obstacles to the ability of the President to attract talented appointees from all parts of society" (Volcker, 1989, p. 5). The CSRA of 1978 had eliminated earlier requirements for CSC qualifications review of some political appointees not subject to Senate confirmation; the Commission was not seeking a return to review of qualifications of professional expertise but rather presidential and congressional actions to enhance the image of governmental service and to stress "the necessary and honorable role that public servants play" (Volcker, 1989, p. 6) as a means to attract leadership talent. More recently, Comptroller General Walker's recasting of the public workforce as human capital assets has attracted some attention to government's needs for talented personnel and their strategic management for dynamic, high-performing government. Earlier, as an Arthur Andersen executive, Walker had led in human capital concerns, and he brought current private-sector perspectives with him into the GAO.

What has been slighted or deliberately dismissed as unimportant or irrelevant in public service reform efforts of recent decades, as in the performance and merit pay provisions of the CSRA of 1978, has been the emphasis on connections of civic duty and facilitative service in support of self-governance. This is especially evident among elected and appointed officials of the national government. For many, public and party expectations are for performance as instruments of transactional politics demonstrating obedience to financial patrons, interest groups, and self-serving voter blocs. Strong support for contrary actions, driven by transformational



civic duty and ideals of constructively connected governance, are more common among mayors and city managers. The latter commonly demonstrate devotion to facilitative roles on behalf of shared community values (Nalbandian, 1999).

At all levels of society, civism arises from crises as after the terrorist attacks in September 2001. Among rank-and-file career public employees as well as among higher officials, civic duty also often appears as a sometime thing reserved for crises as noted earlier in examples. The 2001 crisis resulted in an instantaneous re-embrace of the faded term *public service*, combined with evident disciplines of civic duty.

### RESPONSIBLE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SELF-GOVERNANCE

Facilitative state ideals follow somewhat in the long tradition of political optimism about the human condition and the susceptibility of people and their institutions to developing self-disciplines, including civic duty and public service. This positive faith reaches back to such advocates of responsible self-governance as John Locke, Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson, and John Stuart Mill. As noted earlier in this analysis, in the absence of institutions and other conditions to facilitate development and exercise of those disciplines, the former Soviet Union republics suffered enormously in the 1990s, and many crippling problems continue. Corruption among some business giants demonstrates that, even with such institutional constraints as the GAAP, enormous disasters may occur in the absence of disciplines of civic duty and responsible service as an organizational and personal culture of enterprise. Furthermore, frequent seamlessness of politics, business, and government threatens to spread undisciplined license and corruption across public and private institutions, consequently threatening vital confidence in them. What trust can international and domestic investors have in American markets given Arthur Andersen's enormous failures? Note the adverse impacts on stock markets!

### CONCLUSIONS

Disciplines of constitutional democracy are essential foundations of the facilitative state and its three interrelated sets of contemporary notions: social self-governance, responsible economic organizations and markets, and facilitative government. All of these optimistic frameworks

depend upon a broadly shared culture of self-discipline, civic duty, and public service in search of human dignity and reasonableness. Fanatical terrorists demonstrated in September 2001 that individuals and organizations that do not share those values and disciplines can wreak havoc upon those who do. Far more important, experience following those brutal attacks demonstrated that connecting public service with civic duty and advancing both as companion disciplines of facilitative governance are not only contemporary challenges but realistic opportunities. Of importance, many people and nations, almost globally, demonstrated informed appreciation and support for these disciplines of constitutional democracy after the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Obstacles to self-governance and facilitative government under disciplined constitutional democracy include some that are enduring and others that are situational in time. Enduring and deepening is the dependence on an increasingly powerful presidency and on strong partisan chief executives at other governmental levels to cope with difficulties of separation of governmental powers, complexities of federalism and metropolitanism, and splintered political parties and competing interest groups. A crucial contemporary challenge is the paradox of fragmented and seamless politics.

Reform fatigue plagues American public administration at the national level and somewhat at the state and local government levels. Partisan political pitches have kept public organizations and civil services perpetually churning for a third of a century. By contrast, Enronization/Andersenization produced relatively modest but useful business reforms that will not weary business enterprises that are based on integrity. Reform fatigue is also no threat to partisan politics. After 7 years of the McCain-Feingold debate, the modest Shays-Meehan bill limiting soft money in election campaigns passed the House of Representatives in February 2002—absent were full disclosure provisions. Then a modest version of the McCain-Feingold bill finally passed the Senate on March 20, and it became only a show version of reform.

Yet, despite such challenges, in contexts of war on terrorism, transformational ideals of civic duty and public service enjoy popular support unparalleled for decades. Responsible self-governance demonstrates strong reserves of social capital supportive of facilitative state disciplines of constitutional democracy. Also, contrary to behaviors of some headline-grabbing, corrupt business giants, responsibly governed markets and productive private enterprise remain the rule within the United States. Transactional realities of sordidly seamless politics of self-interests must

not be ignored, but neither should they be allowed to overshadow fundamental forces of transformational idealism that support constitutional governance within frameworks of a facilitative state.

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