PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION UNDER PRESSURE:

THE ROLE OF THE EXPERT IN THE MODERNIZATION OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE

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Some of the central questions presently raised in public administration research are as follows:

1. Which factors effect the administration's participation in the policy-making process, or as David Easton terms it, regulate the administration's production of "within-puts"? For instance, it would be reasonable to assume that participation increases proportionally as the administration's problems are conceived as technically neutral and value-free, that is to say, that participation is greater in consensus situations than in situations where there is controversy over the goals or values the administration aims at carrying into effect. Other factors are related to the legitimate distribution of initiative and responsibility between the administration and the political authorities and to the extent to which the administrators are considered bound by their cause or by the political authorities. The administration's participation will further vary with changes in the relationships between

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other units in the political system, for example, the government and the legislature.

2. What is the relationship between the problems solved by the organization and the organizational structure? An organization is orientated towards the implementation of certain, not necessarily manifest, goals and it must work out theories of the connections between goals and means. Parallel with this theoretical or ideological activity it must also form its conceptions of the social relations between the employees and the organization's clientele. It must be supposed that these two processes do not occur independently of each other. but that there is an exchange effect between the social structure and the structure of ideas.

3. How does an organization adjust itself to its environment? How does an administrative system react when changes take place in the environment, and how does the environment react when the system cannot adjust itself quickly enough? There are no grounds for supposing that adjustment takes place automatically or mechanically. The changes in the environment must be understood and defined as problematic if an adjustment-process is set in motion and, correspondingly, the system's lacking ability to adjust must be conceived as problematic for the environment for a reaction to occur. The relations between public administration and its environment will here be perceived in terms of an input-output system just as David Easton has sketched the relations between the political system and the rest of society. Easton's central idea is that in order to survive the political system must receive inputs in the form of support and demands. These inputs will, through the system's internal processes, be transformed into decisions which, in turn, through feedback processes affect the amount and composition of inputs. In the same way, administrative activity, whether that of public administration as a whole or that of a single administrative unit, may be conceived of as a system which depends for its future existence upon demands being made upon it or support being obtained in one form or another. By means of the system's inner processes, the energy which it receives is transformed into administrative decisions which have concequences for the environment and which in turn affect the amount of energy-input.

In this article we shall take an administrative system and examine certain points relevant to the problems outlined above. The study concerns that branch of the public administration in Norway which during the last quarter of the ninetenth century made efforts to modernize Norwegian agriculture. Numerically it was a small organization. Its resources corresponded to less than one per cent of the Norwegian State budget. But the organization had to make decisions about a number of general problems: to what degree should the organization be bureaucratized and professionalized; how should it define its clientele; should it take the client's lack of motive for granted or consider it a problem; should it act independently of political authorities or be a passive tool? The answer to these questions together formulate so many alternative definitions of the expert's role in the modernization of traditional agriculture.

A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION FOR A HIGH STATUS CLIENTELE

During the whole of the nineteenth century, that section of the Norwegian population which depended upon agriculture for its livelihood suffered a relative reduction, and after 1865 the decline was absolute (see Table 1). The proportion of the population engaged in secondary and tertiary industry increased from 29.5 to 50.0 per cent from 1865 to 1900.

Table 1. The proportion of the population in agriculture in Norway, 1801–1900

Year	Total population	Population in agriculture	In per cent of the total population
1801	883.000	733.000	83.0
1865	1.701.000	1.115.000	65.5
1875	1.818.900	1.052.600	58.1
1890	2.004.100	975.000	48.7
1900	2.239.000	972.000	43.4

Source: Kiær (1904), p. 272.

The reduction of the farming population was due not only to the comparatively good possibilities for employment in other walks of life but also to emigration. Between 1866 and 1900 over 325,000 Norwegians emigrated – on an average over 9,000 per year.

In Table 2 the population engaged in agriculture is classified according to social position during the census years 1865 – 1900. While the group of freeholders increased by almost one fifth during this time, the other groups decreased. The number of tenant farmers and smallholders, foremen and male farmhands were reduced to less than one half, while the group of female farmhands was reduced to almost one-fourth.

In 1865 the group of independent farmers consisted of one third of the population engaged in agriculture (36.3 per cent). In 1900 there was only one crofter or farm-labourer to every farmer (50.3 per cent).

Table 2: Labor force in agriculture, by occupational status, 1865–1900

	Holders		Crofters	Hired workers		Total
	Owners	Tenants		Males	Females	
1865	95.826	16.899	60.296	46.104	90.933	310.058
1875	100.492	12.782	52.787	35.807	87.446	289.314
1890	108.510	11.696	29.623	28.003	75.837	243.669
1900	113.317	7.039	27.260	22.489	68.848	238.953
1865–1900	+ 17.491	– 9.860	– 33.036	– 23.615	– 22.085	– 71.105

Source: Klær (1904), p. 266.

While the increase of production in agriculture was considerable up to the middle of the 1800's, the difference between input and output was apparently unchanged. The methods of production, on the whole, were the same as those used for centuries before. From the 1840's one notices increasing signs of

change in the methods of production which, at any rate, after a shorter or longer trial period led to relatively higher output. More efficient tools were obtained, and fodder for the livestock was improved. "A change of system in Norwegian agriculture" had begun. The one-sided grain cultivation was replaced by more rational crop-rotation where fodder-growing took up a considerable area. Changes in production methods were not inspired by agriculture itself, but were the result of lengthy external pressure due to the development of the town industries which transferred to agriculture ideas and techniques characteristic of manufacturing and other capitalist trades.

The first public effort to stimulate the technical rationalization of agriculture took place in 1842, when the *Storting* gave grants for the first agricultural schools. In 1854, sums were set aside for the salaries of three instructors and for an agricultural high school, and starting with 1857 and 1860 for a venture to reform cattle breeding. In the course of the 1860's most of the reform efforts fell apart. In 1874 the Department of the Interior established a position for a professional leader of the rationalization efforts, and in 1877 an independent directorate, The Directorate of Agriculture. From 1874 to 1899 the organization experienced a tremendous expansion. During this period the personnel increased six-fold and the budget over twelve times (see Table 3).

Table 3. The Norwegian administration of agriculture 1874, 1883 and 1899

	1874	1883	1899
Employees in central administration	1	2	2
State employees in field organization	3	9	34
Employed by counties	6	17	41
Employees at agricultural schools	6	6	30
State expenditure for agricultural purposes (1.000 kr.)	62	111	764
State expenditure for agricultural purposes in percent of total expenditure	0.25	0.27	0.72

The growth of the organization was far from being even, but it did take place particulary from the end of the 1880's. The organization also expanded during 1874–84, but the special feature of this ten years period is the organizational changes; the development of a new structure of ideas or a theory of the conditions of modernization, and the establishment of a more sharply defined social relationship between the organization and its environment, stressing the professionalization of the organization.

In the following we shall describe how the organization developed a theory of the conditions of modernization and defined the relations to the clientele and the political authorities.

A Theory of the Conditions of Modernization

In 1874, after the organization had acquired professional leadership, there was increased activity toward shaping a theory of the conditions of modernization.

The organization's goal was to increase productivity in agriculture; to create

"rational agriculture". It would be useful to regard the goal as a problem. Just as a scientific problem is a fairly precise formulation of a distance between something we know and something we want to know, so is a political problem the distance between something we have and something we want to accomplish, that is to say a practical deficiency. (Bay, 1961, p. 72)

Politics thus can be regarded as an activity aiming at defining problems, getting the problems accepted as definite, and possibly creating an administrative organization in order to get the problems solved.

A political problem defines an actual state of affairs, a situation, "something we have", and it defines a desired state of affairs, a goal, "something we wish to achieve". Logically these two types of definitions can be separated, but in practice they are woven together. Existential propositions have built–in value premises and normative propositions factual premises.

An existential proposition implies that a number of values have been decided upon. When the Directorate of Agriculture described the situation in Norwegian agriculture it was in relation to the desired state of affairs, "rational agriculture", where everything was evaluated in economic terms according to the relationship between input and output in the production process. But it also meant that other values were denied, that the production process could not at the same time be considered a means of confirming a tradition, a way of life, nor could it be regarded as a necessary evil on which one spent as little energy and consideration as possible.

After the Directorate of Agriculture had been in existence for six years, it characterised the situation as follows: "However, there is a great deal to be done, there are still large stretches of the country where the simplest principles of rational farming are even now little known, where unsatisfactory cultivation of the land, scarcity of fodder for the cattle during the winter, and poor selection of breeding animals, combined with inefficient methods of dairy farming, are still prevalent. Even in the most flourishing rural districts there is, of course, very much that one hopes will be corrected, there are many reforms and improvements to be made before it can be said that the farm is absolutely up-to-date."

The up-to-date farm was to be run on principles of "rational agriculture", that is, "agriculture founded on scientific thinking". The running of a farm ought to be "a product of the mind, based upon scientific principles".

Science meant a highly developed form of economic thinking, a more systematic form of common sense, and therefore more certain and more useful than thinking on the common sense level. "Scientific thinking" was instrumental in the realization of the value of productivity, because high productivity was a function of scientific planning. The distinguishing feature of rational agriculture was that the means of production were carefully selected and used with a view to maximum output. Accordingly, the problem in the agricultural situation was how one could get the farmers to achieve far better economic results without a corresponding increase in expenses. The goal of the rationalisation movement was the expansion of purely economic or capitalistic values.

According to the way the problem was posed it was taken for granted that the difference between the ideal and reality could be reduced by the dissemination of knowledge about the choice of the correct methods of production. The science of agriculture and professional "know-how" would tell you what these were.

It was also generally accepted that other methods than the spreading of knowledge could lead to rational agriculture. It was established that the development of communication was an important rationalising factor in creating larger markets, and likewise the supply of capital. Behind public efforts to stimulate the reapportionment of farmlands and the change-over from tenant-farmer to owner-farmer lay hypotheses about connections between private property and rational production.

The organization was not blind to these factors, but among the rationalising factors the dissemination of knowledge was clearly given first priority. It believed not only in the positive effects of knowledge, but also in its motivating power. Correct knowledge meant correct action.

There are several circumstances which could explain this high appreciation of knowledge. The prestige of knowledge helped to give lustre to professional "know-how", and the positive results of the spread of knowledge was the agricultural administration's *raison d'être*. Furthermore, the spreading of knowledge was the most adjustable factor for the organization; not only was it the field where it should officially work but also the field where it could work most freely. The organization put the rationalization problem in such a way that it could help solve the problem, and the organization got an "open-eye" for the positive function of the spreading of knowledge.

There are three main differences between the traditional attitudes of farmers and the agronomist's professional knowledge. First, professional knowledge, in principle, was falsifiable; secondly, it was combined with a more single-minded attitude towards productivity; and thirdly, it was more exact.

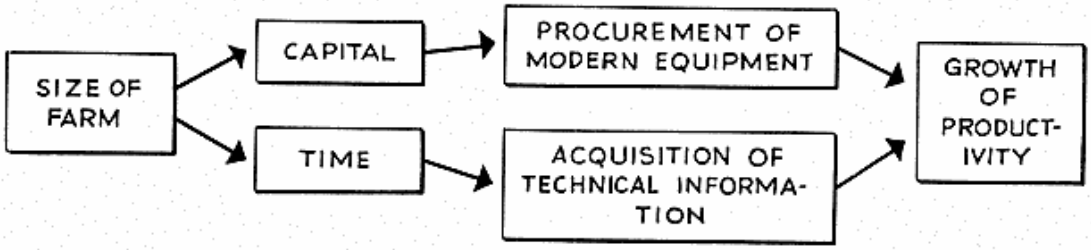
Within the farming community a number of decisions were made on the basis of magic: for example, sickness amongst the cattle was thought to be caused by supernatural beings, and many efforts were made to protect the farm against secret, invisible powers. In opposition to this, professional knowledge was formed in such a way as to make it falsifiable on direct observation. Magical knowledge is made up of statements which in principle cannot be falsified. Superstition is a set of unfalsifiable claims.

The average idea of economy in the farming community was more diffuse and lacked a clear point of reference — the farm as an economic unit. The economy was not set apart as an independent set of institutions organised around the value of productivity.

While calculation of a farm's production required elementary arithmetic, the calculation of profit was not only more complicated but also required greater accuracy. The agronomists reacted chiefly against "being in a rut" and "rule of the thumb" decisions. The agronomist's knowledge was not necessarily new but it was safer.

Progress in agriculture was a function of the dissemination of professional knowledge. Knowledge was regarded both as a necessary and sufficient condition for higher productivity. But in the working theory of the organization conditions were also set down for the acquiring of knowledge, and these important factors were not evenly distributed among the 135,000 independent farmers who formed the organization's clientele. Increase in productivity was dependent upon the owner having had the time to learn and the capital for obtaining better equipment, and again time and capital were dependent upon the size of the farm (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Conditions for growth of productivity



It was also pointed out that the claim concerning the decisive effect of material factors was confirmed by the experience of the neighbouring Nordic countries:

"Experience has shown all along that it is the larger land owners who lead the way in reforms and improvements. An investigation of the conditions in our neighbouring countries, Sweden and Denmark, shows that the larger land owners and estate owners have the honour of pioneering the way for improvements – it is to them their countries owe the high standard of agriculture they have now reached."

Just as capital and time led to knowledge and reform, so did lack of these lead to intellectual and material decline.

The theory of the conditions for acquiring knowledge led to an important strategic decision concerning the definition of the organization's clientele. The organization ought to focus on that quarter of the farms which were the largest, i.e. those with hired labour. The rest would "have to manage as well as they could". This conclusion helps to explain why the organization decided to oppose two fundamental trends in the development of agriculture, the parcelling out of the farms and the abolishing of the crofters' plots. This can be looked upon as a result of a fear that the social basis of rationalization would be weakened, which again was based upon a supposition that technical progress would stop if the social structure was altered. The social benefits had to be shared unevenly so that some would have a surplus with which to finance the technical reforms.

Relationship to the Clientele: Professionalisation

In classical organization theory we often come across the attitude that there is one ideal type of formal organization, characterised by uniformity in leader-

ship, functional specialization, etc. Later research, with a more empirical goal in view, has pointed out how the organization's structure is likely to take the form of the concrete goal which is being implemented (Simon, 1955, pp. 36 ff.), and that both the employees' understanding of the problems to be solved and the way in which it should be done will be affected by the social milieu where in the administrative organization is operating. (Selznick, 1949)

The following inquiry into the decisions applied by the agricultural extension service is an attempt at the further development of the theory ot the *connection between the administration's structure of ideas and its social structure.* The point of departure is that these two aspects of administration can be more or less well adjusted to each other. In case of bad adjustment there will be tension, which an official can try to release by altering either the interpretation of the problem or the way in which the decisions are made.

The level of integration, on the other hand, is not immediately connected to the question of how an administrative organization is adapted to its environment, if the organization functions in accordance with social demands, in other words, its degree of "social efficiency". An organization with badly integrated structures can work with much success, while an organization without tension between the two structures can come into great conflict with its milieu and become an example of "social inefficiency". As we shall see, the Directorate of Agriculture is an example of an unusually high co-ordination between the structures and, at the same time, an example of an organization which comes into conflict with its milieu to an unusual degree.

Public efforts at modernizing agriculture during the 1840's fell into two groups. First, agricultural schools and an extension service were established. Secondly, State funds were used for purchasing production equipment: stallions, stocks of cattle and sheep, and for organizing cattle shows. These measures had the status of public benefits made available to the public, free of charge or at a fee, and corresponded to other public efforts to bring about economic growth.

We shall first examine the organization's policy concerning the relations between instructor and client.

In the following analysis of the relations between official and client, we shall use, as a link in an attempt at integration of role- and decision-theory (Simon, 1957, pp. XXX ff.), two dimensions of decision-making as analytical units, namely,

1) the reciprocal expectations of official and client as to how decisions are brought about. Who decides that decisions are to come into effect?
2) the reciprocal expectations of official and client on the form of the decision, how each side is committed. Is the decision made on the supposition that the official establishes a fact, does he give an order and if so, does he have sanctions at his disposal?

In the relationship between instructor and client two features were clear from the beginning. In the first place, the advice was free – there was no fee for the advice given. Secondly, the instruction was not connected with threats of being

forcibly applied. It was a principle in Norwegian agricultural policy – as in Norwegian economic policy of the 1800's in general – that one tried to avoid enforced State interference with private ownership. In cases where compulsion was used the initiative was either left to private persons or representative bodies. Both these features seemed to break down resistance among the clients to the instruction service. The question of who should initiate the instruction, the official or the client, was unsettled for a long time.

When the instruction service was established in 1855, it was assumed that agronomists would work with individual clients. In this situation the official could in principle choose between two alternatives. He could limit his clientele to people who had the same values as he himself and who sought his advice of their own free will. Or he could actively work to create the common values which were assumed necessary for the principle of the clients' free will to be practised. The official who leaves the initiative to the client we will call the professional civil servant. The other, who works for the establishment of a community of values with the client we will call the agitator.

During the first twenty years of the instruction service the agitator and the professional civil servant worked side by side. As a result of the reorganization in the middle of the 1870's agitation was abolished.

The agitator works in a situation where he can neither compel people to become clients nor reckon with their voluntary co-operation. He must take the initiative himself, and the endurance of the established relationship depends upon his ability to convince the client that the relationship is useful, that he gets something from it.

In the first instance, the agitator's field of activity must awaken a sense of professional knowledge and continue to maintain it. Therefore, his qualifications as a teacher are just as important as his professional qualifications. The process he tries to bring about is the transfer of values as a pre-requisite for the transfer of knowledge. His goal is to *create* the need for professional knowledge, just as much as being able to convey it. The lack of specialised professional knowledge of the teacher corresponded to the little differentiated need of the clientele for professional advice. The application of specialised professional knowledge presupposed certain minimum knowledge in the recipient which he did not possess.

Lack of specialised professional knowledge on the part of the agitator will lead to lower professional prestige for him. His continuance despite his lowered professional prestige must be associated with having important reference groups apart from his professional associates.

Compared with the professional civil servant's clientele, the section of the population with which the agitator works must present a hopeless picture. But the agitator is optimistic, and optimism applies to both the direct effect of the spreading of knowledge and the clientele's possibilities. His belief in the people contributes to raising the clientele's prestige as a reference group, but at the same time it is a sign that he is effectively tied up with his clientele. One of his characteristics is the wide and undefined range of duties to his clientele.

The professional civil servant's responsibility for the client ceases when he has given advice. Whether the client follows the advice or not is entirely up to the client himself – he is the one who must choose – the choice is not the civil servant's problem.

Because the agitator works by spreading values and not exclusively knowledge the limits of his duties are more undefined. It goes without saying that the dissemination of knowledge implies that values are transferred, but in the case of the civil servant this happens through hidden mechanisms, i.e. it is a latent function. As long at the transference of values is a manifest function the transference technique is more emotional. Because of the principle that the agitator is the one who takes the initiative, it is also more important for him to make sure that the values have really been transferred – his findings here are not only items in his strategic planning of a new step, but they also play a role in his evaluation of his own efforts as to whether his mission has been a success or a fiasco. His responsibility never ceases.

When the principle of the client's voluntary co-operation was established during the 1870's it was partly due to the prosperous times and the increase in the number of clients. But this was not the whole explanation. It was also a result of a clear policy on the part of the organization. This policy manifested itself in various ways – partly in the form of the declaration of principles, partly in the recruiting policy. The organization's leader openly advocated that the agronomists should work with "volunteers", "because when assistance is requested from an official one could take it for granted that there was interest in his activity, which must be one of the first conditions for achieving anything". The new positions created up to 1883 (see Table 3) were all for specialists in land cultivation, breeding, agricultural chemistry, etc. From 1874, when the organization got its own professional leader, the annual reports on the modernization efforts in agriculture were collected and published, scholarships for studies abroad were given to agronomists, and more professional conferences were held. All this must have contributed to the strengthening of professional identity and a stronger sense of solidarity.

But first and foremost, the decision concerning the client's voluntary participation was a conscious attempt to alter the clientele's social composition in accordance with the theory on the conditions of modernization. The organization wrote off three-quarters of the clientele who, according to the theory, did not have the inclination to reform because they lacked the capital and the time required for acquiring knowledge and new equipment for production. The professionalization of the role of the instructor, was, in fact, linked with differential treatment of the clientele. The civil servant role was specially suited to help a high status clientele but at the same time its smooth functioning was dependent upon a high status clientele. Professional specialization was a requisite for covering the large farms' differentiated requirements for professional assistance, in the same way as professional diffuseness was necessary to be able to assist the lower status clientele.

The decisions which resulted in professionalizing the role of the instructor were at the same time decisions about the type of clientele the instruction service should aim at, and the theory had motivated the choice of the high status clientele as the only reasonable one. This shows the interdependence between an organization's structure of ideas and its social structure: the formation of the organization's problem structure is implicitly a description of the decision-making processes in the organization.

A survey of the 84 persons or institutions which in 1880 required assistance from the instruction service showed that the policy was successful. Twenty of the eighty-four are unidentified. Thirty-nine were either official institutions or higher civil servants who rented farms in public ownership, twenty-two were proprietors or farmers with large holdings, and only three farmers came from that three-quarters of the Norwegian farmers who ran the farms as a family concern without hired labour.

In a few agronomists professionalization evoked tension between theory and action. They accepted the principle of the client's voluntary participation, but they did not take the client's capital or will to reform for given, but as problematic. They did not see the same close connection between capital and the will to reform. They gave examples of reform tendencies among farmers who lacked capital, and showed concern about how public grants could be utilized to advantage for such clients. They did not take the will to reform as a datum but as a condition which could be manipulated, mainly through the mechanism of voluntary associations among the farmers. The tension between theory and action then became released. These agronomists formed "an inner opposition" in the organization and came to power in the 1890's, when a new reorganization occurred so that the organization could adapt itself to an expanded definition of the clientele.

We shall not go into the details of the organization's policies concerning the agricultural schools and the administration of the cattle shows and production equipment in public ownership. The schools were more or less privately owned and the administration was strongly influenced by the clientele. The policy of the organization aimed at the bureaucratization of the schools and the teacher roles. When the operating costs were taken over by the State a number of decisions concerning the school's activity were made by the organization itself, and the teachers came under professional leadership. The new policy regarding the schools aimed at the training of an elite. There was to be instruction for future farm owners who employed manpower, and thus had a potential labour problem. The instruction was to be carried out in a two-year course for a small number of pupils. One of the conditions for putting this policy into effect was that the organization had greater influence on the administration of the schools and could rely on a teaching service which was loyal to the professional authority. Therefore, influence had to be transferred from the grass roots to the organization and both the clientele and the sub-ordinate officials (e.g. teachers) had to give up influence. The organization further went in for obtaining stocks

of cattle and stallions in public ownership and for organizing an extensive system of exhibitions. As in the case of the schools, here too the essential point was that the measures came under strict professional leadership and that the clientele was excluded from the decision-making process, an attitude which was strongly criticised and which in due course had to be modified. But otherwise there was a strong tendency among the "upper crust" of the organization to take the clientele's support for granted. Or, in other words, the organization treated the support as a function of the organization being led in the correct professional direction.

There are several circumstances to indicate that this is the case – that the problem of support was solved by definition. This had to do with the definition of the clientele.

We have noted that the agitator's most important problem was how one could be assured that reform measures would be accepted by the clientele. The organization solved this, in the first place, by renouncing clients who did not apply for instruction voluntarily. In the second place, it defined its clientele as the farmers with large holdings, identifying capital with the will to reform. The owners of large holdings were interested in increasing the farm's profit, and here the State helped by providing instruction and placing modern production equipment at the disposal of the farmers. In this way capital and knowledge could go hand in hand.

A consequence of the fact that the organization considered capital and the will to reform to be equal and postulated that the modernization efforts had maximal usefulness was the fixation of a community of values and interest between the organization and its clientele. Therefore, it could ignore criticism because opposition was a phenomenon which would disappear as soon as the usefulness of the efforts became visible. Opposition rested upon misunderstandings of bad will.

The success of the schemes was dependent upon correct leadership – without such leadership they could not be maximally useful and thus accepted. The point was to prevent incompetence affecting the schemes and particularly to hinder anyone using the schemes as a means of achieving non-professional objects.

When the re-organization took place in the 1870's the whole situation contributed to strengthening this conception of the problem. That which one could "learn from history", from the occurrences in the 1860's, was that there was a functional interdependence between the high influence of the clientele, the scheme's poor leadership and its decline. The 1860's had been marked by tension in the relationship between capital and knowledge. The agronomists were blamed for muddled teaching, spreading ideas which jeopardised profit-making and the public reform schemes were characterised as useless and harmful. Experience taught that priority had to be given to careful planning and the avoidance of enthusiasm and zeal which had characterized several of the first generation's agronomists.

As we have seen the organization could only find one remedy for this, stronger professional influence. The public efforts had to be conducted according to the right principles, which also were carried out in practice, and the more correctly the schemes were guided skillfully, the more profitable the production equipment and methods of production would be which were offered to those with the will to reform.

But there again, a necessary condition for getting the clientele interested in reform to support the official schemes was that they should be professionally led – that the clientele themselves did not have any influence upon how the measures were applied. If the clientele were kept at a sufficient distance they would come streaming in.

We have here before us an example of an extreme rationalistic train of thought in a technical group, namely, that the estimation of public opinion of the schemes could be preserved by being correct according to a restricted technical criterion. In order to simplify his problem-structure the technician, just as any other civil servant, must take a number of conditions for granted. He will then have a tendency to prefer to manipulate the technical conditions, those within his field, and to neglect or take for granted important social factors.

A most important feature in the organization's problem structure was the assertion that capital and will to reform, on the one hand, and modernization efforts, on the other, would be accepted if they were maximally useful because then they would be maximally profitable. It then became problematic how one could establish a decision-making structure where the non-skilled, i.e. the clients, were deprived any influence.

This line of thought assumed, as we have seen, a certain definition of the clientele – of those social strata for which the scheme would be effective. There was a connection between the quality of the efforts and the clientele's social and economic status. The organization could take the will to reform for granted because it preferred the high status clientele. Its policy was the increase of productivity via a high status clientele, defined as a reform-willing and profit-interested group, in contrast to the social groups of the farmer-community which lacked both capital and the will to reform. A further problem was how one should protect this clientele against being decimated by the parcelling out of farms, lack of man-power, etc. Or, in other words, it was a problem how to preserve the class difference in society.

Table 4. The problem-structure of the agricultural administration

Given	Problematic	Problem solution
Capital = will to reform	Protecting the large holdings	Role of the advisor
The benefits of the modernization measures assure the support from the clientele	Maximizing the benefits of the modernization measures	Closing the decision-making process from non-professional influences

The administrative programme which was the answer to this problem-structure, after a few years was turned upside-down. The premises which the organization took for given were taken as problematic. The organization had treated the will to reform as a costly benefit which could ruin but not be evoked. The years after 1884 saw a breakthrough for the conception that the will to reform could be manipulated. In areas which the organization considered to be problematic solutions were turned down because the problems were put differently. The parcelling out of farms was accepted, and the decision-making process was made wide open to influences from the clientele.

If we are to grasp the organization's problem-structure we must get hold of its identifications. As it has been shown, the organization had strong identifications with the high status clientele in agriculture. But first and foremost it identified itself with the profession, and both these identifications can explain the tendencies toward bureaucratization and professionalization.

According to public opinion of that period, a professional service was, in the first place, comprised of a central head possessing the necessary professional knowledge; this was achieved by the establishment of The Directorate of Agriculture in 1877.

To "the perfect organization", according to the general conception, belonged a hierarchy of positions; and this hierarchy was established, too, with new positions staffed by specialists, each with his own district.

The holders of these positions were able within a certain framework to work comparatively freely, both in relationship to the central head and the clientele. Within their own district they were expected to lead the efforts and be ready to take fresh initiative to the best of their ability. The decisions in each individual case should not be based upon special directives from higher up. The prize judges at the cattle shows should keep within a framework of regulations, and the manner in which the judges were recruited and paid intended to ensure that they would be able to work independently of the exhibitors and unaffected by local criticism. They should not be slaves of opinion of the clientele who at the exhibitions demanded a neat practice of detailed regulations.

To be able to function a bureaucratic organization needs expertise. If one is not to lose control over an organization where it is understood that the officials are to work freely within a fairly elastic framework of goals, means and regulations, the employees must have a certain proficiency. Professional expertise was also necessary to withstand the pressure from the clientele who could hinder a planned policy from being carried out over a longer period.

When the organization identified itself with the high status clientele it was because it had important functions during the development of a service with high social distinction. Without this clientele's differentiated need for professional assistance the specialization of the service could not have continued. The policy of the organization was adjusted to its environment. On the whole it corresponded to the demands it had to meet and the support it could depend upon. Requests for its services most frequently came from owners of large holdings and persons

who only had weak connections with the farming community, and the development of the profession had political support among the town representatives in the *Storting*.

The Relationship to Political Authority

As it has been shown by Talcott Parsons (Weber, 1947, pp. 58 f), Max Weber's formulation of the characteristics of a bureaucratic organization merges together two different foundations of legitimacy for bureaucratic decisions. First, legitimacy can rest on the formal position of the decision-maker, which gives him the right to interfere in other people's activities in a special field. Secondly, legitimacy can rest upon the decision-maker having technical knowledge which he can use to the advantage of the client. The latter depends, in Parsons' analysis, "entirely on securing — — — voluntary consent". (Weber, 1947, p. 58)

Constraint is a feature of political authority based on formal position. Not only has the State the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within its boundary, but most exercise of authority based on formal position is also backed by the use of force, or at least the threat of use of force. A political decision rests, in the first place, on the expectation that the decision will be accepted because correct procedure makes it legal, but in the last analysis, on the expectation that the State's physical power-apparatus will sanction it.

Another trait of decisions based on formal position is that they are surrounded by regulations to make them secure against misuse. This applies not only to the decisions giving commands and issuing injunctions, but also decisions permitting advantages to some clients and not to others. The decisions are not arbitrary but correspond with certain principles which ensure legal justice. This is the idea in political liberalism of the mastery of the law, "a government of laws, not of men", which was the reaction against a despotic rule.

While decisions based on formal position are characterised by constraint and the rule of law (equality before the law), decisions based on technical competence are typically characterised by voluntary consent and ends-means orientation.

The principle of free will and voluntary consent leads us to think that it is less important to control decisions based on technical competence than for the expert himself to warrant the correctness of the decision through learning and formal education. In the case of decisions based on formal position they have to be legitimised by its legal authority.

Moreover, from professional knowledge one does not demand equal treatment for the same situations, but that all situations are treated appropriately. If a physician orders an operation for one patient and a treatment for another, there could be grounds for criticism should the operation fail while the treatment succeeded. The important thing is that it is the result of a decision based on technical competence which is judged, not the premises. Criticism of decisions

based on formal position has a different emphasis. The decision-maker may mean well and the result may be good, but if, while dealing with the case, he goes beyond the limit of his jurisdiction he is liable to criticism.

A marked feature in the development of public administration in western societies in the last hundred years has been the establishment of new positions of responsibility for experts in the natural sciences and technology. This process began very slowly in Norway in the 1860's, an exception being the case of the physicians. The influx of experts had a centrifugal effect upon the formal organization of public administration. As late as 1850, practically speaking the entire personnel of the central administration was organized in seven departments, each headed by a Minister (statsråd). Gradually independent units were set up for road-building, construction and management of railroads and telegraph, measures in agriculture, forestry, etc. One may say that during these years there was a decentralisation of the central administration, with the professions being allowed some kind of self-government, either by professional leadership of the services being placed outside the Ministries or by the professions being given top positions in the Ministries. The lawyers gave up their influence in favor of the new professions.

The organizational changes were connected with marked changes in the political culture. A utilitarian theory on public decision was developed which not only required that experts took part in central decision-making, but also contained a request for greater State activity. One of the objections to decision-makers not being experts was their passiveness, that they did not discover imperfections which were right in the centre of the experts' field of attention. The political mode of thought favoured the professional request for governing their own affairs.

If we look at the forces in the political system, with a marked division of power, it is likely that the *Storting* as a criticising institution had to create clear reference points for its criticism. The *Storting* went against collegial administration and preferred independent institutions with a definite responsibility. At the time when the national assemblies of most countries increased their power, the system of separation of power had a decentralising effect on the administration. The *Storting* could try to modify the system by establishing parliamentary responsibility over the heads of the departments, and it also succeeded in some situations to overthrow a Minister. But without modifying the principle of power division, the *Storting* could try to reduce the responsibility and authority of the department heads by making some of their branches of administration independent relative to the government departments. There was not necessarily any aversion to the Government behind this, but it could simply be conceived as satisfying the *Storting*'s legitimate need for criticism.

When on several occasions the Government preferred to have the experts in the Ministry it was not only a matter of power, but simply a need for co-ordination which had the effect of centralization in the same way as the *Storting*'s need for criticism had the result of de-centralisation. And as soon as the Government became subject to parliamentary responsibility it was not long before the

Storting, too, discovered that one could save quite large amounts by placing the experts within the walls of the Ministries.

Also another circumstance must have pointed in the direction of excluding the experts, namely the tendency of professional knowledge to break up an hierarchy. The Department had a strict military structure, and an hierarchial structure is easier to preserve when the distribution of information is inversely proportional to the pyramidal structure. If information heaps up at a low level it will have a dysfunctional effect upon the hierarchy: influence will be pulled in the direction of the position where one expects most of the relevant information to be found. In the same way, the fight for influence in a formal organization often develops as a conflict over the definition of what types of information are most relevant to the decisions to be made.

The activities of the agricultural administration were regulated by budget resolutions. There were no statutes which gave the activity a legal foundation and which compelled the *Storting* to allow the activity to continue. By refusing a grant the *Storting* could stop the whole activity. All expansion was dependent upon its permission.

Agricultural policy did not seem of primary importance to the *Storting*. The schemes did not cost a great deal. The agricultural budget took up 0.25 per cent of the State budget for the budget term 1874/75, and 0.27 per cent for the term 1883/84. The work of the *Storting* during these years was dominated by the fight for power between the *Storting* and government, and the handling of the agricultural question, of course, was affected by it.

Of greatest interest is the voting pattern of town representatives. In the 1870's it was their strong support which continuously carried through the marginal efforts. This strong positive attitude cannot only be due to loyalty to the Government's proposals even though such has been the case in a number of instances.

The relationship between the *Storting* and the Directorate of Agriculture had four characteristics:

First, the organization had the initiative; it was the active part; the *Storting* the controlling one. The *Storting* and the Ministry did not take any fresh initiative, nor did they take up suggestions which the organization refused, but restrained its enthusiasm when the proposals required comparatively large grants and where the organization's points of view clashed too violently with ideas in other quarters.

Secondly, the organization was responsible to political authority only to a certain degree. The decisions the *Storting* and the Ministry made marked the limits of its activity, but it was quite free to try to extend these limits by convincing the political authority of the necessity for it. First of all, it was responsible to professional considerations. This again was because the *Storting* or the Ministry did not have an independent policy; they left it up to the organization within the limits set by the political authority.

Thirdly, the organization's authority was relatively strong. When it was ac-

knowledged that it should be loyal only to a certain degree to the political authority, the organization's professional status was emphasized.

Fourthly, the organization carried the responsibility for all its decisions, the criticism hit the organization. The organization and its leader were the ones who were disputed in the *Storting* whenever legislators were in disagreement over its policy – the Ministry, when it followed the advice of the experts, was not affected.

RE-DEFINITION OF THE CLIENTELE: MODIFICATIONS IN THEORY AND ORGANIZATION

From the last half of the 1880's increasingly more Norwegian farmers changed over from a barter economy to market agriculture, a development stimulated by better communications and changes in the population structure (see Table 1).

Grain production declined while at the same time milk production increased. The number of dairies increased from 74 in 1875 to 780 in 1900. The yearly average of agricultural exports in 1871–75 amounted to 3.862.000 kroner, as against a yearly average of 14.801.000 during 1896–1900.

The changes in agricultural economy were followed by a tremendous increase in demands for professional extension services and a marked expansion of public modernization efforts. Parallel with the increase in demands came a change in the content of the demands. New social strata were drawn into the reform work and this lead to changes in the activity of agronomists. Instead of giving individual advice, they now participated in new co-operative schemes, such as dairy farming, cattle-breeding associations and new forms of exhibitions, which had a much more far-reaching effect than the older collective schemes.

The administrative system was built up with the idea of satisfying the needs of the larger farms, some of which had belonged to the town communities, higher officials and proprietors. This was combined with stressing the quality of reform schemes. The question of quantity now came to the fore and with it a change of emphasis from efforts to give individual advice to working to create "reform milieus". Strong demands were put forward that the service should serve "the common farmer" and change its methods to suit this new clientele.

There was no automatic connection between the increase in the demand for technical help and the expansion of the schemes. The important factor was the change in the farmer representatives' attitude toward the State's efforts in agriculture. This change was effected by the situation in agriculture being defined as disastrous, and this provided the basis for appeals to the most tradition-bound farmer-group to put away old anti-State attitudes and stand solidarily with the profit-making farmers behind the State support to the advantage of agriculture. At the same time as the farmers support became stronger, the town representatives' support, which had laid a safe foundation for the schemes, became weakened.

Amendments to the Theory on the Conditions of Modernization

The theory which was the foundation for the modernization schemes after the re-organization in the 1880's was purely elite oriented. There was also a competing theory, held by the "inner opposition" in the organization. During the latter half of the 1880's this theory was further developed and became the foundation for the re-organization of the modernization schemes that took place in the 1890's.

The organization was confronted with mainly two types of criticisms. First, it was accused of preferential treatment of the clientele. For instance, it was asserted that it was not the "common farmer" who benefitted from the instructors, but farmers with large holdings and higher officials who did not make a living from their farms.

The organization's answer was that it practised equal treatment in a formal sense. All the clients – "clients" defined as farmers who came forward requesting assistance – had the same chances of getting the advice they asked for, regardless of capital and origin. The organization insisted that the methods in the reform work did not have to be changed. The professional standard must be maintained; to lower it was the surest way of hindering progress.

But with this attitude concerning the choice of procedure the organization was also bound to keep their definition of the clientele. The organization was suited to serve the clientele which was already motivated, but not suited to motivate clients in strata where ideas of reform were rejected.

An administrative organization built upon bureaucratic principles cannot maintain equal treatment of clients if the clients themselves are not equally situated. Equal treatment can only be secured either by levelling the status of the clients, or by setting up separate organizations each dealing with different sections of the clientele. The last mentioned alternative was tried in the 1890's when the "common farmer" began to use the educational and extension services.

The changes in the external situation had the further effect that the original theory of the conditions of modernization itself went out of date. As the parcelling out of farms continued, the smaller farms steadily became more prevalent. The reduction of the number of crofters created a labour problem for the large farms dependent upon hired man-power. More important than this was the fact that with the change-over to marketing agriculture a number of co-operative associations were established, and in order to function satisfactorily these co-operatives required general support from the farmer community.

The dairy experts were particularly aware that work with the individual farmer was worth comparatively little if one did not at the same time introduce modifications in the environment. If the reforms in dairy-farming or agriculture were in any way to have nation-wide effect, it meant little "that improvements were brought to perfection on only a few farms", even though such examples could no doubt have favourable effects by tempting others to follow suit. What one had to consider was "that improvements, even though to a lesser degree,

obtained as great distribution as possible". With the emergence of dairy farming this point of view steadily acquired greater weight, particularly from the 1880's onwards.

The modernization of production methods in agriculture had consequences for other reforms schemes, too. The agricultural schools had to be planned in such a way as to spread knowledge as far as possible amongst the farmer population. Norwegian agriculture was divided between so many small farms that one individual farm simply disappeared in the mass. It helped little if only a few were influenced. "For instance, if dairy-farming is to be developed in an up-to-date way, it is not enough to have dairy experts and some skilled farmers who can act as leaders, be members of committees and the like, give a good example in caring for cattle, in good feeding, an even supply of milk throughout the year, thorough cleanliness, etc. Uneven milk supply, with a great excess during the spring and little in the autumn when it is best paid, makes the whole of dairy farming unprofitable, and unhygenic handling of milk by some individuals will give dairy farming a bad reputation. Advancement in dairy farming, as in all branches of agriculture, is absolutely dependent upon the understanding that conditions for profitable dairy production are known to all suppliers."

Up to that time one had tried to improve agriculture without improving the farmers. But it was not enough to set up schemes and just wait for someone to use them. People had to be taught to use the schemes. As in the agitator's situation, a transference of values was necessary. As such, enthusiasm had an important function not only in capturing a new clientele, but also as a means to break down the existing administrative system and build up a new one where the problems were differently defined and where another productivity model was used.

As we have previously seen there was a tendency among the instructors to accept the principle that individual advice had to be initiated by the client, that is, the advice had to be the result of the client's own choice. On the other hand, we also find a tendency among some instructors to take the client's initiative as problematic, a conception which presumed that it was possible to manipulate the factors which conditioned the initiative, through agitation, by establishing associations and by increasing the in-put of capital for farmers who were reform minded and lacked capital.

A marked feature of the revised productivity model, which was eventually adopted by large sections of the service, was that several factors could be manipulated; it was less static than the original model. It was possible to improve production equipment in private ownership, both through the in-put of capital and through breeding associations; and it was possible to increase the felt need for information by establishing agricultural associations. The model extended the number of potential clients in such a way that the new definition of the clientele could be combined with the professionalization of the service.

The Relationship to the Clientele

The new theoretical orientation did not threaten the agronomists in their professional role, but contributed to the development of a new alternative to professionalization. The previous alternative was a profession which was strongly identified with the occupation and aimed at a service of able experts. It defined the clientele in consideration of the service, it only dealt with the already existing will to reform, and was on the whole, conservative in its general outlook. The other alternative was a *client-orientation* where the basic consideration concerned the clients' welfare. The change-over from an occupation-oriented to a client-oriented profession coincided with the break-through of marketing agriculture and the growth of a number of co-operatives, such as dairies and other production associations. The co-operatives required general support for their persistence. The average farmer therefore had to join the movement. At the same time the so-called "agricultural crisis" helped to create a feeling of disaster in the farming society. Agronomists of a new type took the leadership. They identified themselves to a much greater extent with the farming community, and they combined the productivity work with the work of protecting the clients against economic disaster. The client-oriented instructors were more favourably inclined toward the clients' welfare than the occupation-oriented agronomists. This client-orientation has since become a characteristic of the profession.

We shall not go into the details of the modifications which followed in relation to the clientele. One of the main features of the agronomists' activity was to start voluntary associations, and some of these associations received fairly large public grants for their disposition. Because of the expansion of the measures, the clients were to a great extent co-opted in the administration of the schemes. A de-specialisation of the instructors' activity occurred to some degree, simply because the new clientele did not have the same differentiated need for instruction as the earlier high-status clients.

The Relationship to Political Authorities

In this section we shall describe modifications which occurred in the relationship between the Directorate of Agriculture and the political authorities during the course of the 1890's as a consequence of the changes which took place in agricultural policy and the political system as a whole. The modifications in agricultural policy will be analysed in terms of the relationship between competing problem structures or models of action, and the changes in the social relationships in terms of modifications in the distribution of initiative, responsibility, commitment and technical knowledge.

The relationship between the Directorate and the political authorities centered primarily on the authorities and the organization's leader, Jonas Smitt.

In his relationship to the political authorities, Director Smitt was right up to the

middle of the 1880's the undisputed leader of the public efforts for the furtherance of agriculture. Gradually he became exposed to criticism in the *Storting* for formalism, bureaucracy, lack of leadership, lack of effectiveness, and the *Storting*'s agricultural committee strode forward as a central decision-making authority. Along with these alterations new problems were formulated, which Smitt did not attend to. When he lost the leadership and was blamed for formalism and bureaucracy it was because he neglected the tasks he was expected to do.

The expression "agricultural crisis" was first voiced in the middle of the 1880's to describe the situation Norwegian agriculture found itself in, and strong demands were put forward for protecting agriculture against disaster. That Norwegian agriculture was problematic and the profits low was not in itself a startling assertion. Agronomists had maintained this for a whole generation. It was this trivial fact which was at the root of public efforts since the beginning of the 1840's. But the expression "agricultural crisis" itself was new and the distance between ideal and fact was described in much stronger terms: agriculture was suffering from the strain of being threatened with ruin. When it was maintained that the crisis could be avoided by providing the farmers with more "information and knowledge", it was dismissed as being insufficient means. The crisis had been caused from without. With foreign competition, Norwegian agriculture had lost much of its previous natural protection. "No agronomic knowledge... can quite remedy this disadvantage." Instead, a number of public efforts of a non-technical character were suggested: tax relief, increased credit possibilities, better conditions for internal retail and the export of agricultural products, and above all protective tariffs.

The reform efforts in Smitt's administrative system created a pattern which we will call "the information model", because of the emphasis placed upon spreading information as the manipulable factor and upon all schemes being strictly lead by experts. The main point of the new demands put forward was that the State should act in consideration of the individual farms's surplus, and we shall call the pattern these requirements follow, the surplus- or profit model.

Expert knowledge had an important place in the profit model but knowledge was not enough. In consideration of the individual farm's surplus the State had to take measures in addition to the spreading of information, and this activity had to be developed or modified in such a way as to be able to reach most of the farmers.

The profit model defined the agricultural situation as disastrous or near disaster, and it was therefore necessary to use means which one normally would not have applied. In the information model the situation was defined as difficult, but not so bad as to have to resort to irregular measures.

True, instruction and education were dismissed as the only remedy, or main remedy, against the crisis, but otherwise the definition of disaster was combined with the claim for grants for the information schemes. The agricultural budget then rose very rapidly, and this happened without many dissenting votes. But while the grants in the 1870's were often driven through against votes from

farmer representatives, it was the town representatives who, more often now, were in opposition.

In the profit model there was a strong tendency to put the blame for the crisis on something the individual farmer had no influence over but which was within the political authority's power, either to alter or at least to remedy; among other things, the competition from American agriculture. In the information model there was a strongly reversed tendency: blaming the reasons for the difficulties in agriculture upon the individual farmer.

The profit model was a disaster model, it was a question of acting instantly, making short-term schemes, allowing large grants. The new and, up to now, unknown situation required new, unorthodox methods. According to the information model it was unnecessary to make drastic changes.

The request for protective tariffs had a central place in the profit model and equally so the request for interest reduction. Both these requests were dismissed in the information model. The interest reduction for farmers was considered to be "socialism not to the advantage of the poor, but to the advantage of the privileged – the owners of the land itself". The request for protective tariff on grain was likewise "essentially a socialistic demand" and "interference in the conditions of ownership to the advantage of a certain class".

The decisive difference between the information and the profit model had to do with the conception of the responsibility of the State – what one could demand from the State. In the information model public efforts aimed at increasing agricultural profits in general, but whether the individual farm was run with a profit or loss was the private problem of each individual owner.

The conception of the State's responsibility for the individual farmer's welfare had, in turn, to do with the identifications contained in the models and with the strength of the identification. In the profit model there was a strong identification with the farmers as a class, while the identification in the information model concerned agriculture as a branch of economy at the same time as the orientation was more universalistic. It is true that agriculture ought to be rationalised and the profits increased, but in doing this schemes must not be made which would have an adverse effect on other social groups.

In the information model instruction and technical knowledge were the manipulable factors, while a number of other conditions were taken as given, for instance, terms of trade, and the burden of taxation. That is not to say that these conditions were unchangeable of course, they were changing all the time but it was not the political authority's task to change them in favour of the farmer.

In the profit model far more conditions were manipulable. The surplus was not entirely dependent upon the individual owner's technical knowledge or industriousness but on a number of external factors which could not be affected by a single individual, although they could be influenced if the farmers acted as a group.

The contention about the agricultural crisis had an important place in the agricultural policy formed from the middle of the 1880's. Sheltered by the

definition of disaster one could demand protection for the farmers' co-operatives. From the agronomists' point of view a feeling of disaster in the clientele lead to a breaking down of the old indifferent attitudes toward reform schemes and helped to advance a definition of the situation where a change of working methods appeared to be an indisputable necessity. But to do this the agronomists themselves had to accept the crisis as a fact and identify themselves with the clientele. In their lectures, the agronomists attacked "wholesalers, agents, landbuyers, scrap dealers and tradesmen", who often demanded a profit far greater than the producer himself and they urged farmers to start purchasing cooperatives. Later, when these associations had been effective for a while and taught the participants to stay united, the turn for marketing cooperatives would come.

The definition of the situation as disastrous had also the effect of breaking down traditional anti-State attitudes among the farmers. These attitudes had a solid super-structure of economic liberalism, but had their roots in the pre-industrialized society, where State power meant taxes and expenditures without bringing any advantages. With expanding public activity and transition to the political system of industrialism the State became an institution which the farmers also could, and had to, use to their own advantage. (Riggs, 1957, p. 39) A number of the farmers' representatives, however, held fast to the traditional attitudes of the days when the agricultural society had to protect itself against the State.

This again points to one of the functions of the many attacks on Director Smitt in the 1890's. The traditional anti-State attitude of many farmer representatives coincided on many points with the information model for which Smitt was spokesman. There was agreement on the conception of the State's limited responsibility, the reasons for the crisis and what means could be legitimately used. When the spokesmen of the profit model time and again pinned fast these older conceptions upon Smitt as a representative for bureaucracy and state power, it tended to bring discredit to the conceptions and at the same time hit the undecided without attacking them openly.

Spokesmen for the profit model in the *Storting* were primarily representatives for districts where marketing agriculture had broken through and where the farmer co-operatives had got started. Conversely, the town representatives and representatives from traditional agriculture joined forces around the older information model and created a support in the *Storting* for Director Smitt.

We shall now see how the modifications in the policies gradually lead to changes in the relationship between Director Smitt and the political authorities. From the latter half of the 1880's the initiative moved over to the *Storting*, Smitt became more strongly bound by the decisions of the *Storting*, his professional authority was weakened and the responsibility shifted from Director to the head of the Ministry.

Changes in the Distribution of Initiative

In 1889, the *Storting* established a standing committee for agriculture. When the committee was blamed because it was not generous enough with its grants

for agriculture the committee maintained that it would not suggest anything which was not proposed by the director of agriculture. It was not up to the committee to put forward projects and ideas.

But this was no longer a correct description of the relationship. The initiative, to a great extent, had been taken over by the *Storting,* and Smitt was forced into the role of the controller.

This new distribution of initiative was quite quickly institutionalized. A year after the first crisis debate an unofficial committee was established in the *Storting* which put forward its own proposals for relieving the crisis. Two years later, in 1889, the committee was established as one of the standing committees. From 1892 it was dominated by radical liberals who launched a sort of war against the director of agriculture. In 1895 the *Storting* appointed a parliamentary commission to deal with the question of vocational schools in agriculture, and a statute establishing a State College of Agriculture was prepared by the commission and approved by the *Storting* in 1897 without it even passing through the administration.

The contention that Smitt lacked initiative was steadily repeated by his opponents, who referred to the fact that he remained passive in a situation where, according to the profit model, action was required.

The new dairies had to be protected while they were still only in the initial stage of development. It would be a greater loss for the reform movement if some dairies had to be given up because their products were not sold than if one or two instructor positions were done away with. What the marketing cooperatives expected of Smitt was that he should concern himself primarily with the new co-operative movement, get acquainted with the conditions under which each individual enterprise worked and engage himself in solving its problems. Now there was crisis; now it was time for action. If Smitt was primarly interested in reform and technical rationalisation, he must understand that the new co-operatives were just as important as the public efforts concerning instruction, breeding and cattle shows.

What Smitt, for his part, meant was that direct help to the new co-operatives were no concern of the State. The dairies were subjects to the law of supply and demand, outside the sphere of public activity. It is not true that Smitt did not take initiatives. Actually, the distribution of initiatives between the agricultural administration and other bodies became more even, and he was expected to take the initiative in new domains but refused to do so. Thus he was characterised as lacking in initiative.

The Obligation to Political Authorities

When the distribution of initiative became more even, the question of Director Smitt's obligation to the political authorities became more problematic. Up to that time the *Storting*'s decisions only represented restrictions upon the policy Smitt himself pursued. With the *Storting* taking over the initiative, the question

as to whether Smitt followed the commands became far more important because the implementation indicated whether Smitt accepted the new policy or not.

But the requirements for cooperation reached far beyond an apparent formal loyalty. They anticipated that he would accept the definition of disaster, declare his solidarity with the farmers and act as their undisputed spokesman. But Smitt could not go that far. At stake were his fundamental attitudes to the tasks and his ideas concerning the office and the rules for procedure in public administration.

In the first place, there were administrative procedures which he believed to be correct *per se*. Administrative forms and the modernization of agriculture had nothing to do with each other. "Forms are necessary for an administration; if the correct form is abandoned the administration easily gets into disorder." The choice lay between certain procedures and administrative chaos, and this notion hindered him from taking the administrative consequences of the definition of disaster and forced him towards defining the situation as approximately normal, in accordance with the requirements of the information model.

The administrative procedures were specially suited to solve Smitt's own problem structure — they were adapted to the information model. When he defended the methods of procedure as being correct he also defended his notions of the problems deserving to be solved. When the opponents attacked his administrative practice as "bureaucratic" and "formalistic" and demanded a more "effective" administration, it contained a demand for solving new problems. To raise the question whether Smitt, from an observer's point of view, was bureaucratic and formalistic or whether he was able and effecient is to formulate a mock problem. What seems to be efficiency and good administration to those who accept and give priority to the problems appears to be "bureaucratic", "red tape", "lust for power", "lack of initiative", and "inefficient" to those who reject these problems. One cannot have a standpoint on the question of efficiency without taking a position on which problems the administration should solve.

Assertion of inefficiency put forward in situations where the problems are so mutually inconsistent as in our case are, however, of interest from another point of view. It is reasonable to suppose that the assertions act as important mechanisms aiming at the modification of the administration's notions of which problems are to be solved. When new problem situations are to be incorporated into the administration's field of attention there is one set of mechanisms working upon the content level. New lines of policy are drawn up which define new situations and present new problems. This is what happened when the profit model came about. Another set of mechanisms work on the process level. An organization may be induced to accept new problem situations by characterising its procedures as ineffective, expensive and "bureaucratic" in order to force the employees to abandon traditional and, from their point of view, wellfounded opinions and get them orientated in the direction of new expectations.

The notion of administrative efficiency can, therefore, be compared with a vessel which is being steadily filled with new contents and where the mechanism

which changes the contents is the continuous debate on what the vessel "actually" contains or ought to contain. Even though it can be shown that the vessel actually does not hold anything at all, the debate will nevertheless continue because it renders an important contribution to the administration's adjustment to the changes in the larger society.

Administrative procedures are not determined by the problems alone but are also formed in conjunction with characteristics of the political system and the political culture. Smitt wanted to stand free, and this became steadily more important for him as his policy got into danger. But his idea of political obligation was also influenced by his notion of his official position. This conception, just as the information model, was part of the old political system and the values which surrounded it.

The salient point was whether the office should be conceived as a forwarding centre for orders and wishes from others – then the criteria of efficiency was attentiveness, alacrity and flexibility, or whether the office should be conceived of as the proper place for policy making. In the later case the leader was bound to fight for the products having the right quality. (F. Morstein Marx, 1948, pp. 36 f)

Smitt had a strong sense of leadership. He tended to consider the development of the public efforts in agriculture as his own work – a result of his own efforts. According to him, he could not have managed to do this if he had felt himself duty-bound to the political authorities. "Had the Directorate been satisfied with the first refusal, it would have failed its duty."

In his own opinion his role was not that of a clerk or servant for others. His position as an expert forbade it, but it also contradicted his constitutional conception of his office. As a government official he was independent and had "a safe position and certain rights which could not – – – be touched by any power in the country."

According to the conditions for establishing the position and according to the way the instructions read, he was entitled to a great deal of independence, he maintained. The Department of the Interior had accepted this in the beginning. Afterwards the minister's conception of this relationship changed somewhat, and "in later days the Directorate's independence appeared to be more restricted". This again had lead to lack of efficient procedure. The proceedings had become more detailed and in many cases time consuming. This served as an argument against the establishment of a Department of Agriculture when the case was brought up. Smitt did not believe that a new department would serve any purpose. It would be much better if the professional experts were given more power and independence. The process of "politization", which took place in the 1890's, strengthened the hierarchial element in the administrative organization. Smitt tried to stop this process, he stressed the office's detachment as a right and a condition for progress, independence as a condition for efficiency. This idea of the connection between administrative independence and efficiency was the stable core of Smitt's conception of the office. He did not believe that the establishment of a department in itself would be advantageous for agriculture.

On the contary, one risked "agriculture's fate to become influenced by political currents to an even greater degree than now", that it would soon be pulled "in one direction, soon in another", and that the planned development would be stopped. If, on the other hand, the Directorate of Agriculture was given an independent position outside the new department, then the frequent changing of department heads would mean "less danger of stopping the continuity of the public efforts in agriculture".

The Diminishing Prestige of Experts

When Smitt's independence was reduced it was among other things caused by a weakening of his authority as an expert. An impairment of this kind is always liable to happen in a situation where there is a sharp change of values within the expert's own field. Smitt's problem structure was rejected: he did not identify himself strongly enough with the farmers, he did not accept the definition of disaster and had too narrow a view of the State's responsibility. In such a situation, his technical skill counted for comparatively little because it was only suited to solve problems which were of minor importance. Smitt's competence as an expert qualified him for the leadership as long as vocational training and extension was ranked high in agricultural policy. Subsequently, as the social and economic problems pressed forward and became the central questions, it became more difficult to legitimate the leadership with the help of technical knowledge. Economic and social problems were best suited to political solution.

But when his authority as an expert was impaired it was actually connected with broader changes in the political system and the political culture.

In the last quarter of the 1800's the Norwegian political system experienced profound changes in the relationship between the political roles. On several points the system became open to influence from without – the courts through the jury-institution, the government through the Ministers' duty to meet and assume responsibility in the *Storting*, the *Storting* by a broadened obligation between voters and representatives.

The broadening of this obligation can be considered as a link in a change-over from local representation to class representation. Representation was for a long time determined by local particularistic considerations, which expected that the representative would take care of the interest of the local community he represented; "the kingdom's weal or woe – not forgetting the districts". When the representative had used his influence in the limited number of cases which concerned the local community, he was relatively free to vote according to his own convictions.

This representation structure became strengthened by a Liberalist element in the political culture which expected that the representative would vote according to his own convictions and not be dependent on opinions among the voters. The norm also was applied to ban the organization of factions among the representatives.

The norm was upheld not only by the strong local particularistic element in the political culture but also by the restrictions on the extent of public activity. Political decisions did not have the same effect as in a modern industrial society and did not concern so many aspects of life. It was possible for the representative to follow the maxim that "the only sensible and right policy was to fight, even though defeat was quite certain" without those who were represented losing anything very much by it.

The structure of representation was also strengthened by a cultural norm that the best man should be voted in, and this likewise made good sense as long as the local community was united about sending the representative who was most qualified when it came to using his influence to the advantage of the local community, both in the *Storting* and through more informal negotiations with the central administration.

Eventually changes occurred in the structure of representation. The local particularistic elements became weakened to the advantage of a class particularism which widened the representative's obligation to the voters because there were far more issues which were of relevance from the point of view of the social classes than of the local communities. The class-element also laid the foundation for greater and more permanent groupings in the *Storting*. Thereby, the *Storting* became better suited to taking over the leadership and co-ordination which the government and administration had previously taken care of.

Class solidarity not only gave criteria of relevance to far more issues, but it also made the class-discriminating effects of any policy more visible. So was the case with the apparently technically motivated public efforts in agriculture. From the middle of the 1880's the differential treatment of the clientele became a theme in the *Storting*, and the new measures which were carried out were intended to take care of both the farmers in contrast to other social groups and of the lower strata of the farmer community, the hired workers who were on the point of being enfranchised. Class representation also affected the technical experts in the administration who tried to hold on to the principle that it was possible to carry on a correct policy if only it was handed over to society's best qualified men.

Conversion to Ministerial Responsibility

In the first year of his activity in the central administration, Smitt himself bore the responsibility for his decisions in the *Storting*.

This lasted until well in the 1890's. When Smitt was attacked by the activist group in the *Storting*, it was asserted that it was not right to attack a person who could not be present to defend himself. This was because the head of the Department of the Interior did not take the responsibility for Smitt's decisions but left it to him. This practice was strongly criticised in the *Storting* and after a few years lead to an alteration which resulted in the establishment of the Department of Agriculture in 1899. The Directorate of Agriculture was incorporated in the new department where it got a very weak position. The

leadership of the modernization efforts in agriculture was handed over to the head of the department. The farmers wanted a man "who could, with full constitutional responsibility appear as the leading power, a leader of all the State's activity in agricultural development – a man with insight and initiative, sympathetic to demands for all just claims, with an open mind for possibilities as well as difficulties in the field of agriculture and with the ability and will to lead the requirements and ideas of the depelopment forward to trial."

The decision to establish the department of agriculture followed as a consequence of the changes in Smitt's relationship to the political authorities described above. The initiative had, to a certain extent shifted to the *Storting,* Smitt was more strongly bound by political decisions, his authority as an expert had been weakened and the responsibility had gradually been passed on to the Minister.

Smitt's political support in the *Storting,* during the last years, was reduced to representatives for traditional agriculture for whom the old decentralised political system still had meaning. It was these representatives that in the end opposed the establishment of a department among other things, in order to protect the independent position of the Directorate of Agriculture.

SUMMARY

The results of the present investigation can be summed up under six points:

(1) The officials themselves, to a great extent, had to formulate the problems they were to solve.

The general train of thought has been that the goals the administration carries into effect are presented in such a way that the administration's task consists of solving problems which are already formulated. This description is not applicable to the administrative organization under investigation. Although very precise definitions could be set up of technically rationalised agriculture, the problems which the administration had to solve were not completely formulated. Rationalization could occur in several ways – there was room for a number of productivity models. The agronomists themselves took part in formulating the problems they were to solve. They could take the demands for the administration's decisions for granted, as Smitt did, or try to increase the demand by establishing voluntary associations and other modernizing mechanisms.

(2) The definition of the problems took place under the influence of the official's "private" aims and social identifications.

The appropriate procedures selected for the rationalization work altered according to the social values it was based upon, and the agronomists chose the productivity models which were in accordance with their general social attitudes. In the same way, the conflicts in which the agricultural administration was involved were caused not by disagreement over the technical efficiency of the measures but by the evaluation of the social consequences of the different methods.

(3) The roles of the employees were not given but the employees themselves to a greater or lesser extent took part in forming them.

The description of the administration's positions and roles as given is not applicable to the administrative organization we have examined. The officials' freedom of choice during the structuring of the role varied according to the clientele the agronomists decided to work with.

(4) The structuring of the roles took place in accordance with the official's "private" aims and social identifications.

It was Smitt's "private" aim to build up a bureaucratic organization recruited from officials with a strong professional orientation, and these roles functioned best when the organization served a high status clientele. Conversely, the officials working with lower status clientele developed roles with a strong element of agitation.

(5) The structuring of the roles took place in close connection with the structuring of the problems.

The roles Smitt evolved suited the problems which in his opinion ought to be solved. They appeared to be both the least expensive and most labor-saving because they were based upon a division of labor between clientele and employees. The clientele provided capital and motivation, the organization knowledge and modern production equipment. Everything points to Smitt being blind to the connections which can arise between rationalization and social discrimination. His considerations concerning efficiency were that most of the work which technical rationalization involved could be transferred to the clientele. If the organization was relieved of the task of motivating the clients, it could achieve more without increasing costs.

When in the last half of the 1880's this notion of economy was put into a wider social perspective it was easy to demonstrate that this sort of rationalization in fact involved a tremendous waste of public means. Smitt's methods were, without doubt, labor-saving from a narrow organizational point of view, but meaningless when seen in consideration of the need for an urgent modernization, which required great social support among the farmers if the new co-operative efforts were to survive. The motivating task, which Smitt had rationalized away, became the centre of the organizations' activity.

This shows not only how meaningless narrow efficiency considerations can be, but also how purposeless it can be to build up a wealth of knowledge about public administration without at the same time increasing our knowledge of the society in which the administration functions.

(6) The structuring of the organization's problems and roles took place in accordance with traits of the political system.

The agronomists' freedom in structuring their problems and roles varied not only from situation to situation but also over a period of time. Smitt's freedom of action became curtailed during the last half of the 1880's, and the reduction was connected with the new types of demands and support and with the administrative system's reactions to these alterations. While "in-puts" and the

system's inner processes at first pulled together, they were later in conflict. The low adaptability evoked external adjustment mechanisms which deprived the administrative system of initiative and responsibility, weakened its technical authority and widened its political obligation. An additional explanation – which, it is true, cannot be tried out without bringing in material of much larger proportions – is the assertion that the changes in the role-structure were also a link in a general re-arrangement of the relationship between the *Storting*, government and administration.

An alteration took place in the distribution of initiative, responsibility, obligation and authority in the relations between the director of agriculture and the political authorities. These changes can be described in relation to two ideal types of distribution patterns. We have mapped out one movement in the direction of a bureaucracy which has initiative, responsibility and authority and is strongly committed to the cause. Conversely, the other movement goes in the direction of an ideal type where the bureaucarcy is deprived of initiative and responsibility, where it is under strong obligation to political authority and its professional authority is weak.

These findings can be generalized by connecting them with the bureaucracy model sketched out by Eisenstadt. The core of this model is the tensions between the need for a relatively autonomous bureaucracy and the need for a bureaucracy which is under control of the environment wherein it functions. By giving the bureaucracy an area where it can work relatively independently one ensures that the officials have a strong goal orientation but, at the same time, one risks losing control over the values the bureaucracy implements. By putting the bureaucracy under strict control, one has greater chance of deciding which goals are implemented, but one also risks the bureaucracy becoming impotent and formalistic. (Eisenstadt, 1958, pp. 100–103; Bendix, 1949, p. 12).

The tensions between the needs for autonomy and independence have to do with the basic principle of bureaucratic organizations that the officials do not own the means of administration. Morroe Berger has shown how the needs are built-in in the bureaucratic organization: the organization is hierarchial, and at the same time every official has been given his own area where he rules with a varying degree of independence. (Berger, 1957, p. 49) We shall maintain that the tensions between these two needs are expressed in continually changing distributions of initiative, responsibility, obligation and professional authority.

An autonomous bureaucracy is rich in initiative, it takes the responsibility for its own decisions, it is committed to its cause and the decisions can be easily legitimated by the official's technical competence. A dependent bureaucracy takes less initiative, outwardly others carry the responsibility for its decisions, it is not committed to a cause and the professional legitimacy of its decisions is weak. Because both needs cannot be completely satisfied simultaneously, there will always be tensions between them. The distribution of the components is not very stable and will change over time. Consequently, there is a basic lack of stability in the role relationships between the administration and political

authority and the bureaucratic roles are being constantly redefined in one or the other direction in step with more far-reaching changes in the political system.

The increase of Smitt's dependence upon the political authorities occured during a period when the *Storting* increased its influence. We will call this a political contraction process, characterised by drawing together initiative, responsibility and obligation-potential in the *Storting.* A bureaucratic role developed which stressed the official's loyalty, his ability to conform according to the politician's changing aims, his abilities as "the good counsel".

These tendencies stand strongly opposed to a development which has occurred in Norway after the Second World War, and which in many ways had for its object the spreading of intiative, responsibility, professional authority and a weaker obligation to the political authorities outwardly and down through the administrative organization. A period where bureaucratic roles of this kind develop and where tendencies are also expressed in the formal organization, we will call a detraction process.

These movements which succeed each other in time, have bearing upon the officials' role-learning. Director Smitt was taught to take the initiative, to accept criticism, to be strictly responsible to his profession and to expect that great consideration would be given to his professional skill. When he was drawn into a contraction process it was difficult for him to follow. The opposite would be the case of the official who had his role-learning in a contraction period — he would not find it so easy to adapt himself to the role expectations met in a detraction process. On account of these upheavals in the official's role the picture of the ideal official in one period will resemble the distorted picture of an official in another period. The enterprising, responsibility conscious and cause-committed official would be an ideal in a detraction period but a frightening picture in a contraction period.

The theory of political contraction- and detraction processes has therefore certain consequences for the accumulation of verified knowledge of bureaucratic behaviour, for the building up of a systematic theory of bureaucracy. It does not dismiss the possibility of making general assertions concerning bureaucratic behaviour, but it stresses the need for cultural references for specification of time and place. In the words of Lasswell and Kaplan: "Empirical significance requires that the propositions of social science, rather than affirming unqualifiedly universal invariances, state relations between variables assuming different magnitudes in different social contexts. To omit this context is not to universalize the proposition, but rather to hide its particularized reference to the situations characteristic of our own culture." (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1958, p. XXI)

This says, among other things, that one cannot generalize about bureaucratic organizations from intra-bureaucratic data alone. Assertions that the bureaucracy will attract persons who wish to take responsibility or assertions to the opposite, that the bureaucracy will attract persons who wish to escape from responsibility, can both be confirmed and denied, because bureaucratic organization in a

contraction process will appeal to people who wish to avoid responsibility while the same administration in a detraction process will attract the responsibility conscious and enterprising. Neither can it be generally said that officials in a bureaucratic organization will strive after independence or "power". The opposite can be the case, all depending upon the pattern of distribution between administration and political authorities. The officials' independence will change with time, in step with social changes.

The greater part of common sense-notions concerning bureaucratic behaviour are contradictory and this is not remarkable, the prestige of popular wisdom rests entirely upon its probability to provide a proverb to suit every occasion. (Krech and Crutchfield, 1948, p. 41) Meanwhile, the same applies to many social science hypotheses and findings concerning bureaucratic behaviour; their area of validity has not been limited by data concerning the system-situations in which the administrative organizations have worked. The official's behaviour cannot be explained by studies of internal administrative processes alone. The official's position will be defined by the expectations of the clientele in the widest sense – the public, press, associations and political authorities, i.e. the society with which the official comes into contact. These expectations move with the alterations in society and in the political system.

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