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Reinventing Government and Bureaucracy in the Philippines: Old Themes and a New Image?

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The author reviews Osborne's and Gaebler's propositions to reinvent government, and using the propositions, proceeds to analyze the bureaucratic reform agenda of the Philippine government. There are remarkable parallelisms between the reform goals of the western and Philippine blueprints. But where the western propositions are quite specific in identifying problems and solutions, the Philippine program of bureaucratic reforms appears as a "crowded shopping list of aspirations." Reinventing the Philippine bureaucracy to meet the demands of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan for 1993-1998 requires, according to Reyes, fulfilling certain requisites related to: political will, the justice system, the implementation process, and reform priorities.

Introduction

Bureaucracy all over the world today has increasingly become troubled and troublesome. Over the years, scores of critical commentaries, both constructive and hostile, have been heaped on this beleaguered institution which, though not necessarily helpless, is regrettably recalcitrant. Its public image has taken a turn from bad to worse in recent years, and as attention to its reform ebbed and flowed, it remained firmly entrenched, almost inscrutable and uncompromising in its fanatical adherence to complicated, rule-bound and innovation-resisting culture.

The extreme devotion to sacred and cherished rules that dictate norms of conduct, most often obsolete, has increasingly alienated bureaucracies today, not only from their public, but from the realities of what has been described as a "rapidly changing, highly competitive, information-rich, knowledge-intensive society." As it is, bureaucracies appear to have sanctified, as Osborne contends, "the model of government inherited from the industrial age" which "achieved great things in its day," but, apparently "is no longer effective" in the present era (Osborne 1993: 20).

Certainly, the assaults on bureaucracy have now become fairly common, so much so that bureaucratic bashing has emerged as a remarkably dominant preoccupation both in the media and in the landscape of public administration literature. The concern towards reforming large, complicated, overcentralized and

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often oversized bureaucratic organizations has remained an enduring agenda in the dynamics of government in many countries today, both in industrialized societies and in the Third World. It has generated a veritably rich collection of prescriptions and remedies designed to overhaul and improve its performance.[1]

The latest fruit of this spirited movement that has recently sparked attention in the United States is a lively, highly readable, down-to-earth treatise called *Reinventing Government*. Written by two practitioners, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992), the book has gained much acceptance to the extent that it has been considered by United States President Clinton as his administration's blueprint towards reforming American bureaucracy. It offers the concept of an entrepreneurial, mission-driven, client-focused government as an alternative to the existing slow, centralized, rule-centered and expense-oriented model of administrative management that has characterized the operations of most public organizations. The approach is a promising one in the sense that it provides a more practical and comprehensive framework, addressing concatenated variables of governance philosophies and mission, organizational procedures, public sector attitudes and behavior, and government spending habits.

This paper suggests the need to reexamine past efforts to improve government performance and recommends a preliminary agenda by which a comprehensive and concerted reform campaign can be started and instituted according to the demands of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 1993-1998. This we shall aspire to do within the context of the "reinventing" proposition. Admittedly, this is an overwhelming and ambitious task for a single paper to cover, but we hope that we can use this as a take-off point to distill and consolidate other propositions. The paper will provide a brief examination of past efforts and will then evaluate the premise and the promise of Osborne's and Gaebler's reinventing alternative in the context of the Philippine situation and in the light of the emerging challenges imposed on our administrative system by the country's medium term development plan as circumscribed in the Ramos administration's banner movement now referred to as *Philippines 2000*.

This paper however must not be misconstrued as yet another attempt to introduce foreign models or concepts into the Philippine setting but must be appreciated instead as a way of broadening the range of our options and drawing lessons from the experiences of other countries. At those crucial moments when critical situations demand critical solutions, it becomes compelling for us to expand our inventory of approaches from where we can design one that is suitable to our ethos.[2]

Bureaucratic Anomalies: A Passing Review

Much has been said and written about the problems involving bureaucracies and their performance. The early wave of attacks on bureaucratic behavior and

performance gained prominence with sociological commentaries on administrative dysfunctions and bureaucratic culture in the United States. Talcott Parsons dissected Weber's bureaucratic model of capitalism and government and maintained it to be "a highly-developed, impersonal, rationalized mechanism for achieving objectives through routinized behavior that often seems far removed from its ultimate goal" (Parsons 1937; Martin 1989:250). Merton popularized "the sociological argument that bureaucracy contains dysfunctions expressed through a reward system that encourages conformity to precision and rules," but refused to punish "those who applied rules and precise definitions to the extreme" (Merton 1940; 1949; Martin 1989: 251).

Selznick, on the other hand, looked at the problems of bureaucratization and the delegation of authority which he claimed leads to bifurcation of interests within the administrative system (Selznick 1943; Martin 1989: 251). Other authors like Dimock reinforced Merton's position and called attention to problems of bureaucratization that bring about rigidities of rules and resistance to change (Dimock 1944; 1958). He proposed emphasis on leadership and managerial powers rather than control. Bendix attacked the rational, neutral model of bureaucracy which he contended to have caused the rise of the "iron rule of oligarchy," and which, as a result of diversity of beliefs and social backgrounds within the bureaucratic system, brought about an internally competitive and heterogeneous milieu that generated discontinuities (Bendix 1947). On the other hand, Parkinson addressed problems of bureaucratic size which identified the causes of the growth of bureaucratic organizations using empirical data culled from his studies of the British Navy. This evolved into what is to become the celebrated Parkinson's Law on the multiplication of work and of subordinates (Parkinson 1957).

The next wave came again in the sixties spanning to the present with a continuation of elaborate discourses on bureaucratic culture such as those advanced by Thompson who called attention to the problematic of what he calls as "bureaupathology," a term he employed to describe the pathologies of administrative processes (Thompson 1961; 1965). During this period, however, the studies on behavior and culture have been expanded to include other concerns. Others identified underlying conflicts and tensions of bureaucratic principles in relation to democratic philosophies (La Palombara 1963; Downs 1967; Albrow 1970; Etzioni-Halevy 1983; Goodsell 1989). Others embarked on procedural (Gawthrop 1969; Crozier 1964; Hood 1974; 1976), structural (Tullock 1965; Mouzelis 1968) and accountability or ethical questions (Gawthrop 1969; Burke 1968; Nigro and Richardson 1990; Berkman 1992; Bergerson 1992).[3] The problem of bureaucratic inefficiency and incompetence has become acute, so much so that the distinguished scholar Herbert Kaufman who provided us with systematic studies on red tape (Kaufman 1977) referred to it as a "raging pandemic," where "anti-bureaucratic sentiment has taken hold like an epidemic" (Kaufman 1981: 1).

The concern among industrialized countries, such as the United States, on the performance of their respective bureaucracies has been matched by an equally forceful attention among countries in the Third World. Still, it could be argued that scholars and analysts from industrialized countries provoked the trend with the introduction of the concept of development administration which emerged as early as the 1950s (Gant 1979:3, 15) and gained acceptance with the establishment in 1960 of the comparative administration group (CAG) of the American Society for Public Administration with financial support from the Ford Foundation (Riggs 1970:vii; 4-5). Gant argued that development administration represented those aspects of public administration involving changes needed to carry out policies, projects and programs to improve social and economic conditions among newly independent nations. It was a concept of administration geared towards managing policies, programs and projects that serve development goals (Gant 1979:20). In essence, development administration as an advocacy aspired to provide developing nations a model by which newly independent nations and their governments can cope with the demands of development.

The model, however, quickly moved into studies of failures, problems and aberrations. Riggs, who spearheaded the CAG and the development administration gospel, soon found out that much of the problems lie not only in the leadership of governments but in their respective bureaucracies. Analyzing this phenomenon a decade later, he pointed out:

> ...Indeed, looking at most of the countries in the third world, the most important source of imbalance, and hence of maladministration and of the failure to develop, lies not in the excessive weaknesses of bureaucracies but in their excessive power... (Riggs 1977:115).

In time, commentaries on the abuse of power of bureaucracies in the Third World became widespread, bringing in its wake scattered observations on problems of inefficiency, incompetence, graft and corruption and a host of other scathing criticisms. Soon, the reform agenda became a consuming preoccupation so as to send out an outpouring of various perspectives in the newly independent nations. In the Asia-Pacific region, the agenda of administrative reform eventually provoked a continuing collection of discourses during the past three decades, and which, by and large, articulated various propositions and prescriptions towards reforms in local government, personnel administration, accountability and the problems of graft and corruption, and bureaucratic performance. (Lee and Samonte 1970; Ro and Reforma 1985; Cariño 1986; de Guzman et al., 1989; Pradhan and Reforma 1991; and Zhijian et al., 1992).[4] Abueva, for example, considered administrative reform in the light of the problematic administrative culture and the myriad aspects of the environment of government and public administration (Abueva 1970) while Lee looked at budgetary reforms in Korea (Lee 1970).

Administrative decentralization in various countries in Asia also became a prominent feature of this reform effort as can be drawn, for instance, in studies of

the issue in countries like Thailand, Japan, Sri Lanka, Korea and Indonesia.[5] The problems of accountability and of graft and corruption which was euphemistically referred to as deviant or negative bureaucratic behavior also provoked a bulky compilation of materials that served to highlight the concern for bureaucratic misbehavior. Discussions on the phenomenon of graft and corruption identified the approaches launched by governments in Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore to contain the problem.[6]

Bureaucratic Reform in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the bureaucratic reform agenda assumed various dimensions as it competed with another equally prominent and central concern, that of the reform of the political system and of democratic institutions that were severely weakened and emasculated during the martial law era. The administrative reform efforts that began with such initiatives as the Bell Mission in the post-World War II era generated a rich assortment of approaches that sought to restructure administrative organizations, redefine its processes and improve administrative behavior. On the whole, the early stages of the reform movement in the Philippines in the immediate post-war era alternated with critical commentaries on the aberrations of the political system which brought politicians to task, particularly as they interfere in the discharge of administrative functions.[7] Political corruption became a staple issue during elections, in the media, and in the rhetoric of political debates that dominated the post-independent period. But while politicians served as the whipping boy of a disenchanted public on the performance of government, the problems and weaknesses of the bureaucracy slowly began to attract serious attention starting, at least, in both the profession and the academic community with periodic calls for reorganization, to the extent that almost every elected president in the country included it in their programs of government (Abueva 1969a: 6-7; 1969b). This was further reinforced by a series of studies and propositions on administrative decisionmaking (de Guzman 1963), procedures (Climaco 1963), deconcentration (de Guzman and Associates 1969), decentralization and national-local government partnership and the strengthening of local level units in the delivery of basic services (de Guzman and Tapales 1971; de Guzman and Pacho 1975), among others. In government, various anti-graft and efficiency committees have been created, and yet the problems of corrupt practices and poor performance of the bureaucracy today continue to haunt our sensibilities.

With the declaration of martial law, the attention took a sharp turn towards the excesses not only of the martial law regime but of the bureaucracy that served it. At a time when direct criticism against the Marcos regime was suppressed and dissipated as a result of systematic government reprisals, attention increasingly shifted to the excesses of the bureaucracy. Marcos perhaps allowed this and even instigated it with a series of purges that started in 1975 to divert attention from

himself and his elite circle, although it was apparent that the criticisms were indirectly focused towards his martial law rule. Strategies such as the establishment of an ombudsman, the *Tanodbayan* and a special graft court, the *Sandiganbayan*, were instituted and served to highlight the predicament of a bureaucracy that was both helpless and helpful in supporting the authoritarian regime.

The rumblings of this trend towards evaluating bureaucratic problems persisted with such penetrating commentaries as the problem of self-discipline in the civil service (de Guzman, Cariño and Carbonell, 1973), and which soon generated a series of scholarly studies on bureaucratic norms and corruption. Cariño identified and dissected these norms and related them to corruption and its effects, cleverly citing cases in a government agency to provide empirical evidence on the process (Cariño 1975). In a paper on boundary encounters and corruptive behavior, Cariño made use of the sociological studies advanced by Merton and Selznick, among others, as conceptual frameworks to analyze the exercise of bureaucratic power and how they lead to corrupt practices (Cariño 1977). Succeeding efforts continued to analyze the dilemma of graft and corruption in the Philippines, scanning definitional issues, norms and strategies employed to contain it (Cariño 1979; Alfiler 1979) as well as underlying causes in terms of history and colonial experience (Endriga 1979), nature and extent (Bautista 1982), and specific case studies on processes, mechanics and dynamics (Briones 1979; de Guzman, Viñeza and de Leon 1969; Bautista 1979).

As the agenda of administrative reform waxed and waned, scores of studies accumulated and strategies multiplied, the most recent ones being the enactment of a Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for public officials and employees under Republic Act 6713, and a strategy to contain the size of the bureaucracy under an attrition law, as well as that of the *Panibagong Sigla 2000* program. Recently, the administration of President Fidel Ramos has even constituted a Presidential Commission on Graft and Corruption as if to reinforce the efforts of the Ombudsman.

Certainly, these have underscored the urgency of the problem with salutary and well-meaning measures even if they have sometimes brought about dysfunctional results or frustrations in the implementation process. The initiatives have offered assessments and alternative propositions articulated by both academics and practitioners, which for the most part, addressed slices and snippets of the bureaucratic phenomena in their multifarious, but compartmentalized directions.

Administrative reform has thus become a permanent and dominant agenda in the Philippines characterized by a bewildering array of initiatives and movements to the extent that it has practically become a growing and thriving industry. The list of problems remains to be long and accumulated, from the

dilemmas of graft and corruption, red tape, incompetence and inefficiency to issues of size and centralization. The remedies to contain these are also equally long and are captured in their institutional, structural, procedural and behavioral dimensions. Unfortunately, these approaches appear to be fragmented and lacking in focus as attention waxed and waned from one problem to another. Macro-systematic analysis of the problem seems to be wanting as initiatives keep on oscillating from issue to issue, creating discontinuities and sometimes dissonance in the process. As suggested earlier, there appears to be no comprehensive and detailed framework by which administrative problems are prioritized and analyzed and with which reform can be put in place systematically and consistently.

Reinventing Government and the Philippine Situation

Osborne's and Gaebler's proposition of "reinventing government" offers both a redefinition of the philosophy of government and an incisive analysis of the bureaucratic dilemma in the United States and which might well be the predicament of the Philippine administrative system. It submits prescriptions that aspire to provide substance to a new philosophy which it identifies as that of establishing an "entrepreneurial government."

While Osborne and Gaebler employ the term "government" here in its generic sense, it is apparent that their attention is directed, much as Woodrow Wilson (1887) was over a century ago,[8] not to the legislative and judicial branches of the American government, but towards the executive machinery, and by extension, to that of the bureaucracy.[9]

It is in this light that when we speak today of the theme of "reinventing government," the issue waters down eventually to "reinventing bureaucracy," or for that matter, that of "reinventing public administration." Perhaps, "reinventing" may be viewed here as an unconventional term for a conventional issue which has certainly delighted us with a growing and sometimes, glowing ensemble of labels such as "reform," "reorganization," "restructuring," or even "organization development." These approaches have had their respective moments of passing epiphanies and which today are recycled into the stronger, more colorful and forceful label of "reinventing," as if to highlight the urgency with which bureaucracies today must be rehabilitated and redeemed from the morass of its predicament.

To begin with, most of the critique of government procedures submitted by Osborne and Gaebler appear to be recycled versions of what had been said before. It is understandable that most of their observations have been captured in previous studies, for the problems cited are enduring and familiar, and appear to be common or universal among bureaucracies of various nationalities and cut

across cultural lines. They attack inflexible, hierarchical, centralized bureaucracies designed in the pre-war era which they point out as not having adapted to the demands and realities of the 1990s. They contend that bureaucracies today can be likened to "luxury ocean liners" in an age of supersonic jets which are "big, cumbersome, expensive and extremely difficult to turn around" (Osborne and Gaebler 1990:12). It is however their detailed and comprehensive point by point discussion of the issues that set them apart from previous critiques.

In offering their alternative, Osborne and Gaebler opted to collect experiences of agencies and local units in the American Federal, State and Local governments that have adopted innovative strategies in public management. Unlike previous efforts that emphasize bureaucratic failures, Osborne and Gaebler attempt to explain why bureaucracy behaves the way it does and moves on to say that something can be done about it if there is willingness and commitment among officials and employees. Success stories are depicted to highlight the advantage of rethinking the rules, the procedures, and understandably, the attitudes and behaviors of government officials and employees. It is in this respect that the authors argue that it can be done and can be pursued given some measure of determination and innovation. The discussion is thus replete with examples by which Philippine bureaucracy can readily identify with.

To be sure, the complexities of administrative rules have created dysfunctions to the extent that outcomes and results have been ignored. Thus, they argue for example that "in making it difficult to steal the public's money, we made it virtually impossible to manage the public money... In attempting to control virtually everything, we become so obsessed with dictating how things should be done - regulating the process, controlling the inputs - that we ignored the outcomes, the results." The product was thus a government with a distinct ethos: slow, inefficient, personal... (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:14). The incentives are low, the tasks are complex, authority is highly centralized, the room for innovation is limited, the methods are outdated and the response to problems besieging society are standardized or what is candidly referred to as "one size fits all" (i.e. free size) remedies.

It is this trap which the authors would now like bureaucracies to avoid and steer away from. The problems cited are distinctly recognizable based on our experience. For instance, the issue of the "clawback" problem in budget management which I have identified in another paper a decade ago is reiterated as one of the causes of the tendency to spend rather than save because of rules that enhance spending (Reyes 1982:276-277). This is a problem that holds even in the Philippines today where normal government budget procedures "encourage managers to waste money." Thus, they argue:

> .... If they (the government agencies) don't spend their entire budget by the end of the fiscal year, three things happen: they lose the money they have saved; they get less next year; and the budget director scolds them for requesting too much last year. Hence the time-honored government rush to spend all funds by the end of the fiscal year... (1990:3).

The Reinventing Gospel and Its Philosophies

What are the features of this emerging model of public management then? What are the characteristics of this paradigm which now seem to capture the imagination not only of the American public, but of its officialdom? The threads of the philosophy appear to be a handy compendium or elaboration of past propositions which have either been ignored or have failed to attract adherents because they were couched in complex explanations and intimidating language. Osborne and Gaebler, consciously or unconsciously, pick up liberally from the rubric of previous ideas and develop these with operational examples and cases. Some of the propositions that are reintroduced in Osborne and Gaebler's reinventing gospel are aspects of the privatization model, the public choice alternative of Ostrom and Ostrom (1971), private sector contracting, participative management, decentralization, the advocacies for equity and responsiveness of the "new" Public Administration movement of the 1960s (Marini 1971) and even a revised version of Wilson's politics-administration dichotomy proposition (Wilson 1887), which is now resurrected into the steering/rowing model of service delivery systems.

The reinventing philosophy and its vision of an entrepreneurial government can be summed up into several basic propositions which are essentially interconnected and which aspire to modify the traditional ethos of bureaucratic routinization, overconformity, ritualism, resistance to change, and centralization that have generally characterized government operations and procedures. Like most commentaries on the subject, it is both ambitious, compelling, and convincing.

The first of these ideals seeks to crystallize the notion of a catalytic government which is founded on spreading out the delivery of services to other sectors. Traditionally, the concept of delivery of basic services that has prevailed among governments is the practice to concentrate it among public organizations. In recent years, this has been challenged with calls for privatization or the use of non-government organizations. Osborne and Gaebler reinforce this by saying that the antiquated method of service production by bureaucracy alone has become obsolete in the face of the increasing complexity of most societies. In this respect, these authors propose that government should dichotomize the functions of making policy decisions on the provisions of services, or what it calls "steering" as against actual service delivery, or "rowing" (1992:35). The idea suggested here is the increased use of non-government institutions to provide services, specially

those areas which require specialized skills where civil servants may not be exactly trained. The authors view privatization as one approach while another is the strengthening of what they call a "third sector," or those "organizations that are privately owned and controlled, but ... exist to meet public or social needs (and) not to accumulate private wealth" (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:44). Examples of this type of organizations are the Red Cross or the American Blue Cross/Blue Shield which are hardly voluntary but employ thousands of professionals. It appears that the idea here is to expand contracting non-government professional organizations, render competition which can assume, with the private sector, the rowing function or the direct delivery of services on a more professional basis.

A second principle which appears to be now dominating the rhetoric of governance in the Philippines is the empowerment of communities towards deciding and participating in service-delivery programs. The idea is to transform service-delivery programs as community responsibilities rather than the responsibility of government or of professionals alone. Osborne and Gaebler argue that the approach being practiced now merely encourages dependency which treat people as passive recipients in the effort. Ironically, Osborne and Gaebler use public safety as an example where they suggest the formation of community organizations as allies in the police effort. Apparently, this model seems to have been adopted by the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission in the Philippines which has gone to organizing community-based crime watch organizations and networks to help check the declining peace and order situation and bring the crime-fighting campaign from the arena of law-enforcement alone to that of the community level.

A third component of Osborne and Gaebler model is what they call the institutionalization of a competitive government in the delivery of services, much like the private sector which compete with one another in the marketing of their products. For Osborne and Gaebler, competition breeds some form of accountability. If government promotes competition among private sector entities contracted to perform public services and even among public organizations themselves, it is envisioned that the quality of service can be improved.

Another aspect of Osborne's and Gaebler's model is transforming a rule-driven government into being mission-driven. The idea here is to force bureaucracies towards creating a culture focused on the realization of its mission, not on its rule. Certainly, the issue has been raised before in the discussions of Merton or Thompson, but Osborne and Gaebler suggest that to do this, we must evolve a bureaucracy oriented towards customers, not simply clients or consumers of services, and also towards outcomes and results. In this argument, the authors point out that unlike private organizations, which determine their products on the basis of the demands of the markets to please their customers, public agencies respond with programs that aim to please the executive and the legislature because "that's where they get their funding" (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:167). It

is in this respect that they note that "while businesses strive to please customers, government agencies strive to please pressure groups," the lobby and interest participants in the political process which in turn drive elected officials. Thus, they point out succinctly:

> The real customers of the Department of Transportation have not been drivers and mass transit drivers but highway builders and public transit systems. The real customers of the Department of Housing and Urban Development have not been poor urban dwellers, but real estate developers... (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:167).

Osborne and Gaebler aspire to transform this culture through the empowerment of communities by mobilizing client groups which can counter vested interest groups and force government into listening more to public demands. Here, they submit a whole range of options in bringing this about which are based on monitoring consumer preferences and the institutionalization of specialized measures to bring into focus the demands of the public from surveys to customer councils and the formation of inspectors or watchdogs that will monitor public services (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:177-179).

A final proposition that needs to be cited here is the critique of the expense-oriented government where public bureaucracies tend to be preoccupied more with spending rather than generating income because the system and its culture compel them to behave as such. Osborne and Gaebler suggest a liberalization of budgetary policies to allow income generated from operations to be ploughed back to the agency which occasioned them. This, they hope, will serve as incentives to encourage more meaningful programs without having to request for new appropriations and to instill consciousness towards making money instead of spending it. Perhaps, it is this concept that provides the foundations for the transformation of bureaucracies as we know them today to become "enterprise bureaucracies."

Concededly, the entire range of the propositions offered in the reinventing philosophy of Osborne and Gaebler have not been captured in this brief and superficial review. We may have to review the entire expanse of its prescriptions and case studies to appreciate its over-all perspective in the context of our own situation. But the more immediate response for us now is not simply to appreciate these propositions but find commonalities, adapt these to our situation and build a blueprint of our own that will serve to challenge the distinct culture of our public organizations and provide it some direction as we move on towards preparing for the challenges and demands of our Philippines 2000 agenda.

Philippine Bureaucracy and the Agenda of Philippines 2000

Philippines 2000 as a vision of development under the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) incorporates a wide and encompassing

package of macro-economic and sectoral policies and strategies. This is anchored on five major priorities and thrusts, namely, the transformation of the economy into a productive and vigorous one equipped with sufficient development financing, the stimulation of agro-industrial development, the development of human resources, infrastructure development, and the strengthening of the administrative system anchored on the development administration model. Within this framework is the overriding goal of an improved quality of life for every Filipino based on the principle of people empowerment and a concerted attack on poverty. Its macro-economic targets, at least for 1998, are well-defined: a per capita income of at least US$ 1,000; a GNP growth rate of at least 10 percent; and a reduction of the incidence of poverty to 30 percent (Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 1993-1998).

It is encouraging to note that one of the major priorities in the Philippines 2000 blueprint is that of bureaucratic reform under the banner of development administration. The goals and objectives are spelled out as follows: (a) invigorate the public service towards greater productivity and more responsive service delivery and influence the public to adopt socially desirable values; (b) encourage a more active and responsive private sector and citizenry; (c) improve collaborative processes and mechanisms for consensus-building and effective decisionmaking in government; and (d) establish a peaceful, stable, and just environment conducive to national growth and development.

The strategies include the reduction of the size of the bureaucracy; the facilitation of consensus in decisionmaking; the strengthening of government capabilities to implement policies and programs through local government units and volunteer organizations; the implementation of agency management improvement reforms; and the improvement of peace and order, law enforcement, and justice administration.

If we are to analyze the goals and objectives advocated by Philippines 2000 towards improving the performance of government and bureaucracy for that matter, one can see remarkable parallelisms with Osborne's and Gaebler's reinventing propositions. This is especially pronounced in the advocacies of empowerment for communities as well as the development of participative government decisionmaking and consensus-building, the professionalization of the civil service, the containment of size and expenditures as well as the use of private and "third" sector organizations in service-delivery efforts. What is not explicit, however, in the Philippine agenda is the inculcation of the spirit of an enterprise bureaucracy based on market-oriented philosophies of competitiveness in service delivery efforts and on the aspiration of a radical modification of the fiscal and budgetary systems which would encourage income generation, resource build-up and containment of expense patterns especially among regular agencies that do not have a corporate character. These however may be implicit in the broad goals of streamlining government procedures.

There is no reason to pick fault with the broad outlines and conceptual propositions of the administrative reform strategies underscored in the MTPDP. They readily address for the most part much of the problems that have been identified in the past and which have been reviewed in this paper. The weakness of the Plan insofar as bureaucratic reform is concerned, however, lies in its tendency to enumerate broad policy statements simultaneously, without specifics and which renders the program of bureaucratic reform as a crowded "shopping list" of aspirations. The targets and priorities are not precise and the measures flow into different directions as if all these could be done or attacked at the same time. Unlike the reinventing propositions of Osborne and Gaebler which strive to detail government failures and weaknesses and how they are to be addressed using empirical examples based on experiences of agencies that have tried them, the Plan provides sweeping, one size fits all remedies that are not operationalized and therefore may not approximate the realities of the bureaucratic milieu.

Past reform efforts appear to have failed because of four outstanding reasons: the lack of sufficient and uncompromising political will to implement hard, bold and innovative decisions involving the reform of the bureaucracy; the problem of a complex web of rules in the administration of justice which makes it difficult to swiftly remove, prosecute and punish erring officials and employees, particularly those involved in graft and corrupt practices; the absence of well-defined standards and monitoring system which will undertake on the job or in the field surveillance of bureaucratic activities and performance and which can also be acted upon swiftly; and the lack of focus in the direction and target of reform efforts, which tend to address problems simultaneously in their compartmentalized dimensions, resulting in initiatives which are spread out too thinly.

As it is, reforming bureaucracy in the Philippines today in the context of Philippines 2000 calls for a more expanded plan itself in the order of Osborne's and Gaebler's reinventing philosophy where priorities and specifics are identified, where problems are analyzed, and where a comprehensive philosophy is adopted. If we are to "reinvent" bureaucracy in the Philippines today within the framework of the strategies outlined in Philippines 2000, certain requisites may have to be fulfilled.

The first, and certainly the most compelling of these is political will, decisiveness and the commitment of the leadership towards sweeping and all-encompassing reform especially in implementing difficult decisions. This perhaps is a cardinal philosophy which need not be belabored here lengthily. Without this, all our plans will be frustrated as in the past. The will to change must be reinforced with the willingness to innovate and to modify sacred but antiquated rules that often serve as obstacles to efficient and responsive performance by bureaucrats. If the leadership can succeed to demonstrate that mission, results and the welfare of the public are more important than rules, and that there are

rewards in innovation, then the bureaucratic ethos of overconformity and ritualization may be supplanted by one of creativity and commitment to performance.

Secondly, there is need to reexamine the existing machinery of justice which has been recognized as part of the problem as to why graft and corruption and other anomalies continue to persist in spite of the adoption of so many measures and the formation of several anti-graft bodies. There is a need to assure the certainty of punishment, of the prosecution and conviction of erring officials and employees, which must be done swiftly, objectively and firmly.

A third precondition which is related to the above is to "reinvent" our reward and punishment patterns in the bureaucratic setting. Bureaucracy in the Philippines today as in the past is generally punishment-centered; those who do not comply with the rules are threatened with sanctions, even if these very same rules inhibit performance. Those who do not perform can be rewarded if they follow the rules. Salaries, benefits, allowances and other incentives are given or increased uniformly and indiscriminately for both the performing and the non-performing. The traffic policeman who catches many traffic violators is rewarded side by side with another who does not have any accomplishment to show. The clerk who processes more papers is rewarded along with another who hoards papers in his desk.

This problem perhaps stems from the fact that we sometimes cannot discriminate anymore between the achiever and the non-achiever because the standards of performance are often blurred, either because of the lack of indicators or the absence of monitoring systems which will analyze these standards to determine performance and non-performance. In this sense, it may be fitting for us to return to practices suggested by the time and motion methods of Taylorism or to rely on community perceptions or feedback on the performance of bureaucrats. It is perhaps in this respect that we can begin to steer our administrative systems towards becoming what Osborne and Gaebler advocate as an "entrepreneurial government" or, for that matter, as "enterprise bureaucracies" which adapt to the demands of the community and at the same time conscious of the use of resources much like the market-oriented private sector organizations.

A fourth concern is attention to the details of the implementation process. In the past, there has been a constant preoccupation with the design of elaborate policies, rules, and conceptual guidelines which have not been sufficiently matched with a devotion to studying the complexities of the implementation phenomena. Woodrow Wilson's admonition that "it is getting harder to run a constitution than to frame one" must remind us constantly of the roots of public administration, the attention towards the "detailed and systematic execution and implementation of public policy.". It is in this sense that we must focus equal attention to implementation mechanics for it is in this arena where bureaucracy is judged.

Finally, the reform effort must prioritize its activities with a concrete master plan not unlike that of Osborne's and Gaebler's. This must be crystallized with a consistent philosophy towards changing the bureaucratic milieu, of a systematic and comprehensive planning and an operational blueprint by which the program of reform can be carried out and institutionalized. Most of the past efforts have been on the whole reactive and fragmented, shifting sporadically from one problem to another, depending on the wave of public opinion or the prevailing mood of government's priorities and demands. Thus, these efforts moved freely from controversies involving graft and corruption to problems of red tape, inefficiency, bureaucratic size and deployment, and attitudes. As such, much of these reform efforts that had been launched in the past tend to be incremental and passing, largely suffering from discontinuities caused by the inability to prioritize and push our initiatives systematically or to integrate efforts. In this sense, this paper suggests the need to identify those activities that must be addressed immediately and how they are to be coordinated in a systematic fashion. It would do well for us to consider and listen to the inputs that come from the bureaucracy itself, from the practitioners for they will be the most informed on how change can and must proceed based on an over-all philosophy derived from the emerging environmental ethos. Graft and corruption will have to be part of this priority as well as the decentralization of authority, not only to local government units, but also among public organizations at the national level that continue to provide basic services.

Concluding Notes

Much more can be added to these random notes toward overhauling bureaucracy in the Philippines in the light of the realities and challenges of Philippines 2000. Some of the themes are not altogether new but they represent bold initiatives to give the bureaucracy and the administrative system a new image in the face of the challenges of Philippines 2000. Competitiveness and the concept of the entrepreneurial bureaucracy will however serve as new dimensions to this emerging new image, if we can overcome old traditions. This is especially urgent because Philippines 2000 advocates competitiveness of the country in the world market and gives much attention to the importance of engendering the flexibility found in non-government and private sector operations. As in the United States and other countries, both industrialized and industrializing, administrative reform occupies a prominent and almost pivotal place in the Philippines and its development aspirations. There appears to be a general consensus in the urgency of this agenda and this must be advantageously utilized today to seize the initiative towards "reinventing" our administrative system.

Certainly, the first challenge for us in Philippines 2000 is to consider this agenda as not simply the Ramos agenda of transformation, but a Filipino agenda towards moving our society into stability, economic prosperity, sustainable

development and international competitiveness. Our bureaucracy may have to treat this as its very own agenda of reform and consolidation in an era of enterprise.

Endnotes

[1]Some of the strategies that have figured prominently in the reform movements of the past are discussed in Reyes 1993.

[2]It is encouraging to note that Woodrow Wilson himself, who provided what is considered as the seminal work on the study of Public Administration in the United States, confronted this same criticism in his crusade for reforms in American administrative practices. As Doig, 1984 accounts, Wilson confronted the issue "of whether we can borrow the administrative practices developed in Europe 'without fear of getting any of their diseases in our veins.' " Doig points out that Wilson responded to these with his "murderous fellow" analogy, a good one at that, and which I quote here:

> If I see a murderous fellow sharpening a knife cleverly, I can borrow his way of sharpening the knife without borrowing his probable intention to commit murder with it; and so, if I see a monarchist dyed in the wool managing a public business well, I can learn his business methods without changing one of my republican spots... (Wilson 1887:220, as cited in Doig 1984:177).

[3]The literature on the subject is vast and enormous. Certainly, this listing is incomplete and is made here merely to cite representative works done in these areas in the contemporary period. The reader may consider other materials by referring to the annotated bibliographic compilations made by Martin 1989 and also by McCurdy 1986. In the Philippines, a similar annotation was made in 1980. See U.P. CPA (1980). Cariño 1992 also offers a good bibliographic listing of literature from other societies on the issue of democracy and bureaucracy.

[4]Most of these materials are collections of papers and discourses on the subject of administrative reform reflecting country experiences in Asia and neighboring countries. The papers in these compilations had been presented at the periodic conferences of the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA).

[5]See, for instance, the collection of papers written by various authors in Ro and Reforma, eds., 1985.

[6]The literature on the subject of accountability and on graft and corruption are too many to mention here. See for instance the collection of papers in Cariño 1986 on bureaucratic corruption in these countries. On the issue of accountability, the reader may also refer to the compilation of articles such as those in de Guzman, Reforma and Reyes, eds., 1989.

[7]See, for instance, Francisco and de Guzman, 1960 which highlighted the interference of Congress in appointments in the civil service or the series on the pork barrel system in Vidallon 1965; Vidallon 1966 and Vidallon and Cariño 1965.

[8]This parallelism is noted because Wilson's celebrated essay came at a time of government reform in the United States, particularly in the bureaucracy, as spawned by the enactment of the Pendleton Act of 1883 providing for a civil service system based on merit and fitness. This seminal work established the politics-administration dichotomy tradition in Public Administration and served as the defining basis for the emergence of the discipline as a separate and distinct field of study from that of Political Science. See Wilson 1887.

[9]Generally, a distinction is made between the "executive" and the "bureaucracy" as institutions of government, in both the presidential and parliamentary systems. The executive is equivalent to the "political leadership" which, as Cariño explains, "is in turn used synonymously with the 'government of the day' (or simply, "government" or "governors"). In presidential systems, it refers collectively to the President or the Chief Executive and his or her ranking assistants (department secretaries or ministers). In parliamentary systems, it refers to the Prime Minister and his/her Cabinet." On the other hand, "bureaucracy," "civil service" and "administration" are used interchangeably to refer to the civilian apparatus of each country. See Cariño 1992:18n.

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