Recent Publications and Documents

GOVERNMENTS UNDER STRESS: POLITICAL EXECUTIVES AND KEY BUREAUCRATS IN WASHINGTON, LONDON AND OTTAWA, Colin Campbell, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983, 388p.

Colin Campbell suggests that this book, which treats a number of issues concerning the relationship between central agencies and executive leadership in the United States, the United Kingdon and Canada, may appeal to the latent chief executive in many of its readers by asking, "If you were president or prime minister, how would you try to get it 'right' from the start"?

In seeking an answer to this question, Dr. Campbell developed a useful framework of analysis to study executive government in three political systems which have common roots as well as significant differences: two are parliamentary and one congressional, two are federal and one is unitary. In each of the systems, there was at least one change of government during the period of study, so that comparisons can be made not only among the three countries but also between successive governments in each.

The arm-chair executive may be awed at the influences or constraints that face a newly elected president or prime minister in a complex industrialized society. Colin Campbell, in analyzing the interaction of these influences, leadership styles and the organization and operation of central agencies, has made a major contribution to our understanding of how a new incumbent must cut his or her cloth to fit the circumstances. Among the influences he cites are those that may persist far into the future (the bipolar nature of global politics); those which may sustain themselves at least through more than one mandate (stagflation); those that occur during a mandate and relate principally to the legislative and electoral calendars; the partisan situation of the incumbent; institutional resources at the disposal of the incumbent; and the personality of the incumbent.

Campbell has chosen to focus on how these constraints or "influences" affect the way a president or prime minister pursues a particular style of leadership which, in addition to the setting the tone of the government, may bring about changes in the resources, organization and operation of central agencies designed to achieve his or her goals. He suggests that there are four leadership styles: broker politics, where key policy decisions are made in the periphery through negotiations between units with competing expertise and authority, which are tracked and managed by central agencies; administrative politics, where single departments and agencies gain near hegemony over segments of policy management; planning-and-priorities, where units are challenged to propose cross-cutting policy alternatives which central agencies are expected to bring together in a comprehensive strategy; and politics of survival where, under severe political stress, many matters previously decided at the periphery, are brought to the centre for decision.

Interviews with 265 career and politically-appointed senior officials in central agencies in Washington, London and Ottawa provided the basis for analyzing the interaction of influences, executive leadership and central agencies. This approach has its limitations. The degree to which officials are at liberty to discuss all relevant matters is restricted and, as Dr. Campbell discovered in London, access to officials or even to organization charts may be difficult. Concentration on central agency staff also leads to a somewhat formal analysis of how a new president or prime minister tries to get it "right" from the start and perhaps places insufficient emphasis on some of the other influences that may bear on leadership style and on policy development or evaluation (elected members and party "brass", friends in the City or, formerly, Transport House, Canadian senators who may be unofficial policy advisors, transition teams, etc.). Placing the emphasis on formal structures lessens the degree of consideration given to informal structures, such as shadow committees of senior officials, which may play in part central agency functions (although Dr. Campbell does refer, for example, to DM 5 and DM 10).

Notwithstanding these limitations, Campbell has provided a highly interesting examination of central agency performance in three areas: strategic planning; the development and integration of economic and fiscal policies; and the allocation and management of human and physical resources. The study weaves together a rich variety of facts, information on organization, operations and resources, as well as assessments and opinion. A number of observations appear to arise out of his study: collective decision-making in parliamentary cabinet government may be more effective in pursuing a government's goals than the centralization of executive authority in the hands of the president; the United States has fallen behind other systems in its machinery for co-ordinating interdepartmental decision-making and in selecting policy advisors; the capacity to delegate and to avoid becoming enmeshed in detail through the effective use of gatekeepers may contribute to "successful" governance by a president or prime minister; institutional and constitutional factors limit the degree to which a U.S. president can pursue an active priorities-and-planning style of leadership.

Dr. Campbell concludes with some prescriptive counsel for presidents and prime ministers who want to get it 'right' from the start while acknowledging that, in the last analysis, executive leadership is an art. There is much food for thought, but some of his recommendations stray from factual assessment and deal with perception. The practitioners of the art will have to determine how appropriate his counsel is in the light of their own circumstances. One would hope that, in a subsequent study, Dr.

Campbell might interview some former practitioners (presidents, prime ministers and members of cabinet) to seek their assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of central agencies and how best a chief executive might get it 'right' from the start.

While this study represents a major achievement in the area of comparative executive government, he has perhaps concentrated too heavily on the executive branch. References to Congress and Parliament abound in his book, but the importance of congressional relations or parliamentary House planning is not highlighted. It is significant that the Office of the President of the Privy Council is not listed as a Canadian central agency. Questions arise: how do caucuses, congressional leadership, meetings of House leaders and the prevailing situation in Congress or Parliament affect executive strategic planning and, indeed, leadership style? How do or should central agencies take account of these "influences" in developing strategic plans?

If there are aspects of this study that could be further developed or fleshed out, Colin Campbell has nonetheless provided a good framework for analysis and has manipulated a mass of information to produce a coherent work that establishes a bench-mark and will stimulate further study. Although this may be considered an "academic" work, the style of writing and the presentation do no intimidate: the book should appeal to the "latent executive" as well as to political practitioners, officials and students of government.

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POLITICIANS FOR PEACE, by Douglas Roche, Toronto, NC Press, 1983, 175 p.

Since 1980, Douglas Roche has been International Chairman of Parliamentarians for World Order (PWO), an organization of elected politicians from over fifty countries who believe that the nuclear arms race must be halted immediately and that ending disparities between rich and poor nations should be a priority in world affairs. In this capacity, Mr. Roche has travelled to world capitals, lobbied extensively at the United Nations, and has been involved in the growing international peace movement. He identifies passionately with the PWO and has been one of its principal architects.

Politicians for Peace is a manifesto describing the PWO's plan for global change. Its central theme is that mankind is facing catastrophe because of the escalating nuclear arms race and increasing deprivation in the Third World. Mr. Roche argues that the vast sums now spent on armaments must be diverted towards solving the problems of hunger and disease and towards educating the hundreds of millions of people who lack the skills to adapt to modern economic methods. The main prescriptions in the PWO's vision of a new world order are a freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons, the phased elimination of these weapons, the creation of an international inspection authority to monitor arms control agreements, a multinational police force to take up peacekeeping duties in world trouble spots, and the establishment of a new global development fund. At the heart of the PWO's strategy is the idea that values and allegiances must change. They advocate a "long-range survivalist system" based on a radical restructuring of the United Nations and sweeping changes in international law. In defending this bold programme, he repeats Bernard Shaw's often used quotation, "Some men see the world as it is and ask why; others see the world as it might be and ask why not."

While few would dispute the reality of the dangers described by Mr. Roche, or the genuiness of his beliefs, the tone of his writing and the nature of the globalist vision that he advocates are themselves disturbing. The book has a self-congratulatory and moralistic air and gives the impression that the author sees himself as the appointed emissary of the world's people. There is little modesty. It is also the case that he appears not to have undertaken the sober reflection that he has asked of his readers.

The analysis is flawed in a number of ways. First, the manifesto does not deal in any meaningful way with the means that would be needed to achieve the ends that are advocated. Calling for global disarmament is not enough, as the *Kellogg-Briand Pact* and other misadventures in history have demonstrated clearly. A detailed examination of his various confidence-building measures might work, how destabilization brought by unilateral "build-downs" might be avoided, and how the system of mutual deterrance might be replaced, would have given the book greater credibility.

Second, the discussion of world development is similarly bereft of critical analysis. One is tempted to say that there has been a lack of courage on the author's part as he appears not to want to offend those in the developing nations. While many would agree that the old imperialistic system and new methods of exploitation have done grievous injury to Third World hopes, such regimes as Idi Amin's and Jean-Bedel Bokassa's cannot be absolved of some aspects of blame. Roche does not, however, hold Third World dictators, whose reigns are often based on moral corruption and economic mismanagement, responsible to any significant degree for their countries' plights. He focuses on the arms race and on the international banking and commercial systems as though there are no other important factors.

Mr. Roche's vision of a future world order must be questioned seriously. Although the United Nations system has been discredited in the minds of many people who are concerned with democratic values and human rights issues, he sees the international organization as a cornerstone for future achievements. The reasons for his optimism remain vague. How the new global order is to be brought into being and how it would be maintained are not discussed. The classical argument against a central global authority is that if that body becomes tyrannical or unjust, then freedom is endangered everywhere. In proposing to deliver us from our many problems, Mr. Roche's plan might have within it the seeds of an even more perilous future.

While one must commend the author and the PWO for their sense of humanity and high purpose, the book is, on the whole, neither particularly informative nor useful. A more practical blueprint for action is needed.

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