

2

Statesmanship in a World of Particular Substantive Choices

Mark H. Moore

A statesmanlike decision is a rare event in our political system. For the most part, public choices emerge from the collision of urgent, well-positioned, particular interests. There is little in the substantive terms of debate, the process of deliberation, or actual policy choice that reflects the wisdom, virtue, and public-spiritedness that define a statesmanlike decision. More often, what governmental decision making displays is the rapaciousness of man. While we may be grateful that our system protects us from humanity's natural rapaciousness by pitting one scoundrel against another, the struggle between them provides no cause for celebration.

Occasionally, however, this collision of specific interests yields a much different result. A choice is made that seems to exceed the possibilities of the situation: a broader set of concerns is addressed, a longer time frame established, and a more subtle understanding of the world shown than there appeared any reason to expect. The choice made not only reflects this broad understanding of what is at stake, but also reveals a compelling discriminating judgment about which social interests should be given greatest weight among all those that are in competition. In such an event, there is cause for celebration. Not only do we benefit from the wisdom and virtue of the choice itself, but we see in it great possibilities for the future. We are instructed (or reminded) of the interests and concerns that are central to our society; we discover that people can, on occasion, be more than merely rapacious; and we find that the process of governing can produce triumphs as well as ward off disasters. In short, we realize that it is possible for a public choice to express our most highly prized civic virtues.

My hunch is that our society needs a few such triumphs each year to insure the commitment of its citizens. It is possible, of course,

MARK H. MOORE

that the necessary commitment could survive without annual demonstrations of the potential for statesmanship. The determined optimism of liberals (who insist that every public choice should celebrate public virtue) and the equally relentless pessimism of the conservatives (who assume that checking rapaciousness with rapaciousness is the best that can be managed in an imperfect world) might shield both groups from any great disappointment with the actual performance of the state apparatus. More often, though, I think that both groups *do* need evidence of wisdom and virtue in public choices to sustain their commitment. The liberals need a few successes to rekindle their faith. And the conservatives, though they might never admit it, need a little something to celebrate. Without statesmanship, some of the glue that binds both conservatives and liberals to the state will be lost—and with it, not only the state's ability to govern effectively, but also some of the gratifications of being a citizen.

If we need occasional acts of statesmanship to sustain the republic, then we ought to be concerned about the factors that make such acts more or less likely. We understand, of course, that statesmen are necessarily rare. Wisdom and virtue individually are never in large supply; in combination, they are rarer still; and for the combination to appear in men and women who are attracted to and can survive the grueling processes of government is unusual indeed. The dearth of statesmen, however, does not necessarily mean a dearth of statesmanship. If our political processes hurl near-statesmen together and extract from them a choice that would have been beyond the capability of any one of them, then statesmanship can occur without an individual statesman. So, it is some mix of the qualities of people serving in the government and the processes that bring those people together that will determine the frequency of acts of statesmanship.

My colleague, Professor Banfield, sees statesmanship as seriously threatened. In his view, the growth of social science knowledge, the elaboration of its methods, the sheer increase in the number of social scientists, and the increased reliance of government on their advice pose a major threat to the prospects for statesmanship. Part of the threat lies in the allure that the apparently scientific methods of social science might have for conscientious public officials who confront difficult substantive choices and want to make them responsibly. Professor Banfield worries that these techniques will replace the judgment and wisdom of the statesman. Furthermore, he fears that, as the institution of social science grows, the ethos and style of politics will shift in a direction that limits the potential for effective governance. If both the consciousness of our officials and the processes in

which they confront one another become impoverished by the influence of social science, then the prospects of statesmanship will be reduced and one of the glories of public life eliminated.

It seems to me that there is a fundamental misunderstanding of this perceived threat. Professor Banfield fails to discriminate between a choice that is informed by the findings and methods of social science and one that is completely structured and driven by those methods. He sees social science as having limited capabilities and extravagant pretensions which together comprise a threat to wise and virtuous policy choice, and the guesswork, common sense, and judgment of experienced citizens and officials as the much preferable alternative. I agree that common sense and judgment are crucial starting and ending points in making choices about complex situations. But I also believe that common sense can be enlarged and tutored by findings and concepts from the social sciences. In fact, my view is that the intelligent use of the concepts and habits of thought one develops in studying social science could not only lend more discipline and structure to ultimate choices, but could also allow personal creativity and judgment to play a more effective role. The problem is finding public officials who are endowed with wisdom and virtue *and* capable of utilizing social science—who can use their own training in social science to inform their choices and also avail themselves of the products of social science research done by others. Since developing such people is the avowed purpose of my institution, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, I count myself as part of the solution to the problem Professor Banfield identifies, not as part of the problem, as he would have it.

The Consciousness of Statesmen

It is by now a truism that the range and intrusiveness of governmental action seem to grow daily. We often attribute this growth to the internal imperatives of government institutions themselves. I suspect, however, that the impetus comes not only from the internal requirements of legislatures, political executives, and bureaucracies, but from strident demands for governmental action by institutions and individuals outside the government. Some of these external demands are traditional: private groups have always lobbied for exclusive benefits from the government. But increasingly the external demands are of a different character: government is asked to produce benefits distributed on a vaster and more equal scale. The benefits either protect or enlarge areas of individual opportunity and privilege which sud-

denly are considered fundamental to a satisfactory human existence. We seem to be trying either to express new ideas about the rights, privileges, and opportunities of being a citizen, or to protect what we thought Americans once had in a less technological society.

For whatever reason, the public agenda is loaded with complicated choices about specific substantive issues. If this is the environment in which would-be statesmen have to operate, some relevant questions are: How would we like them to respond to this vast substantive agenda? What should they see as being at stake in these choices? How should they make up their minds about what the public interest requires? What perspectives should they bring to bear? And what part can social science findings or formal analytic reasoning play in these decisions?

Perhaps the most important thing for a public official to notice as he confronts a stream of specific issues is that some of the most crucial effects of his choices are likely to fall outside the areas in which he is working. When he decides how long to carry on unemployment compensation benefits, or how aggressively to search for husbands who abandon families and leave them in poverty, or even whether to expand services to the handicapped population, his decisions are likely to have important cumulative effects on the fundamental institutions of the society. Every policy choice he makes accords with some concept of the future role of the state. His decision may affect the distribution of power and responsibility among levels of government; or it may strengthen or erode the power of private or intermediate institutions in the society. Since these institutional arrangements circumscribe future prospects for social action as well as the current circumstances of individual lives, even small and remote effects on them are highly significant.

We tend to assume that the choices that shape the future of our *institutions* will be made explicitly; we seldom think of them as having any relation to the narrow substantive decisions of day-to-day politics. Similarly, we assume that such major choices are the exclusive province of statesmen. When crucial institutional issues arise, we believe, statesmen and statesmanship will come to the fore. The problem with this view is that there does not appear to be even a forum for intelligent discussion of the design and development of our major institutional arrangements, much less an opportunity to direct their evolution in a deliberate, sustained way. Instead, changes in our institutions come as the cumulative effects of smaller substantive decisions.

In a world organized to consider and decide a constant stream of specific issues, perhaps the only way for statesmanlike concerns

about institutions to emerge is in these very day-to-day choices. If this is true, then it is to the people who make these choices that we must look for our statesmen. This means that our statesmen also must have some of the specialized knowledge of substantive experts. It is the need for the combination of these different capabilities in the same person that constitutes the new and distinctive challenge to statesmanship.

It should be clear that the ability to see the long-run institutional implications of individual substantive decisions requires a perspective broader than that supplied by social science knowledge or formal analytic reasoning. It must arise from significant personal experience, knowledge of history and political philosophy, and a personal concept of a political and social structure which allows (and, ideally, encourages) dignified human lives.

Although it is important that public officials have some awareness of the long-run institutional effects of their choices, it is also important that they foresee the more limited substantive effects. We want them to be able to anticipate the impact of a large-scale expansion of methadone maintenance programs on the size and shape of the heroin problem. We want them to be able to judge how efforts to control handguns will affect the level of violent crime. It is in this area—estimating the likely consequences of alternative policy actions and choosing optimal policies—that social science findings and formal analytic reasoning might be expected to help statesmanlike public officials.

In fact, social scientists argue that their findings and methods are not only useful but *essential* for responsible public choices. Judging the impact of a given choice on the many lives it will affect requires tracing possible consequences of alternative actions through elaborate causal chains. The *empirical* methods of the social sciences are designed to determine which causal mechanisms will operate in a particular set of circumstances, and (occasionally) with what force. The *analytic* methods of operations research are designed to help trace the results of complicated chains of causation, and to make an optimal choice from among a bewildering variety of possible actions. Hence, without social science findings and formal analytic reasoning, it is impossible to see what the consequences of various choices would be, or to defend the reasoning that led to a given choice. In other words, social science can provide an accurate model of the way the relevant piece of the world operates—essential if one is to make a responsible choice.

To any conscientious decision maker or policy designer, such an argument carries a great deal of weight. It does seem wrong to decide

a matter of great importance to individual citizens on the basis of uncertain knowledge of the consequences or illogical reasoning. Where important things are at stake, we ought to be willing to take the time to order our thinking and gather the relevant evidence.

The flaws in this argument become apparent only when one tries to put it into practice. Then the insufficiency of social science findings and formal analytic reasoning for structuring and informing complex public choices becomes all too evident. There are at least two problems for social science's role in policy choice—one quite fundamental, the other less fundamental but still likely to be troubling for the foreseeable future.

The fundamental problem is that few crucial components of any policy calculation are necessarily ambiguously derived. An explicit policy choice always involves both a set of objectives (or a set of valued attributes of the world that are likely to be affected by policy choices) and a set of policy options. If social science helps at all, it helps us to estimate the effects of various policy choices on our objectives, or to make a complex calculation of which alternative is better, given a set of values attached to the different objectives. The problem is that neither social science nor formal analytic reasoning tells us which attributes of the world should be considered objectives, or which options are available for consideration. These are likely to be suggested partly by the particular circumstances of a given choice, partly by the ability of the decision maker to see the complexity of the empirical world in which he is about to intervene, and partly by the decision maker's openness, imagination, and ingenuity. Thus, crucial parts of the definition of a decision problem cannot be deduced either from analytic principles or from well-established generalizations about the world. They come instead from the decision maker's sense of what is at stake and what actions are possible—that is, from his knowledge of the particular circumstances of his choice.

A less fundamental but equally vexing problem for the role of social science in policy choice is that the current stock of empirical knowledge, formal modeling procedures, and optimizing algorithms is not sufficient to capture the complexity the decision maker faces as he confronts a particular choice. For each decision, he confronts a slightly different world, comprising a great many variables interacting in complex relationships. To some extent, this complexity argues a need for formal analytic methods, since they can be helpful in organizing reasoning. In fact, however, when a policy maker tries to make a rigorous optimizing calculation about a situation, he finds that he lacks the empirical knowledge necessary to validate an analytic model of the particular world he is dealing with. Moreover, he is

forced to make many limiting assumptions about the shape of that world in order to compute an optimal solution.

If a decision maker is not aware of these limitations of social science as he structures and resolves policy choices, there is a grave risk that his view of those choices will be distorted. First, if his commitment to a "scientific" approach causes him to focus on developing powerful empirical generalizations, lifelike computer simulations, or sophisticated optimizing calculations, he may not give enough creative thought to his objectives or to exploring the range of possible means to achieve them. Without a clear awareness of the goals of a potential course of action, and the various ways these goals might be pursued, no amount of scientific rigor in his calculations can produce an intelligent choice.

Second, as complex as the calculations in a policy design problem may be, they necessarily rest on a drastic simplification of the actual world. It is difficult enough to draw rigorous conclusions from very simple ideas about the world: we are decades away from being able to make rigorous calculations about complex ideas of the world.

Third, the intrusion of sophisticated social science into the structuring and resolution of a policy choice may mean that the whole debate will be carried out in an arcane language, accessible only to a few highly trained people. This obviously limits the opportunities for democratic deliberation. It is also likely to limit the chance for the social scientists involved to find out the limitations of their conceptions of the problem.

Fourth, although nothing in the logic of social science requires it, something in the sociology or psychology of *doing* social science tends to make those who do it overly confident, even arrogant. Many of them seem to believe they guard the world of truth against a stupid, crude, and uncaring practical world. Much of their training and their institutional surroundings encourage them to think this way.

For all these reasons, an orientation toward social science not only fails to guarantee decision makers the best possible policy choices, but it could lead would-be statesmen astray. In this conclusion I agree with Professor Banfield. The crucial question is: What is the alternative to social science and formal analytics in reasoning about complex substantive policy choices? Is it true that without social science, political decision making is mere intuition, guesswork, and judgment?

I am not convinced that this is the case. My own view is a simple one: Within the world of policy decisions that depend ultimately on judgment, experience, intuition, and guesses, decisions nonetheless

differ in terms of how carefully and completely they are structured, how well informed they are, and how systematically alternatives have been considered. Careful structure, adequate information, and systematic calculation can be of great value so long as the price is not a radically simplified or abstracted view of the world.

I have described my hesitation about social science and formalism; I have not yet indicated my misgivings about untutored and unstructured intuition. The idea that a politician's intuition is the only tool he needs for handling complex choices seems to me little more than romanticism. Many intuitive decisions in fact reflect a simple-mindedness that may be as dangerous as the pretentious reductionism of the social sciences. A choice directed by untutored intuition often is extremely truncated: a small range of objectives is identified, a limited number of alternatives considered, and an evaluation made on the basis of shockingly inadequate empirical evidence and little rigorous thought. That this truncated form of the decision problem is cast in terms familiar to all gives it only a slight advantage over the social scientist's equally limited but more obscurely expressed formulation.

The alternative to both simple-minded intuition and simple-minded formalism is for the decision maker to define and analyze each problem in its own particular form. He may begin with a fairly simple conception, but as he proceeds with his evaluation, the terms of the calculation will grow: more objectives will be added as he perceives new potential effects of the policy alternatives he is considering; new alternatives will be generated as he becomes familiar with current practice in the area, historical experience, and perhaps the policies of other governments or cultures; and the definition of the problem may change as he breaks up general contributing factors into sets of specific causes. As the complexity of the problem thus emerges, three important things will happen. First, the decision maker's scope for action increases, giving him greater potential for inventing and combining alternative actions. Second, some means of ordering relationships and variables becomes essential if he is to use the organized structure of the problem to point toward solutions. This ordering must be systematic, but it need not be stated mathematically. Third, the structured but complex conception of the problem allows the decision maker to bring in all kinds of information about both the sizes of various components of the problem and the relationships among various factors, and it indicates areas where information is missing or uncertain. All this brings the decision maker closer to the particular circumstances with which he is dealing and

provides room for creativity, rather than leading a decision maker into the structure of a stark, formal model with little room for ingenuity or insight.

The second and third steps in the process can be facilitated if the policy maker is sufficiently well trained in social science methods to use those methods to organize his ideas about relationships and draw on available information about magnitudes. But the value of the methods is as metaphors and qualitative guides, not as means of obtaining a simple quantitative solution to the problem. The methods allow the decision maker to reason more effectively about events in the real world. Understanding them also can make him a more effective consumer of the works of other social scientists, in that he is equipped to avoid being either over- or underimpressed with their careful observations and elaborate calculations. But this is a small benefit, I suspect, compared to his increased capability to reason clearly about complex choices.

Thus, training in formal empirical and analytic methods can be of great value to the would-be statesman confronted with complex substantive choices. There are real limitations to these methods, and some dangers in relying on them too heavily, but there are also substantial potential benefits. Combined with judgment and experience, the methods of social science can sustain a fairly comprehensive and probing exploration of the piece of the empirical world relevant to a particular problem. That exploration may suggest new approaches, or it may suggest different evaluations of traditional approaches. The calculation that informs the ultimate choice cannot be fully "scientific," but it will be relatively informed, careful, and imaginative—which is about as much as we can ask of decision makers. In a few cases, systematic but unscientific calculation may even become the crucial ingredient for a statesmanlike choice.

Social Science: A Dangerous New Estate?

Beyond the disturbing prospect that individual officials might be misled by the promise of scientific solutions for difficult problems, Professor Banfield sees an additional threat: the sheer weight and momentum of the institution of social science. Representatives and officials might simply be unable to hold off the hordes of social scientists now skulking, but soon striding, in the corridors of government.

In Banfield's view, such a shift in the style and ethos of government from a political system composed of competing interests mediated by a variety of restraining structures to a technical debate

among academic social scientists holds many terrors. First, for all the reasons noted above, the substantive aspects of the political debate would become impoverished in such a situation. Important interests either would be strategically disguised or would go unnoticed. Knowledge about causal relationships in the real world would be lost because that knowledge is found not in the results of a statistical analysis, but in the experience of people who have worked in the various substantive areas. Second, because the terms of the policy debate would become arcane, power in political decisions would shift from people with real interests, knowledge, and experience to people with relatively little experience but substantial academic training. This not only would further impoverish the debate, it also would deny most citizens any opportunity to participate. Governmental choices would cease to be expressions of a communal process of deliberation: they would become as empty and alienating as arbitrary orders from an incompetent superior. Third, partly because social scientists are motivated to discover and document new conditions in the society that require action, and partly because social scientists are *always* able to find flaws in previously adopted solutions to problems, the number (and difficulty) of problems to be resolved by government would grow astronomically. As a result, government would become a source of frustration for those who participate, a symbol of incompetence for those (increasingly few) who merely look on, and an arrogant, clumsy monster for those whose expectations and lives are buffeted by its starts, stops, and shifts.

Clearly this is a recipe for ineffective governance. If such a government were plainly imminent, and if the growth of the social science establishment were a major factor pushing in this direction, there would be not only occasion for handwringing but also, perhaps, a strong argument for braking the momentum of this emergent estate. Professor Banfield does not, however, make a convincing case for this threat to our political system. His paper fails to establish conclusively even that the influence of social science is growing. He does not consider the possibility that the role and contribution of social science could develop in a different direction from the one he predicts. Further, his argument does not preclude the possibility that the growth of social science is not an independent factor pushing government in the direction he abhors, but merely an intermediate result of much more fundamental processes.

Consider, first, the relatively simple issue of whether or not social science is becoming more influential in policy deliberations. Professor Banfield begins his paper with observations and statistics designed to give the impression that a juggernaut is building. We learn that

expenditures in applied social science research have grown from \$235 million in 1965 to \$1 billion in 1975; that the number of social scientists has increased by 163 percent from 1960 to 1970; that Congress has accumulated a large professional staff; and that universities are now describing many of their activities as policy related.

Reflection on these facts, however, suggests a modest level of growth for a small institution—hardly the emergence of a juggernaut. A billion dollars represents less than 3 percent of the civilian payroll for the federal government.¹ If we assume that somewhere between 10 and 15 percent of these officials work at policy levels, and if we assume that all this money supports independent policy-related research activity which has as much chance of influencing agency choices as does the work of officials within the agencies, then we can conclude that social science research now constitutes from one-third to one-fifth of the policy-level activity in the federal government. Actually, since social science research products are used quite selectively by agency officials, their real influence probably is much smaller than indicated by this comparison. Furthermore, even if we imagine that *all* the social science research money supports a group of social scientists thinking about policy problems, those social scientists still are significantly outnumbered by salaried government officials and elected representatives.

Similarly, while the number of social scientists grew 163 percent over the decade 1960–1970, the number of personnel and labor specialists grew by 295 percent, and the number of social and recreation workers grew by 230 percent. Moreover, the number of social scientists is now less than 5 percent of the total number of government employees.²

Finally, the fact that a few relatively small academic institutions have begun to justify their activities in a period of financial difficulty by claiming that they make a major contribution to social policy hardly indicates either a change in the pattern of universities' activities or an increase in their ability to influence government policy. In short, Banfield's observations fall far short of documenting the emergence of a major new institution.

In fact, Banfield himself presents a great deal of evidence showing that social science has failed to have much impact on the policy process. We hear that "Congress is almost totally impervious to systematic analysis"; that the useful results of a decade of social science

were "insufficient for a short article, not to speak of a handbook"; and that formal analytic models answered only questions that "nobody was asking." Having assembled these findings, Banfield sums up: "What has been said so far should relieve any reader who might have feared that policy scientists are exercising undue influence. In fact, they have very little influence, certainly very little of a direct kind." It appears, then, that the institution is far from a colossus. Of course, it may be cold comfort to discover that the institution is merely a waste rather than a major threat to the polity; but, still, it is comfort—at least when compared to Professor Banfield's apocalyptic view.

Having made social science's irrelevance to actual policy choices part of his case against its potential contribution to the political process, Banfield then has difficulty making us feel seriously threatened by the field's growth. His solution is to warn of disastrous consequences for governmental policy making if the institution of social science ever should become influential. In this prospect he sees two distinct threats. One is a significant reduction in the quality of substantive political debates (arising from the difficulty of capturing the world relevant to those debates within social science models). The other is the possibility that social science will create "problems, not solutions." Banfield offers no empirical evidence for these views, but since they are predictions about future trends, this is not unreasonable. What is less reasonable is that he fails to consider the possibility that the influence of social science might develop in a different and more benign direction. Given the uncertainty in the world, surely it is appropriate to consider a variety of potential scenarios.

With respect to the prospect of social science's introducing crude reductionism into policy deliberations, I think there is some possibility that Banfield is right. This is far from certain, however. I can conceive of decision makers remaining aware of the real dimensions of the policy problems they face, even as they learn to be effective interpreters of social science findings and analytic reasoning. We sometimes refer to such people as effective consumers of social science, but it probably would be better to think of them as mediators between the simplified, structured world of social scientists and formal modelers and the messy particular worlds that are the realm of policy decisions. One might call them exceptional clinicians—able to draw on recent findings and theory from a science related to their professional work, but also concerned with each specific case that arises. If enough such people existed, social science could easily enrich rather than impoverish our policy deliberations. Only a philistine could object to the use of carefully collected evidence and closely reasoned analyses of policy options in making decisions—particularly if the

¹ U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Special Analyses: Budget of the U.S. Government—Fiscal Year 1977*, p. 154, table H-3.

² U.S. Department of Commerce, *Characteristics of the Population: U.S. Summary*, vol. 1, pt. 1, sec. 2, table 221, 1973.

raw products of social science research were organized and presented in a form that allowed effective public discussion. Our present problem may be not an excess of social science, but a lack of people who can use it intelligently and effectively in evaluating policy choices.

Exactly what kinds of individuals will be able to accomplish this mediation, and what forms of analysis will be developed to bridge the gap between social science and effective policy choice, remain somewhat unclear. The mediators and forms of analysis that ultimately evolve are not likely to be "scientific" in the narrow sense, but they also will probably look very different from unaided intuition and common sense. My hunch is that both the individuals and the works will bear traces of social science influence, but that the most sophisticated forms of social science will have been abandoned in favor of methods more likely to capture the real subtlety and complexity of the world and to allow—even invite—a broader policy debate. I hesitate to give examples, and I think the two works I have in mind are probably a little too general to be valuable in particular policy situations, but something like *The Unheavenly City* or *Thinking About Crime* might be just what is required. Certainly such works suggest that social science findings can contribute a great deal to effective policy debates, and hence to effective governance.

With respect to the prediction that social science will create problems, not solutions, the argument is somewhat more complex. Note that Banfield believes that the proliferation of problems arises from two different sources: first, social scientists' tendency to discover social problems where they do not exist, and second, their tendency to find fault with old solutions. Together these inclinations ensure a large and frustrating government agenda. My own view, however, is that social scientists produce this result because they are tempted to act not as scientists, but as activists, and because we have unreasonable expectations about how policy decisions could be made.

Consider, first, the prediction that growth in the institution of social science will be accompanied by the discovery of new social problems that require governmental attention. This in itself is not a bad thing. After all, if we learn of a condition that is inconsistent with our communal aspirations, if we can imagine an effective governmental remedy, and if the remedy violates no fundamental conceptions of humanity and erodes no basic institution, then there should be no bar to action. We might praise rather than criticize the person who documented the problem. Only frivolous additions to the government's agenda warrant criticism of the role of social science.

I would also suggest that social science is more likely to debunk claims about emergent social problems than to support them. Science

is a profoundly conservative mode of thought: it requires a great deal of observation, evidence, and reasoning to establish the validity of a statement. In fact, if we had insisted on scientific evidence of a health hazard from automobile emissions or of an increase in the number of heroin users, we might never have regulated automobile emissions or declared a war on drugs. Thus, one can contend that a firm commitment to social science would shrink rather than enlarge the government's agenda.

It is sometimes argued that the social scientists who "find" social problems are not really acting as scientists: they are advocates, or propagandists. But the fact that this role is common today tells us more about the weakness of professional norms governing social scientists, and the gullibility (whether ingenuous or not) of public officials, than about the inherent tendencies of social science. The position of social scientists who act as propagandists is a weak one; if they could be bound to higher professional standards, and if public officials were independently capable of evaluating their arguments, their tendency to "find" frivolous problems could be stopped.

According to Banfield, the second way social science contributes problems rather than solutions is by finding fault with old solutions and adding complexity to current conceptions of problems. Reflection reveals that this is the flip side of the coin of the conservatism of science. In evaluating past policies or designing new initiatives, social science does play a spoiler's role. Because conservative rules of evidence make it hard to conclude that a policy's desired effect actually has occurred, evaluations of governmental programs nearly always fail to show any effect. This scientific skepticism may indeed create frustration and—sometimes, at least—a sense of governmental incompetence. But it is also a powerful means of pruning the reach of government, disciplining its ambitions, and redirecting its efforts toward more successful approaches. We have seen social science play this role in several recent issues: rehabilitation in the criminal justice system, various kinds of regulation, and many of the initiatives of the Great Society. Learning that previous goals were too ambitious or that previous means were poorly designed is cause for frustration and despair only if we thought at the beginning that we were acting with precision on the basis of perfect information. If we understand that social science cannot guarantee an effective policy design, though it can determine how a given approach has performed, we will not be disappointed or frustrated so frequently, and we certainly will not blame social science for our frustrations.

Thus, social science need not be an engine for enlarging the scope or compounding the frustrations of governmental action. As a pro-

foundly conservative force, it can debunk claims that problems exist, and it can show the inadequacy of current governmental efforts. If we take science seriously when it decides that problems exist, and if we use it to help us learn something about the impact of past and present policies, it can become a force for shrinking the government's agenda and redirecting its efforts rather than for expanding the governmental quagmire.

My final point in rebuttal to Banfield's claim that social science is a dangerous emergent estate is somewhat different. Even if Banfield's predictions about the development of social science should prove accurate, it is not clear that the problems he anticipates would be results of the internal dynamics of social science. My suspicion is that the growth of social science is not a cause but a consequence of much more fundamental problems of governance.

One such problem is simply that citizens expect much more from their government now than ever before. They seek representation and expression not only on the bases of their occupational roles, but also as individuals who are concerned about the shape of their lives outside their jobs. They want good health, safety, and recreation, as well as economic and civil security. And they want these things not only for themselves, but for larger and larger groups in the society. Government has responded with an array of new programs—which policy makers desperately need help in designing and running. It is as a source of this help that social scientists have become important, an easily expanded work force that can assist government in responding to citizen demands. They may look as though they are forcing the development of the government's programs, but nothing would change if we temporarily shattered the institution. The reason for the expansion is not social science, but a shift in people's expectations.

A second problem is related to the first, but it is less fundamental. Public officials and representatives have shown a discouraging tendency to rely on social science in making choices.³ When faced with difficult choices, they seem to prefer to hide behind apparently scientific arguments that support their position—to substitute technique and credentials for judgment and character. This is unfortunate because each time they do so, they sustain a false idea of what social science can be expected to accomplish. The politician's need for scientific justification could account for the growth of social science rather than any internal dynamic within social science itself.

In sum, then, it has not been shown convincingly that science is very influential, nor that such influence as it has is necessarily

harmful, nor that its growth can be attributed to its own internal dynamics. The institution has some potential for harm and some for good. It is not yet fixed on one track or the other. The problem is to harness it on behalf of effective governance.

Statesmanship and Programs in Public Policy

Two persistent themes have run throughout this essay. One is that much of the work of government is confronting complex substantive choices, a situation that is likely to continue for the indefinite future. This circumstance probably arises not from the growth of social science but from other, more fundamental causes. A second theme is that social science is neither a substitute for nor a major threat to public officials' ability to think intelligently and responsibly about the decisions they face. To the extent that formal applications of social science come to dominate policy debates, there is some risk that debate will be substantively and procedurally impoverished. But it is not clear that any sensible policy maker would allow this to happen. Nor is it clear that the institution of social science is inclined or able to force itself on the policy process. On the other hand, if we ignore the findings of social scientists, or fail to appreciate social science's capacity for using rigorous logic and carefully assembled empirical information in reasoning about policy problems, we risk thinking about these problems less effectively than we might.

Under these circumstances, the possibilities for statesmanlike decisions might be enhanced by the development of structures and processes that mediate between the institution of social science and the policy process. I do not want to exaggerate the importance of establishing such links; the relationship between social science and the policy process is only one of many factors that affect the prospects for statesmanship. But in a world of particular substantive choices and a growing social science establishment, this relationship is becoming *relatively* more important. As a result, managing this relationship is gradually becoming a priority matter.

The establishment of a link between social science and policy deliberations is likely to depend on two related developments. One is the emergence of a group of people whose work is deliberating practical policies, but who also have a sophisticated understanding of the methods of social science. This combined capacity is important for at least three reasons. First, their facility with social science methods can enlarge these people's ability to reason about policy problems. Second, their understanding of the methods can enable them to use the raw products of social science with ease and discrimination. Third,

³ I am indebted to Gary Orren for emphasizing this point.

their commitment to the largely political and procedural world of particular policy choices can keep them from sacrificing important institutional relationships and values for limited substantive objectives. Such individuals thus can bind the worlds of social science and policy choice together without sacrificing the ethos of either.

A second crucial development is the creation of forms of reasoning that draw on the sophisticated analytic and empirical methods of social science, but that are at the same time comprehensible to those who have a stake in policy choices. The raw products of social science research so admired by professionals for their methodological competence must somehow be transformed into sensible policy arguments allowing broad political discussion. Of course, the development of these forms of analysis will be facilitated by the emergence of people with both practical and social science skills. It is likely that this group will have to take responsibility for creating the forms and policing the practice as well. They must become self-conscious about their role and communicate their standards to others. In short, a modest professional group may have to emerge to mediate between the world of politics and the world of social science.

Encouraging these developments is the purpose of most public policy programs with which I am acquainted. They are designed to facilitate the emergence of a group of people who feel ultimately responsible to the political process, but who are sophisticated about social science. They are also concerned with creating forms of analysis that are informed by social science methods and findings and that present a picture of the world familiar to those with both knowledge of and a stake in that world. Thus, to the extent that public policy programs succeed in their ambitions, we can expect the relationship between social science and the policy process to be managed more effectively in the future. And, to the extent that more effective management of this relationship enhances the prospects for statesmanlike decisions in a world of particular policy choices, public policy programs will contribute to rather than lessen the prospects for statesmanship.

3

Policy Analysis: Boon or Curse for Politicians?

Laurence H. Silberman

That the federal bureaucracy has become relatively impervious to political control is, I think, undeniable. I would contend, however, that this circumstance has little to do with politicians' growing dependence on policy analysis. The problem is rather that politicians and political appointees rarely bring to office coherent notions of governance. Bureaucrats, naturally, defend their "turf" tenaciously and seek expansion of their programs virtually without regard to past effectiveness. And government bureaucrats, like any other bureaucrats (or, indeed, any other people), are quick to seize on new program possibilities that promise general advancement—again, virtually without regard to likely results. Unless we try massive lobotomies, we are unlikely to change behavior so rooted in human nature. We are, however, entitled to rely on political authority—the president and his direct appointees, as well as Congress—to channel bureaucratic energies toward reasonably useful goals. But if our political authorities cannot muster a clear and interrelated vision of these goals, control of the bureaucracy is an illusion.

Throughout the twentieth century, our political scientists and journalists have exalted political pragmatism—practical problem solving—as opposed to ideology. The "isms"—Marxism, fascism, Spencian capitalism—all of which are characterized by theoretical explanations encompassing all human behavior, have so frightened our politicians and political observers that they shy away from any theoretical concepts of government. Condemnation of ideology leads to distrust of broad coherent notions of what government should and should not try to accomplish. Instead, the "neutral" problem solvers are much in demand. Jimmy Carter, the engineer president, is an archetype of that breed. Ad hoc problem solving, however, is not