THE PRESTIGE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

IN A

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY

by
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Prestige is the respect or esteem which the population gives to positions in the public service. The prestige which the public service commands has an important bearing on the morale and recruitment problems of governmental agencies. Prestige is also indicative of citizen willingness to comply with administrative regulations.

In his 1928 Chicago research Professor Leonard D. White discovered that the prestige of the public service was low. Later empirical studies seemed to confirm this finding but they were somewhat misleading because they focused on select or specialized groups and they used the desire to work for government as the sole measure of prestige. It was therefore desirable to collect data on the esteem which the population at large has for the public service by using a more adequate method for measuring prestige. Such data were collected by the 1954 survey of the Detroit Area Study from a cross-section sample of 784 adult respondents living in the Detroit metropolitan area. Following Professor White's original method, the Detroit Area Study measured prestige by offering respondents a choice between paired occupations--one in public employment, the other in private employment. The respondent was asked to select which position, public or private, he felt had more prestige. A Guttman scale of the four occupational items used divided the sample into groups giving low, middle, and high prestige to the public service. The analysis consisted chiefly of tabulating this division of the prestige variable by three types of independent variables--social structure, political, and administrative.

The research findings may be treated under three general headings:

1. Time Trends in the Prestige of Public Employment: The increased prestige of the public service is reflected by several aspects of the data collected. Higher prestige rankings were recorded on the occupational items used in both the 1928 and 1954 studies. The populace finds public employees more courteous and evaluates its dealings with public employees higher than in the past. A majority (56 per cent) prefer employment by the United States Government to employment by a private firm (30 per cent).

2. Correlates and Non-Correlates of Prestige: The major social structure variables of social class, income, occupation, and education were inversely related to prestige. Negroes and women gave higher prestige respectively than whites and men. These relationships were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence. One group expected to give high prestige to the public service--public employees and their immediate kin--gave slightly lower prestige than the rest of the population. Certain political variables were related to prestige, with the public service commanding significantly higher respect from those desiring governmental intervention in the social and economic spheres, from Democrats, and from those low in political self-confidence. These relationships remained statistically significant after social class, sex, race, and age were held constant. Administrative variables related to prestige were the desire to work for government, the judgment that public employees are more courteous than private employees, and the desire for the public service to expand the scope of its actions. These relationships were also statistically significant. Two administrative variables, contact with public agencies and evaluation of their performance, were not related to prestige.

3. The Public Service in a Democratic Society: In a democracy the public service ought to meet the immediate needs of the population and at the same time its operations should be judged rationally and critically. The marked relationships found between prestige and certain social, political, and administrative variables indicate that prestige is accorded largely on the basis of whether the public service meets the immediate needs of the population. The findings that contact with public agencies and evaluation of their performance are not related to prestige indicate that the public service serves the populace broadly and that the population in some measure evaluates the operations of the public service on a rational and independently critical basis.

The major conclusions of the study are as follows: The increased benefits dispensed by the public service, the security features of public employment, and the improved estimate of the courteousness of public employees make a position in the public service more esteemed and more desirable than previously. The chief determinants of prestige are those variables which are closely connected with the immediate needs or self-interest orientation of the population. An exception to this must be made for public employees and their immediate kin who do not perceive of public employment as placing them in an elite group. There is a sphere in which the citizenry evaluates the operations of the public service rationally and realistically. Such an evaluation is a sine qua non in a democratic society.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Administration exists wherever two men cooperate to do something which neither of them could do alone.[1] In this sense administration is a universal attribute of all human societies. The need for administration arises out of man's necessity to coordinate his activities and to secure and maintain his dominance over other forms of life. As a society becomes more complex men develop more intricate administrative mechanisms for maintaining themselves. The history of civilization records the growth, decline, and resurgence of many intricate mechanisms for coordinating human behavior. Among these, few are more salient, few are more interesting, and few are more demanding of analysis than the administrative apparatus which performs the function of government.[2]

An Approach to Public Administration

It is within this broad setting that the present study undertakes, as a point of departure, a consideration of some external influences which affect the performance of governmental functions. The nature of the public administrative process cannot be fully understood

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[1]Cf., H.A. Simon, D.W. Smithburg, and V.A. Thompson, Public Administration (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), p. 3.

[2]Two books which treat the functions of government in broad perspective are; Ernest Barker, The Development of Public Services in Western Europe, 1660-1930 (London: Oxford University Press, 1944); and Solomon Fabricant, The Trend of Government Activity in the United States since 1900 (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1952).

without some treatment of the cultural context within which it operates. The authors of a public administration text suggest that the "culture concept" is useful in public administration because first, it helps American administrators abroad understand the people of other cultures; and second, it enables administrators at home to understand the cultural influences that structure administrative institutions.[3]

Another writer in the field of public administration, Professor John Gaus, has also suggested that students and practitioners of public administration broaden their outlook. Professor Gaus proposes that "the study of public administration must include its ecology."[4] He would include under the ecology of public administration a study of people, place, physical technology, social technology, wishes and ideas, catastrophe, and personality.[5] In short, what Gaus, Pfiffner, and Presthus are suggesting, and what this study attempts to do, is to examine how the populace perceives and relates itself to the public administrative process.

Nature of Prestige

The approach to public administration as outlined above must focus on some specific subject to permit empirical research. The subject of the prestige of the public service was selected because it seemed to promise the most rewarding results. Pioneering work in this

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[3]John M. Pfiffner and R. Vance Presthus, Public Administration (New York: Ronald Press, 1953), p. 229. See their brief discussion of culture and administration, p. 227-230.

[4]Reflections on Public Administration (Montgomery: University of Alabama Press, 1947), p. 6.

[5]Ibid., p. 9.

area had been done by Professor Leonard D. White in Chicago in 1928,[6] and on a broader geographic base in 1931.[7] Data on the prestige of the public service in Detroit were available from the 1954 survey of the Detroit Area Study.[8]

Any discussion of the nature of prestige profits immensely from the incisive treatment by Professor White in his early studies. He offered two general definitions of prestige, both of which warrant repeating.

> We understand prestige to mean the attribute of social appreciation which may attach to a person, a group, or an institution, which may vary not only from high intensity to low but also from positive to negative poles.[9]

> Prestige is an external quality assigned to the group by other groups or individuals in measure depending both upon the appraising group and upon the group appraised.[10]

Prestige is a relative concept, as the above quotations imply. It varies from group to group, from high to low, from time period to time period, and from job to job within the governmental service. Also, it should be stressed that the prestige of public employment refers to the esteem given to positions in the public bureaucracy. Position, as used here, refers to the duties and responsibilities of a job apart

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[6]The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929).

[7]Further Contributions to the Prestige Value of Public Employment (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932).

[8]The writer was employed by the Institute of Public Administration at the University of Michigan and worked with the Detroit Area Study throughout the academic year 1953-1954. The operations and procedures of the Detroit Area Study are described below in "Methodological Considerations."

[9]White, Further Contributions to the Prestige Value of Public Employment, p. 78.

[10]Ibid., p. 83.

from the personal qualities of the individual who occupies the position at a given moment.

A few remarks are appropriate regarding the selection of White's statements as the operational definitions of prestige for this study. The quotations imply that the prestige of the public service is a unique attitude--that it is separate and can be distinguished from other attitudes (or variables) toward the public administrative process. For example, the prestige of the public service is different from (1) the status of government based on the number and extent of services it performs, (2) the status of government based on the desirability of working for government, and (3) the status of public servants based on their inter-personal relations with citizen clientele. It will be apparent later that much of the literature on prestige has not recognized the singularity of the prestige variable. The "prestige" of the public service has often been used as a catch-all term covering the three variables enumerated here, as well as others. We hasten to point out, however, that the prestige of the public service is undoubtedly related to these three variables and perhaps others. But we suggest that it is not identical with any other single variable or with a combination of variables.

In summary then, the prestige of public employment is the status of positions in the public service. It refers to the respect, deference, recognition, esteem, or approbation given to the public service by the population at large.

Basic Assumptions

Two assumptions are made about the importance of prestige. These should be enumerated to clarify the foundations on which the study is based.

First of all it is assumed that the prestige of the public service affects certain aspects of administrative performance. In this respect its influence is felt (a) on the government recruitment process, and (b) on the morale of persons in the public service. So far as recruitment is concerned, the ability of government to attract qualified, capable, and interested individuals is partially determined by the prestige of the public service. The higher the prestige of the public service, the greater is its "pulling power." The greater the "pulling power," the greater the possibility of acquiring first-rate individuals to perform the functions of government, and to perform them more effectively.

The morale of public servants is also affected by prestige. Certainly many factors influence the morale of persons in any governmental organization, agency, or unit, e.g., leadership, the work situation, personalities, and so forth. Nevertheless, a feeling of public approval and respect for performing the tasks of government affects the public employee's attitude toward his job. It affects his willingness to stay in or to leave the public service and his performance on the job. In short, it influences the day-to-day operations of government. Professor White expressed the influence of prestige on administrative performance in these terms:

> Intangible though it is, prestige is a commodity of value in the art of management. Fundamentally management is the manipulation of external conditions and of individual and group attitudes for the purpose of securing and maintaining a social-psychological situation favorable to the accomplishment of the end sought by the organization--industrial, educational, clerical, or governmental as the case may be. Prestige is one of the attitudes which may help or hinder the task of management.[11]

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[11] White, Further Contributions to the Prestige Value of Public Employment, p. 87.

In addition to the effect of prestige on administrative performances, it is also assumed that the prestige accorded the public service affects the degree to which the citizenry complies with administrative regulations. Why do people obey the regulations made and enforced by the public bureaucracy? People obey such regulations because (a) they see the reason and need for such a regulation and (b) they wish to secure benefits or avoid penalties. The combined operation of these two factors establishes the public bureaucracy as a legitimate institution in the society, that is, as an institution endowed with authority. Here authority means, in Professor MacIver's words, "the established right, within any social order, to determine policies, to pronounce judgments on relevant issues, and to settle controversies, or more broadly, to act as leader or guide to other men."[12]

The prestige which the public service commands is assumed to be a variable indicative of the legitimate or authoritative position of the public bureaucracy and thereby, of the willingness of the citizen to comply with administrative regulations. This does not mean that for broad groups within the society those groups which give high prestige necessarily comply with administrative regulations more readily than do those which give low prestige. It does mean that under limited and controlled conditions high prestige should lead to greater compliance with administrative regulations. For example, among persons in similar social and economic circumstances and with similar social backgrounds and political views, all of whom receive unemployment

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[12]Robert M. MacIver, The Web of Government (New York: MacMillian, 1949), p. 83.

insurance, those giving high prestige to public employment will be least likely to circumvent or violate agency regulations regarding the receipt of the benefits. Broadly speaking, this also means that the public service must command a minimum amount of prestige from all social groupings in the society to obtain a minimum amount of compliance for the effective operation of the public bureaucracy.

It is important to keep in mind that the effect of prestige upon citizen compliance and administrative performance are assumptions of this study. They are a priori deductions about relationships concerning the public bureaucracy that are supposed to exist. So far as the writer knows, no empirical data have ever been collected as proof or disproof of the stated assumptions. Nor has the second assumption--the relationship between prestige and citizen compliance --ever obtained currency in literature on prestige.

The appearance of the term public bureaucracy in the preceding paragraphs suggests that a brief comment about terminology is appropriate. The terms public service and public bureaucracy will be used interchangably throughout this study. The word bureaucracy in the latter term implies no value judgment. That is, it is not used as a political "cuss-word" similar to the following definition of bureaucracy by Harold Laski:

> Bureaucracy is the term usually applied to a system of government the control of which is so completely in the hands of officials that their power jeopardizes the liberties of ordinary citizens. The characteristics of such a regime are a passion for routine administration, the sacrifice of flexibility to rule, delay in the making of decisions and a refusal to embark upon experiment. In extreme cases the members of a bureaucracy may become a hereditary caste

> manipulating government to their own advantage.[13]

Contrasted with Laski's definition is that of Professor Theodore Caplow, a sociologist at the University of Minnesota, whose definition will be connoted whenever the word bureaucracy appears in this study.

> Essentially, a bureaucracy is an organized hierarchy of social positions which, at least in principle, is complete in itself without reference to the characteristics of the individuals who occupy the positions at a given moment. The key words which identify bureaucracy are rationality and impersonality. The usual form of bureaucracy in the United States is a 'civil service' system, in which all or most positions are classified in a scale of rank, salary, and perquisites. This scale is intended to correspond to degrees of responsibility, skill, and seriority. The requirements for each position are predefined to ensure the rational selection of candidates.[14]

Past Research on Prestige: Professor White's Studies

Professor White's early studies were landmarks in empirical research on the prestige of public employment. It is generally recognized that his studies were the first attempts to quantify data regarding this variable. Several reasons demand that attention be devoted to White's studies. First of all, his definitions of prestige are the ones accepted as the operational basis for this study. Secondly, this study follows his methodology in measuring prestige. Thirdly, some aspects of his data will be compared with the data of this study in an attempt to chart changes and trends in the prestige of public employment. Therefore, a brief review of his findings is in order.

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[13] "Bureaucracy," Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Volume III, p. 70.

[14] The Sociology of Work (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 129.

The geographical area on which White first centered his attention was Chicago, Illinois. In a survey conducted in 1928, he found that positions in the public service commanded substantially less esteem than the same positions in private employment. Of twenty occupations in the public service only two--library assistant and machinist--compared favorably with the same occupations in private industry. Certain traits relating to the performance of public employees were also investigated. White found that public employees compared unfavorably with employees of private firms. For example, public employees were rated much less courteous, competent, and honest than persons in private employment. The same pattern was generally true of other aspects of public employees' performances. Only on the features of personal dealings and publicity did public employees compare favorably with private employees.

In addition to specifying the low repute of public employment and public employees in Chicago, White's data also permitted him to designate those groups which accorded high or low prestige to the public service. His findings in this respect are best expressed in his own words:

> Employment by the City of Chicago apparently tends to command the respect of the immature, the uneducated, the foreign born, and the laboring people. Among persons of maturity of judgment, substantial education, native to Chicago, high in the economic and business world, a position with the City of Chicago is normally rated as one of low prestige.[15]

White, in other words, found that age, occupation, education, economic status, ethnic background, and sex were correlates of, i.e., related to prestige.

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[15] The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago, p. 144.

White offered several reasons to explain why the public service was held in such low esteem. They were (1) "politics" in the city government, (2) the lack of a civil service based on merit, (3) dishonesty and political graft, (4) the negative effect of the press, (5) the neglect of public affairs on the part of the well-to-do and of the "better" elements in the city, and (6) the lack of an esprit de corps on the part of municipal employees.[16]

Three years after the Chicago study a survey of prestige on a broader geographical base was conducted under Professor White's leadership.[17] Data on the prestige of public employment were collected by scholars in such cities as Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Trenton (N.J.), Los Angeles, and San Francisco. At the risk of some over-simplification, two major findings may be noted from this second study. First, the prestige of employment by the national government was found to be higher than the prestige of employment by the state government, which in turn was found to be higher than the prestige of municipal employment. Second, the prestige of public employment varied among cities, with prestige of the public service reported higher in all other cities than it was in Chicago.

The finding that the prestige of public employment varied from city to city is a matter of special relevance for using some of the data from the 1954 Detroit survey. Some comparisons will be made between data from White's 1928 Chicago study and data from the 1954 Detroit study to establish trends in public attitudes toward the prestige of public employment. On what basis may such comparisons be made? Were not the two surveys drawn from two different "publics,"

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[16] Ibid., p. 145ff.

[17] Further Contributions to the Prestige Value of Public Employment (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932).

namely, residents of Chicago and residents of Detroit? In other words, were Detroit and Chicago sufficiently similar in the late 1920's to give assurance that if White had conducted his 1928 study in Detroit instead of Chicago, his findings would still have been substantially the same? If a "yes" answer can be given to this latter question, then the chief intervening variable between the two studies is the time factor alone and the shift in the geographical situs may be discounted. The following three possible differences relate to the comparability between the two studies: (1) the difference in the politics and civic attitudes between Chicago and Detroit in the 1920's, (2) the difference in the composition and characteristics of the population between Chicago and Detroit around the time of White's study, and (3) differences in the sampling procedures used to secure interviewees by the two studies.

On the topic of politics and civic attitudes, Chicago has had a type of machine politics which Detroit has seldom, if ever, known. Detroit has had non-partisan, at-large elections since 1918; Chicago still has ward-type politics which have long made that city famous, or infamous.[18] It would seem that these differences might engender a more favorable attitude toward public officials in Detroit than in Chicago. On the other hand, these same differences might be interpreted to have just the reverse effect, i.e., to cause more favorable attitudes toward public officials in Chicago than in Detroit. Whatever the demerits of "machine" politics, with its favoratism, patronage, and corruption, it had one saving grace--it provided, in Gosnell's terms,

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[18]The classic account of Chicago politics is Harold F. Gosnell's Machine Politics, Chicago Model (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937). For comparison of Detroit and Chicago on an impressionistic basis consult the two chapters (one on Detroit and one on Chicago) in Robert S. Allen's Our Fair City (New York: Vanguard Press, 1947). Chapters 7 and 8 give some of the "ethos" of each city as it is seen through the eyes of a local journalist.

"goods, advice, brokerage, and deference."[19] Precinct captains in Chicago performed relief and friendly activities; they offered concrete services. In this sense they might have enhanced the attitudes of many Chicagoans, particularly those in the lower classes, toward public officials. On the other hand, while Chicago was dominated by William Hale "Big Bill" Thompson and/or Al Capone through most of the "Roaring Twenties," Detroit can hardly be said to have kept a clean slate through that decade, or after. It is clear from Leo Donovan's chapter in Our Fair City that vice, graft, and municipal corruption did not end in Detroit with non-partisanship or the Detroit Civic Uplift League.[20]

Perhaps the one thing that can be said about the difference in civic spirit (or civic contempt) between Chicago and Detroit is that little can be said! One would probably be just as correct to assume that there was no difference, at least in the decade of the nineteen twenties, as to assume that there was some difference at that time. If it is assumed that there was some difference we must be content with a number of intuitive judgments as to the extent and direction of the difference. If it is assumed that there was no substantial difference in attitudes toward public employment between the two cities, the problem is then shifted to any differences in population characteristics. Proceeding on this latter assumption, we turn to the question of whether the population characteristics were markedly different.

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[19]Gosnell, op. cit. p. 70ff.

[20]Allen, op. cit., p. 152ff. and especially p. 157. The story goes that in prohibition days public officials were bought so easily that tremendous quantities of liquor were "run" into Detroit from Canada just across the river. The standing jest of the day was the one which referred to the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel as the "Detroit-Windsor funnel".

Statistics on the population composition of the two cities are available from the 1930 United States census. Table 1 presents a comparison between the two cities on a few important population characteristics.

TABLE 1

COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATIONS OF CHICAGO AND DETROIT IN 1930: PERCENTAGE COMPARISONS FOR SEX, RACE, AGE, AND NATIVITY*

	Sex			Race			
	Men	Women	Total	White	Negro	Other	Total
Chicago %	50.6	49.4	100.0%	92.3	6.9	0.8	100.0%
Detroit %	52.4	47.6	100.0%	91.8	7.7	0.5	100.0%

	Age							
	under 10	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	over 60	Total
Chicago %	15.7	17.1	19.4	18.6	14.2	8.2	6.8	100.0%
Detroit %	18.7	16.3	20.6	20.2	13.2	6.4	4.6	100.0%

	Nativity			
	Native White	Foreign Born White	Other	Total
Chicago %	67.4	24.9	7.7	100.0%
Detroit %	66.5	25.4	8.1	100.0%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population, II. General Report, Statistics by Subjects.

Briefly, what Table 1 shows is that there were no large differences in population composition between Detroit and Chicago in 1930. If White had conducted his 1928 study in Detroit rather than Chicago, the universe on which he projected his findings would have been nearly identical.

The third and remaining consideration which relates to comparability is that of the different sampling methods employed by the two studies to select their respective respondents. This comparison

must proceed on the basis of methodology actually employed, however great the technical differences.

Because of the lack of means and techniques for securing a nearly representative sample, White and his associates obtained interviews wherever and whenever they could. Their procedure for selection of the persons to whom the questionnaire was given was eminently pragmatic. It was given to as many and as varied a number of people as was humanly and administratively possible. The sample was over-weighted with young people and college students. Forty-seven per cent of the interviewees were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four and 25 per cent of the total sample were students.[21]

White and his collaborators recognized the bias that existed in their sample. They therefore sought for a degree of representativeness by giving the questionnaire at business-men's luncheons, women's clubs, and to various other groups. Thus, while the sample was not a representative or systematic one, there was a sufficient number from varied segments of the population to provide the basis for some generalizations, particularly when the findings showed consistent trends among certain population groups. In his analysis White also attempted to compensate for the unrepresentativeness of the sample by adjusting one of his statistics--the prestige index--to approximate the true character of the Chicago population's attitude. He used census data figures on sex, age, occupation, and parentage for adjusting his calculations.[22]

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[21]For an analysis of the sample see White, The Prestige of Public Employment in Chicago, p. 16-20.

[22]Ibid., p. 28-30.

In the twenty-odd years since the Chicago study the methods of sampling and sample selection have become highly developed. The sampling statistician today has techniques and information which were unknown in earlier years. Benefiting from these techniques, the Detroit Area Study has been able to undertake surveys which closely approximate a representative cross-section of the Detroit metropolitan area.[23] If anything can be said about the effect of the different sampling methods employed by the two studies, it is this: any spurious results traceable to the sampling bias present in the Chicago study would probably reinforce the statements which will be made about the changing attitudes toward the public service. Because of the large proportion of young persons and students included, White's reported findings may have been more favorable to public employment than if the sample had been representative. This would indicate that the actual attitudes of Chicagoans toward public employment were even more negative than White discovered. It would also suggest that any changes in these attitudes during the years intervening between the Chicago and Detroit studies has been greater than the comparisons suggest.

Other Research on Prestige

Since the time of White's studies, students and practitioners of public administration have found that the area of attitude and opinion polling has provided a source of useful information. Among the several topics selected for study by this technique a few surveys have dealt, either directly or indirectly, with the topic of prestige.

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[23]The sampling procedure for the Detroit Area Study will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter under the topic "Methodological Considerations."

One theme, however, has continued to run through the literature on the prestige of public employment. The theme is a continuation of White's early findings--that the public service is held in low esteem.

A few empirical studies between 1945 and 1953 seemed to support the general assumption that the prestige of public employment remains low. In 1947 the President's Scientific Research Board reported that among a representative sample of scientists in the United States the desirability of government employment ran a poor third behind university and industrial employment.[24] One of the statements summarizing opinions of scientists about government employment was, "There is a widespread belief that many fine scientific minds are 'trapped in a blind alley' under present conditions of government employment and advancement."[25]

In 1948 the Personnel Policy Committee of the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government conducted surveys of college seniors and of present and past top-level career employees. The findings pointed to the relative unattractiveness of a career in the federal government and the report indicated that great strides could be made in improving the prestige of the federal service.[26]

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[24]Administration for Research, Vol. III of Science and Public Policy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947). Research on the attitudes of scientists who work only in government was done by Clark D. Ahlberg and John C. Honey, Attitudes of Scientists and Engineers About Their Government Employment (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University, 1950). These authors summarize their findings in "The Scientist's Attitude Toward Government Employment," Science, Vol. 113 (May 4, 1951), p. 505-510.

[25]Science and Public Policy, Vol. III, p. 143.

[26]Report of the Personnel Policy Committee, Commission on the Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, Appendix C, "Studies in the Prestige of Federal Employment" (Washington: October, 1948, mimeographed).

Two more recent studies also focused on college seniors. One dealt with the attitudes of engineering students toward federal employment.[27] The other surveyed the opinions of a group of college seniors with varied undergraduate training.[28] Both studies reported that the college seniors favored private employment over federal employment. While job security was seen as one of the main favorable features of federal employment the college students indicate that this was not one of the more important considerations to them in choosing a job. One important consideration in employment selection was pay, and on this factor, industrial employment was heavily preferred over federal employment. These two studies also pointed to the need for the improvement of federal recruitment procedures as a way of drawing better people into government employment.

Each of these empirical studies pointed to the low prestige of public employment as compared to private employment. Yet each investigation centered on select groups, either scientists, college students or present and past top-level administrators. Would there be any reason to expect that the population at large would hold attitudes that were markedly different from the attitudes of these special groups?

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[27]George P. Bush, Engineering Students and Federal Employment (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1951). A summary of the findings may be found in Science, Vol. 114 (November 2, 1951), p. 445-458, "Federal Recruitment of Junior Engineers," by George P. Bush and Lowell H. Hattery.

[28]Charles M. Hersh, College Seniors and Federal Employment (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1953). A summary of the study appears in Science, Vol. 120 (July 2, 1954), p. 12-14, "Attitudes of College Seniors toward Federal and Industrial Employment," by Charles M. Hersh and Lowell H. Hattery. A recent article by Lowell H. Hattery indicates the presumption that the prestige of the public service remains low. See Lowell H. Hattery, "The Prestige of Federal Employment," Public Administration Review, Vol. 15 (Summer, 1955), p. 181-187.

Some basis for expecting substantially different attitudes is derived from the National Opinion Research Center studies done in 1947.[29] In a study of how a sample of the population ranked different occupations, the Center found that positions in the government service commanded very high prestige. However, the positions studied were all top-level ones, and primarily "political" in nature, e.g., United States Supreme Court Judge, State Governor, diplomat, mayor of a large city, and so on. None were positions in the permanent civil service. Therefore, it seemed important to find out what the populace's attitudes are toward positions in the public service that are typical of the bulk of administrative skills required by government.

We may conclude this section on studies of prestige with two general observations. First, the investigation of selected groups is necessary and useful for program planning but the attitudes of the entire population must also be secured to understand the emerging trends in attitudes toward the public service.[30] It is hoped that this study will help clarify such trends. Second, with the exception of White's research, most of the empirical studies of prestige have assumed that the desirability of working for government is a measure of the prestige of the public service. Or rather, the prestige of the public service has been defined as and equated with the willingness to accept a job in the public service. It has already been suggested that the nature of prestige is something more than just the variable of desiring to work for the government. Therefore it is not an adequate measure of the prestige of public employment to ask the single question,

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[29]"Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation," Opinion News, Vol. 9 (September 1, 1947), p. 12-28.

[30]Cf., Morris Janowitz and Deil Wright, "The Prestige of Public Employment: 1929 and 1954," Public Administration Review, Vol. 16 (Winter, 1956), p. 15.

"Would you like to work for the government?" For that reason White's Chicago study is the touchstone in the technique of measuring prestige.

Measurement of Prestige

It has been over a quarter of a century since White undertook the Chicago research but his basic insight into the measurement of prestige stands as a model for further research. He offered the subjects in the Chicago study a list of twenty paired occupations. Each paired occupation differed only in that one was a position in municipal employment while the other was the same occupation in private employment. The subject was then asked to select which of the positions, public or private, he felt had more prestige. In order to direct the respondent's attention to the prestige of the job, the following introductory statement preceded the list of occupations:

> The following pairs of occupations are intended to be substantially equivalent as to salaries and duties.
> Check in each pair the occupation for which you have the higher esteem.
> Consider each pair as a unit without reference to other pairs and deal with it before considering the next pair.
>
> 1. ( ) Stenographer, Treasurer's office, Equitable Life Insurance Company.
> ( ) Stenographer, Treasurers office, City of Chicago.
>
> 2. ( ) Accountant, Department of Public Works, City of Chicago
> ( ) Accountant, George A. Fuller Construction Company.[31]

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[31]White, The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago, p. 4.

The occupations White used ranged from janitor and elevator starter to accountant and chemist. He focused not on the top-level administrator but on the middle and lower level positions in the bureaucratic structure.[32] Using White's technique of measuring prestige, the Detroit Area Study included a much smaller list of specific paired occupations in its interview schedule. White's lead was again followed by selecting occupations which were typical of most positions in the public administrative hierarchy. Stenographer, accountant, night watchman, and doctor were the job classifications employed by the Detroit Area Study. In the Detroit study the question was asked as follows:

> We'd like to know what people think of government jobs and government workers. If these jobs are about the same in kind of work, pay, and so forth, which have the most prestige?
>
> (a) a stenographer in a life insurance company, or
> a stenographer in the city tax assessor's office.
> (b) an accountant in the Detroit Department of Public Works, or
> an accountant in a private accounting firm.
> (c) a night watchman in a bank, or
> a night watchman in the City Hall.
> (d) a doctor in the Detroit Receiving hospital, or
> a doctor who is on the staff of a private hospital.

To facilitate interviewing and to aid the respondent in answering, the occupational items were printed on a small card and handed to the respondent by the interviewer.

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[32]The true prestige of the entire public service would be the relative prestige rating of all positions in the government service when compared with similar positions in private employment. Since it is obviously not feasible to administer such a comprehensive survey, it is necessary to select occupations which typify the majority of positions in the civil service.

Although there are minor differences in question wording between the two surveys these common elements stand out: (1) differentials such as pay, duties, etc., between public and private employment are excluded, (2) the occupations used are not top-level administrative jobs, (3) all positions are in the municipal service, and (4) the focal point is the prestige of the position depending on whether it is in the public service or in private industry.

It should be emphasized that the central concern of this study is with the prestige which the entire population has for the public bureaucracy. It is not concerned with select groups and their desires to work for the government in specialist capacities. The measurement of prestige is based on the populace's esteem for positions typical of the bulk of jobs in the public service and the analysis will center on the varying prestige accorded the public service by different segments of the population.

Methodological Considerations

The Detroit metropolitan area was the geographic setting for this study. A cross-section sample of the population was selected from the city of Detroit and the surrounding urbanized areas. The basis for defining the "Detroit metropolitan area" was all the area in Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland counties which is divided into census tracts by the U.S. Census. (see Map 1) Census tracts are merely geographic areas for the collection and compilation of census data. This area includes 89 per cent of the total population of Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland counties. These three counties comprise the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Area according to the definition used by the U.S. Census Bureau. Only the outlying parts of the three counties do not lie within the sampled areas outlined by Map 1.

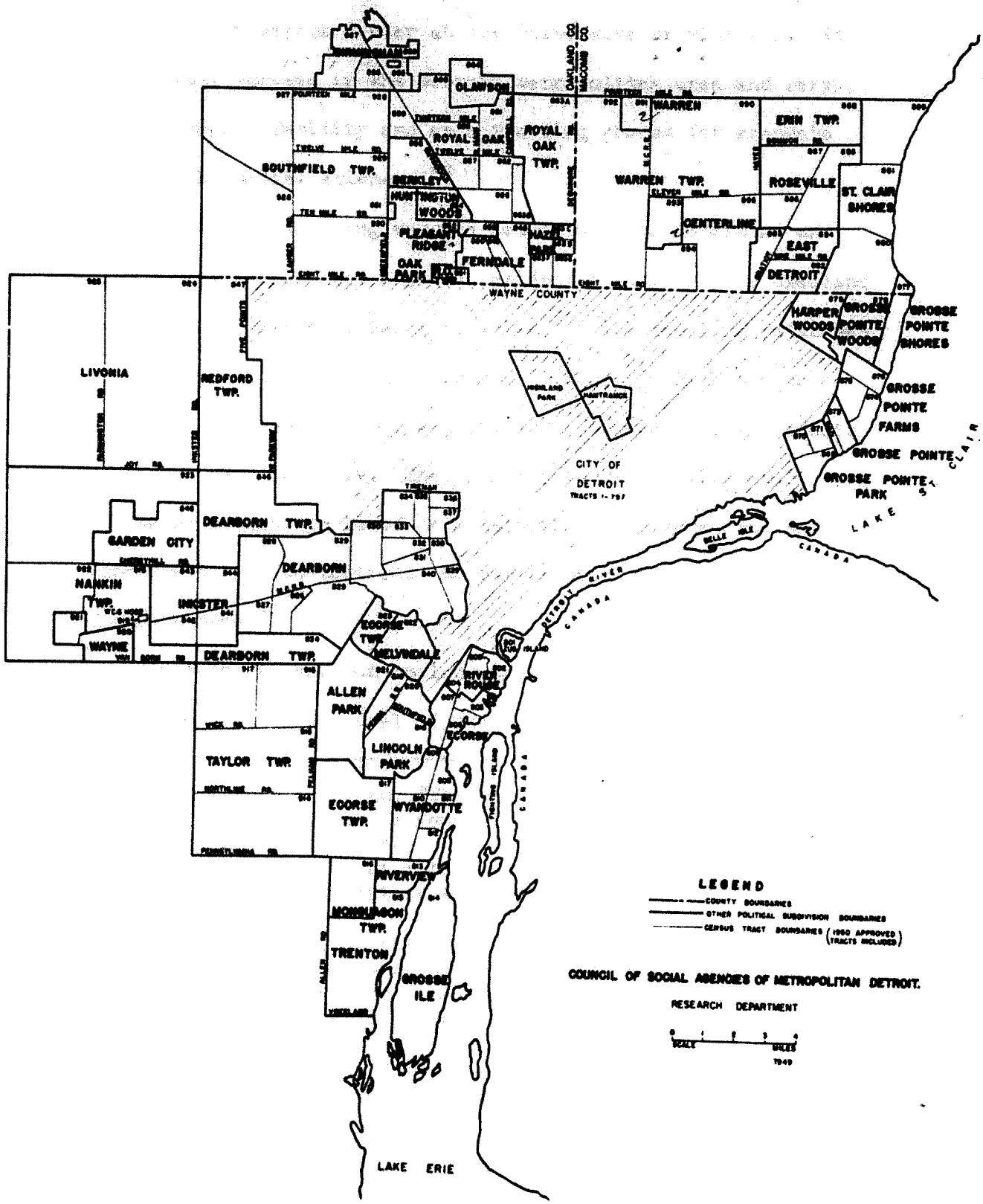


Figure 1. The "Detroit Area" as Defined by the Detroit Area Study

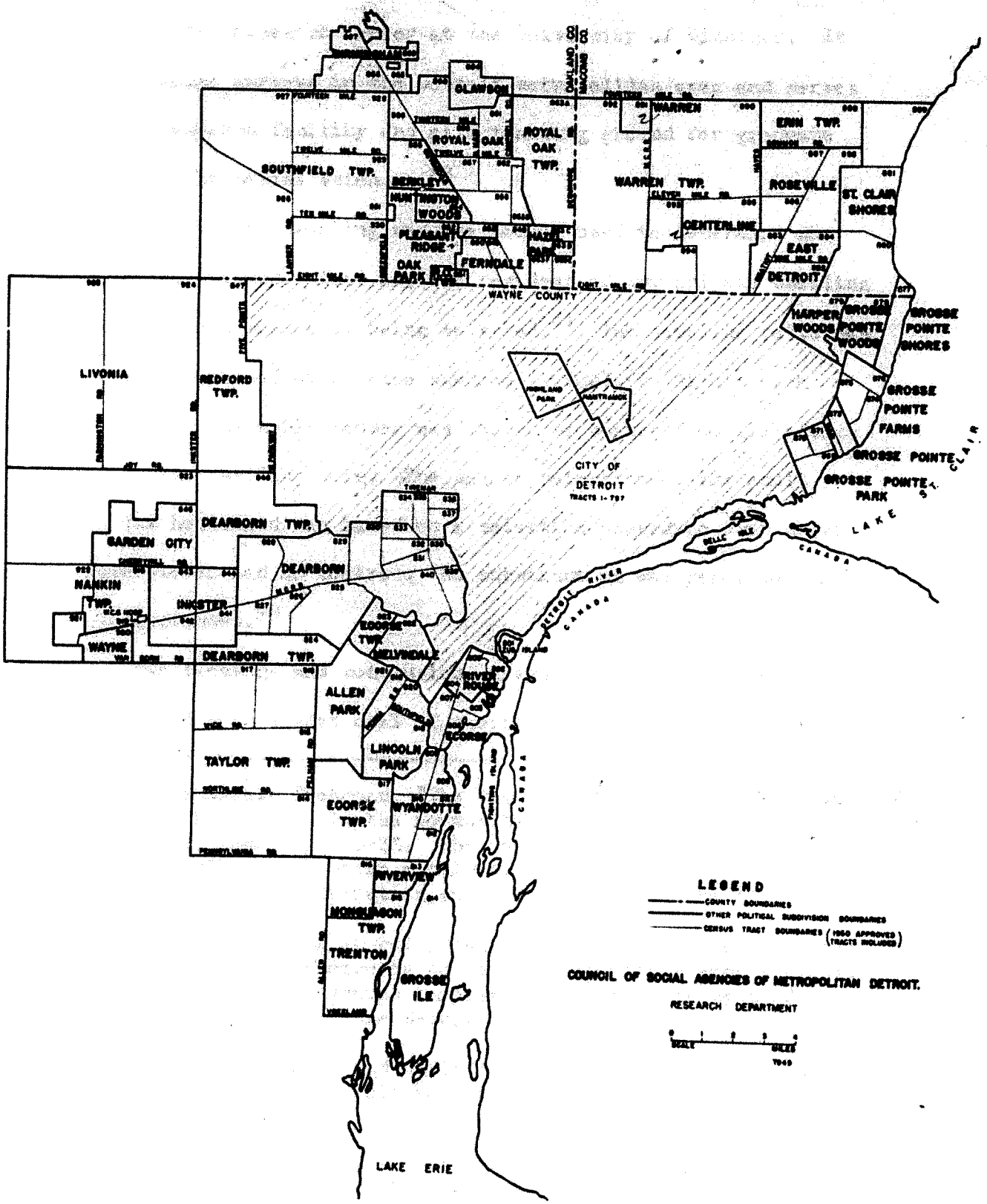


Figure 1. The "Detroit Area" as Defined by the Detroit Area Study

The empirical data were collected through the facilities of the Detroit Area Study, a continuing research organization affiliated with the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. It conducts annual surveys in the Detroit metropolitan area and serves both as a research facility and as a training ground for graduate students in the social sciences.[33]

Probability sampling was the method used to determine who would be interviewed. That is, the resident of any private dwelling unit had a known chance of being selected.[34] The sampling ratio was one dwelling unit of every nine hundred (1/900).[35] Within each dwelling unit one adult member was chosen by chance from all adults living in the dwelling unit. The chance selection of the adult within the household was based on a selection procedure over which the interviewer had no control. No substitution was permitted under any circumstances.[36]

The findings and conclusions drawn from sample surveys are often treated with a good deal of scepticism. This, among other

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[33]See Ronald Freedman, "The Detroit Area Study: A Training and Research Laboratory in the Community," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 59 (July, 1953), p. 30-33. The Detroit Area Study has available for free distribution a short publication describing the purpose, objectives, methods of operation, and publications of the Study.

[34]Persons living in religious and educational institutions, transient hotels, large rooming houses, and hospitals were excluded from the sample. These groups compose less than 5 per cent of the total adult population of the Detroit area.

[35]See Leslie Kish and Lysle Sommers, "Selection of a Sample of Dwelling Units for the Detroit Metropolitan Area," (Ann Arbor: Detroit Area Study, 1952, mimeographed).

[36]For a full discussion of the random selection of an adult within the dwelling unit see Leslie Kish, "A Procedure for Objective Respondent Selection within the Household," Journal of the American Statistical Association, Vol. 44 (September, 1949), p. 380-387.

reasons, makes it desirable to check the adequacy of the sample selection and interviewing by comparing the data of the Detroit Area Study with data from external sources. Table 2 shows that on the number of persons per dwelling unit the Detroit Area Study data correspond very closely with those of the United States Census.[37] This table is not selected solely to prove a point. Similarly close correspondence occurs for data from other sources and for other characteristics.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF PERSONS PER DWELLING UNIT FOR THE DETROIT AREA: COMPARISONS OF FINDINGS OF U.S. CENSUS (1950) AND DETROIT AREA STUDY (1953, 1954, 1955)*

Persons Per Dwelling Unit	U.S. Census	Detroit Area Study		
	1950	1953	1954	1955
1 person	6%	7%	6%	8%
2 persons	28	28	28	26
3 persons	24	24	21	21
4 persons	20	22	21	21
5 persons	12	9	13	14
6 persons	6	5	7	5
7 or more persons	5	5	4	5
	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Source: A Social Profile of Detroit, 1955 (Detroit Area Study, 1956), p. 37.

However, any sample, because it is a sample, will tend to depart somewhat from the true nature of the total population on a pure chance basis. Because of the mathematical rigor with which the Detroit Area Study sample is drawn, it is possible to calculate the probabilities of the departure from the actual percentage for the total population.

[37] It should be noted here that the figures for the United States Census are those for the "Detroit Standard Metropolitan Area" while the Detroit Area Study data are for the area defined above. (See Map 1)

The extent of this departure is dependent on the size of the sample and on the characteristic measured. Table I in Appendix A takes both of these factors into account. An example illustrating the use of Table I is included in Appendix A.

Besides the simple amount of sampling error, it is desirable to know whether or not a difference between two percentages is statistically significant; that is, whether the difference would remain if other samples of the population were interviewed or if the entire population were interviewed. Stated in another way, the question is whether the percentage differences between the two groups is due to sampling (chance) error or to some actual difference which exists between these groups. Having both the size of any two groups and the percentages for subgroups within each one, it is possible to determine whether a significant difference exists between the subgroups by using Table II in Appendix A.[38] An example is provided in Appendix A to illustrate the use of Table II.

The interviewing process is no less important than the sampling methodology. The interviewing for the Detroit survey was done by graduate students and professional interviewers. The graduate students were enrolled in a credit course in field methods of survey research offered by the Department of Sociology at the University of Michigan. The students were closely connected with all stages of the survey--from hypothesis construction, question writing, and pre-testing, to interviewing, coding, and initial analysis of results. The professional interviewers were on the Detroit field staff of the Survey Research Center.

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[38]Throughout this study whenever percentage differences between two subgroups are designated as significant the 5 per cent level of confidence (or 95 per cent probability) is applied. In other words, this means simply that the observed percentage difference could arise by chance only once in twenty trials.

The interview schedule consisted of two parts, (a) substantive questions, and (b) census-type questions.[39] Total time for a single interview varied from one-half hour to two hours. The average interview required about one hour to complete. In a few cases where the person selected did not speak English, an interviewer fluent in the particular foreign language took the interview and translated it into English.

The present investigation utilizes data collected in the 1954 survey conducted in February of that year. The objective of the 1954 survey was to study the metropolitan populations' attitudes, contacts, knowledge, and evaluations of the public administrative process.[40]

Greater Detroit has characteristics that are typical of many large urban places. It is highly industrialized with a heterogeneous population and a history of rapid population growth. Certain other factors make it unique. Detroit is the hub of the automobile industry and subject to the fluctuations of that industry. It also has a comparatively large number of recent southern rural migrants.[41] Considering all of the above factors we feel that the findings presented here have fairly broad relevance for public administration in other urban areas and in the United States at large. However, these findings and conclusions should not be taken as valid generalizations applicable to any number of specific communities.

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[39] See Appendix B for the questions in the interview schedule which were used in this study.

[40] For a comprehensive statement of the study objectives see Morris Janowitz, "Administrative Behavior in the Metropolitan Community: Elements in a Theoretical Orientation". (Ann Arbor: Detroit Area Study, 1953, mimeographed).

[41] See Some Social and Economic Characteristics of the Detroit Area Population, 1952 (Ann Arbor: Detroit Area Study, 1953, mimeographed).

CHAPTER II

MAJOR HYPOTHESES

The major hypotheses of this study are of three general types. First, there are those hypotheses concerned with time trends in the prestige of public employment. The second group of hypotheses deals with the variables which are, and are not, correlates of the prestige for public employment. Third, there are those hypotheses which pertain to popular conceptions of the public service insofar as these conceptions or attitudes are necessary for the proper functioning of the public bureaucracy in a democratic society.

Time Trends in the Prestige of Public Employment

Questions similar to those used by White in his Chicago study were employed by the Detroit Area Study to collect data for comparing the past and present (as of 1954) status of the public service. The expectation was that the prestige of the public service had increased since the time of White's study. The basis for this expectation was twofold.

First of all, the expansion of services by all levels of government since 1930 has meant increased benefits for wide segments of the population. This, it was felt, would result in more favorable attitudes toward the public bureaucracy which dispenses these benefits.

Second, it was believed that the changed emphasis in career values in American society--job security has become a dominant value --would lead to increased prestige for public employment. The public's

image of the job security of public employment would enhance the esteem for the public service.

Bearing in mind the considerations mentioned in Chapter I about comparability of the two studies, the Detroit Area Study data were expected to show the improved status of the public service since the time of the Chicago study. The comparison of data from the two studies occurs in parts of Chapters III and IV.

Correlates and Non-Correlates of Prestige

The second group of hypotheses deals with the problem of specifying those variables which are or are not related to high and low prestige. The question is, "What are the correlates and non-correlates of prestige for the public service?"

Here we shall again have occasion to refer to White's earlier findings. He found that the variables of sex, age, ethnic background, race, education, and occupation were all related to the prestige of public employment. The direction of the relationship was, of course, that female sex, youth, foreign birth, and low social status were associated with high prestige, whereas male sex, maturity, native birth, and high social status were associated with low prestige. It was expected that the Detroit data would reveal essentially the same correlates as White found and show the same direction of relationships. Thus, groups with low income, low education, and low social status would still be expected to have the highest respect for the public service. The socio-economic correlates of the prestige of public employment are considered in Chapter IV in conjunction with the comparisons of the Chicago and Detroit data.

Besides obtaining data on the above socio-economic variables, the 1954 study sought information on the political attitudes of the respondents. Three hypotheses were postulated regarding the relationship between political attitudes and the prestige of public employment. First of all, persons demanding that government be an active, positive agent in the society were expected to hold higher respect for the public service than persons who preferred that government occupy a limited and narrowly circumscribed role. Second, it was hypothesized that partisan political identification would be related to the prestige of public employment. Democrats were expected to give higher prestige to the public service than Republicans. In this connection, political activity was expected to be related to the prestige of public employment. The politically apathetic were expected to offer higher prestige than the politically energetic. Third, the politically self-confident individuals, i.e., those who feel themselves effective and influential in political affairs were expected to give lower prestige to the public service than do the politically un-confident. The rationale and data concerning each of these expected correlates are treated in Chapter V--Political Perspectives.

Certain social structure and political attitude variables were postulated as correlates of the prestige accorded public employment. In addition to these variables, it seemed pertinent to inquire as to what attitudes toward the public administrative process <u>are</u> and <u>are not</u> correlates of the prestige for the public service. The Detroit Area Study undertook a wide investigation of the population's contacts, evaluations, and attitudes toward specific public administrative agencies and toward public administration in general. These we shall call administrative variables, or administrative perspectives.

The following three administrative variables were expected to be correlates of the prestige for public employment: (1) the desirability of working for government, (2) evaluations of the interpersonal relations between public servants and the citizenry, and (3) the demand for increased administrative action. We expected that those who preferred to work for the government, those who had favorable evaluations of their personal relations with public employees, and those who demanded an increase in the administrative activities of government would all give high prestige to the public service. These three variables, as correlates of prestige, are treated in Chapter III.

But are there any important and meaningful administrative variables unrelated to prestige? Neither past research nor logical inference provided much help in attempting to postulate what administrative factors, attitudinal and otherwise, were not correlates of the prestige of public employment. Hence, no specific hypotheses were drawn and, especially in this area, the data from the Detroit Area Study are primarily exploratory and suggestive rather than definitive and conclusive. The administrative variables which proved to be non-correlates of prestige are discussed in Chapter VI.

The Public Service in a Democratic Society

Two of the three general types of hypotheses in this study have been discussed. The third remaining type treats the hypotheses pertaining to popular attitudes which must exist toward the public bureaucracy if that bureaucracy is to fulfill its proper role in a democratic society. What is the proper role of the public bureaucracy in a democratic society? A summary answer to such a question might be that the bureaucracy must be the servant of the people, not

the master of them. As servant of the people, however, it must not be completely servile. It must maintain a requisite amount of authority to maintain order. Therefore, the public bureaucracy must also be seen, in some degree, as the master of the people. The problem then is to specify the attitudes toward the public service which will maintain the bureaucracy in a balance between servant and master in the society.

How should persons in a democratic community perceive the institution of the public bureaucracy? Do persons in a democratic community perceive it this way?[1] In this study we shall be mainly concerned with the chief preconditions necessary for the public service to play its proper role in a democracy. Specifically, we must ask whether these preconditions are met so far as the prestige of the public service is concerned.

This study postulates two perceptions which the population must have of the public service if that service is to operate in a democratic context. They are (1) that the public bureaucracy is seen as a "political" institution in society and (2) that the public bureaucracy is seen as an impartial or neutral agent in society. Furthermore, it is postulated that in a democracy the working consensus on which the public service operates results from an interaction of these two perceptions. What are the full implications of each of these perceptions or views of the public service?

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[1]For an attempt to specify some of the preconditions necessary for a democratic political process, see Morris Janowitz and Dwaine Marvick, Competitive Pressure and Democratic Consent; an Interpretation of the 1952 Election (Ann Arbor: Bureau of Government, Institute of Public Administration, University of Michigan, 1956).

The hypothesis that the public bureaucracy is seen as a "political" institution implies that the bureaucracy has a will or direction of its own, that it is not merely a mechanical, value-free apparatus for executing public policy. In a democratic society this "political" role requires that the public service must remain responsive to changing popular demands. The public bureaucracy must adjust itself to emerging political and social movements. If it does not, then the public service may constitute a strong repressive body operating in disregard of the people's wishes. As Sir Jan Christian Smuts once expressed it:

> But in the complicated organism of the state, any organ which becomes independent of the rest becomes a danger, and nothing is so dangerous to the state as a public service which does not march with the people, and becomes a drag on well-ordered progress; it may even have to be dynamited out of its fixed position[2]

The public service must keep in step with popular demands. If it does not then the population at large will not identify its own goals with the goals of the public bureaucracy. The lack of such identification will undermine the consensus on which the public service in a democracy depends. Two quotations suggest the necessity and manner by which this identification may be achieved.

> It is by what they [men] themselves can tell their government, and do within its framework, and elicit a response to their own questions or appeals, that they learn to feel at home in it and to identify themselves with it. To elicit full identification and loyalty, therefore, a government must be to a considerable extent accessible and predictable. It must be accessible to the questions, problems, needs,

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[2]Africa and some World Problems (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 174.

> desires, and communications of its subjects; its office must be accessible to personnel recruited from their ranks; the minds of its decision-makers must remain open to the hopes, fears and wishes of the population; and their commands and actions must be predictable in their impact on the lives and fortunes of its citizens.[3]

> Unless the members of an administrative system are drawn from various classes and regions, unless careers are open in it to talents, unless the way is prepared by an appropriate scheme of general education, unless public officials are subjected to internal and external criticism of a constructive nature, then the public personnel will become a bureaucracy dangerous to society and to popular government.[4]

These two quotations point up the argument developed here, namely, that in a democratic society the public service must not be isolated from and in opposition to the rest of the society. On the contrary, it must be seen as an institution which is responsive to popular wishes.

This postulated perception of the public service can be summarized as follows: the public bureaucracy is seen as a policy-influencing institution in society and individual attitudes toward this institution vary depending on how the responsibilities which government must impose are allocated and how the benefits which government provides are dispensed. What, then, are the corollaries of this postulate?

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[3]Karl W. Deutsch in Totalitarianism, Carl J. Friedrich, editor, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 316-317.

[4]Charles A. Beard, "Administration, A Foundation of Government," American Political Science Review, Vol. 34 (April, 1940), p. 234. See also in this regard Norton E. Long, "Bureaucracy and Constitutionalism," American Political Science Review, Vol. 46 (September, 1952), p. 808-818, where the thesis is developed that the bureaucracy itself is an important medium of political representation.

If the public service is seen as a "political" institution, how will attitudes toward the prestige of the public service vary among different groups within the population? It would seem that those who benefit the most, or have immediate prospects of benefiting the most from the actions of government, would accord higher prestige to the public service than those on whom a larger share of the burdens of government fall. Prestige would be accorded very largely on the basis of subjectively perceived self-interest. Thus we would expect the lower class, lower income, lower occupational, and lesser educated groups to give higher prestige to the public service than their socio-economic opposites. If the public bureaucracy is a "political" institution then political attitudes, as well as social structure variables, should influence the prestige accorded public employment. Those who demand increased governmental action would give higher prestige than those who are less desirous of, or opposed to, more government action. Political party identification might also be expected to influence prestige with Democrats rating the prestige of public employment higher than Republicans.

People may give esteem to the public service on the basis of their own self interest, but this factor alone is not sufficient to maintain the effective operation of the public bureaucracy. Nothing short of chaos would result if people were at liberty to ignore laws when the laws were not personally advantageous. An additional element must be present to compensate for the situations when the bureaucracy's acts run counter to the self-interest of an individual or group. This additional element must operate to insure minimum compliance with rules and regulations that conflict with the personal advantage of some individuals or groups. The public bureaucracy must,

in some measure at least, override the wishes and demands of some parts of the population. In this sense, it must be the master as well as the servant of the people.

For the public service to be the master, the populace must see it in a particular way. That particular way is the neutral or "umpire" perception of the public service. At the base of this perception lies the classical idea that man is, to some degree, a rational being. Modern research may have rightly discredited the Attic Greek and eighteenth-century rationalist over-emphasis on man's governance by reason. New techniques of research have not, however, erased the element of truth contained in this view of man's nature. Democracy rests to a large degree on the ability and willingness of men to find rational solutions to their problems, i.e., democracy shuns the use of brute force or violence as a problem-solving device. In the words of one writer on democracy, "Such [political] matters require systematic effort to contract the area of conflict and passion and widen the area of accredited knowledge as the basis of action."[5]

Democracy, if it is to exist, cannot presuppose that man is simply a creature of passions and guided only by his immediate self interest. This self-interest orientation is explicit in the first view of the public service that--the bureaucracy must be amenable to the political demands of the people. Democracy, while not forgetting that men are chiefly motivated by their self-interest, must place faith in the capability of men to adjust their conflicting interests

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[5]Felix Frankfurter, The Public and Its Government, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), p. 152.

through rational methods.[6]

How is this rather theoretical discussion connected with the population's perception of the public service? In this way: it is not sufficient that the public bureaucracy be seen in a "political" context. The population must also be aware of the socially useful functions which the bureaucracy performs irrespective of whether the benefits dispensed or restrictions enforced work to the disadvantage of some segments of the population. Those who object to certain functions of the public service because the functions do not coincide with their own self-interest, must still recognize the legitimacy of the public bureaucracy.

Upon what basis is this legitimacy established? We may fruitfully call on Professor MacIver again for an answer to the question. "It [democracy] achieves for men one important liberation --it enables them to dissociate, in degree at least, the value of the institution from the judgment they may pass on the functionaries of that institution."[7] Here is the nub of the discussion. The institution of the public bureaucracy, in its procedures as an arm of government, is the repository of authority. Authority is not vested in the person who wields governmental power but in the impartial and impersonal procedures by which the public service administers the functions allocated to it.

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[6]An objection might be raised that the "reason" men use is only the dictate of their long-run or "enlightened" self-interest. Even granting this objection however, does not refute the point that this distinction between "rationality" and "self-interest" constitutes a researchable formulation, however the two terms are defined.

[7]Web of Government, p. 50.

The public bureaucracy achieves the requisite amount of authority and secures compliance with its decisions largely on the basis of its being perceived as an impartial or neutral institution. This is not to say that all or most of the population feels that the public service is completely impartial. It is rather to say that varying evaluations of the actual operations of the public administrative process should not lead to varying compliance with administrative regulations. One of the assumptions of this study was that the prestige of the public service is an indicator of the authoritative (or legitimate) position of the public bureaucracy, and thereby it is some measure of the public's predisposition to comply with administrative rules and regulations. Granting this assumption, we hypothesize that variables on the general operations of the public administrative process would be unrelated to the prestige of the public service. This hypothesis is necessarily broad and speculative. The specific variables which prove to be unrelated to prestige were revealed by an ex post facto determination. These variables, which are non-correlates of prestige, are discussed in Chapter VI.

Let us recapitulate. In modern urban-industrial democratic society we hypothesize that the public bureaucracy operates on a consensus which is a blend of two attitudinal conditions in the population. First, the public bureaucracy should be seen in a "political" context. In that context it must remain responsive to the self-interest demands of the population. Second, but no less important than the first, the public bureaucracy should be perceived as an impartial and neutral institution so far as the formation and execution of public policy. This view of the public service arises out of the rational awareness on the part of the public that the

governmental bureaucracy performs necessary social functions, e.g., preservation of order. These two perceptions operate cooperatively to make the public bureaucracy a legitimate (or authoritative) decision-maker and to facilitate citizen compliance with its decisions.

Perhaps the key word to summarize the inter-relationship of these two perceptions is ambivalence. Neither the political nor the neutral view of the public service must become paramount. In a democratic society the public service must command prestige which is neither inordinately high nor disruptingly low. Ambivalence toward the public service must exist both within the single person and within various groups. This ambivalence is best illustrated from responses to questions asked about the public service at the New York World's Fair in 1940.[8] The group polled was strongly in favor of the merit principle that "public employees should be selected through open competition among all competent persons who wish to apply."[9] And yet the very same group also distinctly accepted the proposition that "local government jobs should go to local residents."[10]

If the public bureaucracy becomes divorced from the "political" context in which it operates and completely out of step with major segments of the population, then it will likely be an ineffective organization, incapable of enforcing its decisions on its citizens, e.g., French tax collection. On the other hand, if the public

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[8]Public Relations of Public Personnel Agencies (Chicago: Civil Service Assembly, 1941), Appendix B.

[9]Ibid., p. 256.

[10]Ibid., p. 258.

bureaucracy is held in high esteem largely on the basis of its complete neutrality, then it may tend toward a strong and authoritarian organization, e.g., the Germany civil service.[11]

The public service in a democracy is faced with this paradox: it must have the requisite amount of authority to be able to enforce the laws and yet not so much authority as to endanger the liberties of its citizens. This study will investigate only a minute facet of how the paradox is reconciled. It will specify the social, economic, political, and administrative factors and attitudes that pertain to the prestige of the public service in a democratic community.

Summary

This summary is not for the purpose of restating the major hypotheses but rather to enumerate the parts of the study which deal with each of the major types of hypotheses.

The time trends in the prestige of public employment are discussed in Chapters III and IV. The chief source of comparative data is White's study of prestige in Chicago.

The correlates and non-correlates of prestige are of major concern throughout the study. Part of Chapter III deals with the administrative variables which are correlates of the prestige for public employment. Likewise, Chapters IV and V deal respectively with social structure and political correlates of prestige. Chapter VI discusses the administrative variables which are not correlates of prestige.

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[11]It is relevant to observe the permeation of the Hegelian notion of the complete impartiality of the German civil service, or what might be termed the "umpire" role of the civil service. See George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory (revised ed.; New York: Holt, 1950), p. 661-664.

The supporting data for the hypotheses about the public service in a democratic society largely parallel the data on the correlates of prestige. The "political" or self-interest perception of the public service proceeds from the administrative, socio-economic, and political correlates of prestige in Chapters III, IV, and V. The impartial or neutral perception is considered with the non-correlates in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Administrative perspectives may be defined as the attitudes of the public toward the public service and the public servant. Stated in a different way, administrative perspectives are attitudes toward the public administrative process. The Detroit Area Study attempted to secure information on several administrative perspectives. The questions under this heading in Appendix B suggest the range of attitudinal information sought.

Three administrative perspectives have been selected to give a broad over-view of how the population sees public administration. They are (1) the desirability of working for the United States government as opposed to a private firm and the reasons offered for the individual's preference, (2) the citizen's evaluation of his dealings with public employees, and (3) the prestige accorded to public employment. Wherever possible the results of other surveys will be used for comparative purposes and, since the prestige of public employment is of central concern, special attention will be paid to the relationship of prestige to other administrative perspectives.

Desirability of Government as an Employer

"If the pay were the same would you prefer to work for the United States government or for a private firm?" This question was asked of all respondents in the Detroit metropolitan area. Their

responses show a strong preference for government employment over employment by a private firm. (Table 3) Fifty-six per cent of the sampled population selected government and 30 per cent private employment, while the remaining 14 per cent offered no preference or had no opinion.

TABLE 3

TREND IN PREFERENCE FOR GOVERNMENT VERSUS PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES, 1940 AND 1947, AND IN THE DETROIT AREA, 1954

Employment Preference	National Survey (Fortune) 1940[a]	National Survey (AIPO) 1947[b]	Detroit Area Study 1954	(Number of cases)
U.S. Government	40%	41%	56%	(430)
Private Firm	50	40	30	(227)
No Preference; no opinion	10	19	14	(107)
Total	100%	100%	100%	(764)

[a] Fortune Poll, February, 1940. Question asked: "Would you prefer the government or private business as an employer?"

[b] American Institute of Public Opinion, August, 1947. Question asked: "Assuming the pay is the same, would you prefer to work for the U.S. government or for a private firm?"

From the responses to similar questions asked by two national opinion survey organizations there is reason to believe that the present favorable position of government as an employer (in the Detroit area at least) has developed over a number of years. The percentage preferring private employment showed a consistent decline from 50 in 1940 to 40 in 1947 to 30 in 1954 while the percentage preferring government employment rose markedly from 41 in 1947 to 56 in 1954.

Three factors must be kept in mind when interpreting this comparison. First there is the non-comparability of the question asked in the 1940 survey with the questions in the 1947 and 1954 surveys. The Fortune survey in 1940 did not include the assumption that "the pay is the same," nor did it specify that "the government" was the United States (national) government. The 1947 and 1954 surveys were identical on both of these points. The effect, if a question identical to the other two had been asked in the 1940 survey, would probably be to raise the percentage favorable to government employment and perhaps lower the percentage favorable to private employment.

Secondly, it should be emphasized that in both the 1947 and 1954 surveys the choice is between employment by the United States government or a private firm. The meaning is employment with the national government. On the basis of White's findings regarding the relative status of federal, state, and municipal employment, we would expect to find a smaller percentage preferring public employment if the question were asked as applying to state or local government.[1]

Thirdly, it must be recalled that the Detroit Area Study sampled only an urban industrial population, while the national surveys encompassed both urban and rural populations. The responses from an urban area, as compared to those from a rural area, are expected to be more favorable to governmental employment. This factor would apply directly to Detroit where seasonal lay-offs and technological unemployment in the automobile industry would be most likely to induce critical attitudes toward private employment and enhance

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[1]Leonard D. White, Further Contributions to the Prestige Value of Public Employment, p. 71.

the security features (real or apparent) of public employment. Thus, if the 1954 survey had been on a national basis we would expect a figure lower than 56 per cent preferring government employment and a percentage higher than 30 preferring private employment. Of course, it is impossible to be sure of the exact amount of these changes. However, since the majority of the United States population resides in metropolitan areas, and since there is no reason to believe that Detroit is especially unique as a metropolitan area, the numerical change in the percentages ought not to be very large and the contemporary findings ought to have fairly broad relevance.

Considering Table 3 in the light of the above-mentioned factors, what does it tell us? This general conclusion may be drawn from it. There is a strong indication that traditional attitudes toward public employment have changed, that this change has been a gradual process over a period of years, and that in this new phase government employment is tending to lose much of its "second class citizen" status.

Turning from the trend in the state of public opinion regarding public employment in the United States, let us briefly compare recent findings with the results of surveys in two other democracies, Canada and Australia. (Table 4) In these countries, where British influences have strongly affected the development of the civil service, we would expect the people to consider government employment more favorably than do the people of the United States. Table 4 suggests that such an expectation is false. The 36 per cent preferring public employment in Canada is actually lower than the 41 per cent making the same selection in 1947 in the United States survey. While

the percentage preferring government employment in Australia is slightly higher than the figure for the United States, 44 per cent to 41 per cent, the percentages preferring private employment in Canada and Australia are both higher than the percentage selecting private employment in the United States survey of 1947. These findings are in direct contrast to the current assumption among public administration experts that the desirability of federal employment is at low ebb.[2]

TABLE 4

PREFERENCE FOR GOVERNMENT VERSUS PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT: NATIONAL COMPARISONS FOR AUSTRALIA, CANADA, UNITED STATES, AND THE DETROIT AREA

Employment Preference	Australia[a] (1948)	Canada[b] (1948)	United States[c] (1947)	Detroit Area (1954)
Government	44%	36%	41%	56%
Private	47	45	40	30
No difference	5	2[d]	--	--
No opinion: undecided	4	17	19	14
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a]Australia Public Opinion Polls, July, 1948. Question asked: "If two jobs had the same wages and conditions, but one was with the government and the other in a private business, which would you choose?"

[b]Canadian Institute for Public Opinion, March, 1948. Question asked: "Assuming that the pay is the same, would you prefer to work for the Dominion government or for a private firm?"

[c]American Institute of Public Opinion; August, 1947. Question asked: "Assuming the pay is the same, would you prefer to work for the U.S. government or for a private firm?"

[d]Answer: "If the other party were in power."

[2]Lowell H. Hattery, "The Prestige of Federal Employment," Public Administration Review, Vol. 15 (Summer, 1955), p. 181-187.

Light can be thrown on some of the factors underlying the strong preference shown for governmental employment in the Detroit area by considering the reasons offered for selecting either public or private employment. (Table 5)

TABLE 5

REASON OFFERED FOR PREFERRING EITHER GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Reason Offered	Government Employment	Private Employment
Job security	59%	4%
Job benefits	14	4
Working conditions	1	3
Nature of the work	4	7
Personnel policies fairer	6	10
Better chance for advancement	1	21
Prestige or status of job	3	1
Duty or obligation to work for one's country	6	--
Less or no politics	--	6
Less bureaucratic	--	26
Other responses	1	7
Not ascertained	5	11
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	430	227

The single predominant statistic in Table 5 is the large percentage of those offering job security as the reason for preferring governmental employment. Academic debate may persist over the real or apparent security of tenure in government,[3] but a majority (59

[3]See O. Glenn Stahl, "Security of Tenure--Career or Sinecure?" The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 292 (March, 1954), p. 45-56.

per cent) of those who reported that they preferred to work for the United States government offered job security as the reason supporting their choice. The next frequent response by those who preferred government employment was "job benefits." Fourteen per cent of the responses fell in this category, which included such items as vacations, retirement, and pension plans. Considering this second response category as involving elements of security, nearly three fourths (73 per cent) of those selecting government employment mentioned some form of security as the reason for their selection.

Those who preferred private employment gave "less bureaucratic" as the most frequent reason for their selection (26 per cent). The second most frequent response was the greater opportunity for advancement with a private firm (21 per cent). These responses coincide with traditional entrepeneurial goals in American society but do not overshadow the predominance of security as a prime occupational value in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Evaluation of Dealings with Public Employees

The second administrative perspective for consideration is the people's evaluation of their dealings with public employees. Two areas of investigation were marked out here. One was the respondent's overall evaluation of his dealings with public employees. The other was the comparative standing of public employees versus private employees on the specific trait of courtesy. Findings on both of the subjects had previously been reported by White in his 1928 Chicago study.[4]

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[4]The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago, p. 5-6.

Table 6 compares the findings of the Chicago and Detroit surveys when the respondents were asked to evaluate their general dealings with public employees. It is worthy of note that the unfavorable category (poor) dropped from 24 per cent in the Chicago Study to 6 per cent in the Detroit Study.

TABLE 6

EVALUATION OF PERSONAL DEALINGS WITH PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: A COMPARISON OF THE CHICAGO AND DETROIT STUDIES

Dealings with Public Employees	Chicago Study[a] (1928)	Detroit Study[b] (1954)
Yes (favorable to public)	54%	65% Very good and good
Doubtful, no difference, or unable to answer	22	22 Fair
No (unfavorable to public)	24	6 Poor
		7 Not ascertained
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	4,670	764

[a]Question asked: "Have your own dealings with public employees and officials been satisfactory?"

[b]Question asked: "In general, would you say that your dealings with public employees were poor, fair, good, or very good?"

The inference from Table 6 is that there has been some favorable improvement in the public's evaluation of its dealings with public employees since 1928. Further evidence can be drawn from a comparison between the findings of the two studies on the specific point of the courtesy of city employees vis-a-vis private employees. (See Table 7)

TABLE 7

COURTEOUSNESS OF CITY VERSUS PRIVATE EMPLOYEES: A COMPARISON OF THE CHICAGO AND DETROIT STUDIES

Courtesy of City Employees versus Private Employees	Chicago Study[a] (1928)	Detroit Study[b] (1954)
Yes (favorable to public)	18%	27% City
Doubtful, no difference or unable to answer	22	29 Both equal
No (unfavorable to public)	60	29 Private
		15 Don't know and not ascertained
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases:	4,680	764

[a]Question asked: "Do you get more courteous attention in dealing with city employees than in dealing with employees of private companies?"

[b]Question asked: "Would you say that generally you get more courteous attention in dealing with city employees than in dealing with employees of big companies?"

The percentage of responses favorable to public employees rose from 18 per cent in 1928 to 27 per cent in 1954 while a substantial drop, from 60 per cent to 29 per cent, was recorded in the response category unfavorable to the public employee. Even if the "don't know" and "not ascertained" responses in the 1954 survey are considered unfavorable to the public servant--a highly improbable assumption--the marked improvement of the public employee's position is still clear.

Tables 6 and 7 evidence the populace's improved evaluation of their dealings with the public servant. These tables are not to be taken as indicating that public employees <u>are</u> more courteous now than in 1928 or that their public relations <u>are</u> better now than then.

The evidence merely indicates that the citizenry feels that the interpersonal relations between it and public employees are better now than previously. However, it is difficult to imagine the improved evaluation occurring without some actual improvement in the actions and behavior of public employees.

Prestige of Public Employment: Past and Present

The prestige of public employment is the third administrative perspective to be considered. The prestige of the public service was defined in Chapter I as the esteem or respect accorded a position in the public bureaucracy. Reference was made there to White's technique for measuring prestige by the use of paired occupations from public and private employment. The Detroit Area Study used a similar but smaller list of paired occupation items.

When compared with the results of the Chicago study, the responses to the items included in the Detroit Area Study indicate a pronounced rise in the prestige of public employment. White found that the prestige of the public position in the various occupation items varied from job to job but that the lower prestige of the public job was the rule rather than the exception. In only two of the twenty occupations he used--library assistant and machinist --did the prestige of the public position outweigh the esteem for the same position in private employment. The occupations used in the Detroit survey hardly presented the same pattern. (Table 8) It was only in the case of the doctor, with his particular role in our society, that private employment was more esteemed by a substantial plurality (53 per cent to 25 per cent). In one case, that of the stenographer, public employment was clearly seen as having more respect

than the same position in private industry (49 per cent to 25 per cent). The occupations of accountant and night watchman were found to be relatively balanced between private employment and governmental service.

TABLE 8

PRESTIGE OF SELECTED OCCUPATIONS IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954*

Type of Employment with Most Prestige	Stenographer	Accountant	Watchman	Doctor
Public	49%	38%	35%	25%
Private	25	39	40	58
No difference, can't judge, or don't know	22	18	20	17
Not ascertained	4	5	5	5
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Cases	764	764	764	764

*Question asked: "We'd like to know what people think of government jobs and government workers. If these jobs are about the same in kind of work, pay, and so forth, which have the most prestige? (a) a stenographer in a life insurance company, or a stenographer in the city tax assessor's office, (b) an accountant in the Detroit Department of Public Works, or an accountant in a private accounting firm, (c) a night watchman in a bank, or a night watchman in the City Hall, (d) a doctor in the Detroit Receiving Hospital, or a doctor who is on the staff of a private hospital."

Further evidence of the rise in the prestige of public employment may be seen from a comparison on the prestige indexes of the three occupations which were in both the Chicago and Detroit studies: stenographer, accountant, and night watchman. (Table 9)

TABLE 9

PRESTIGE INDEXES FOR SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT IN GENERAL, CHICAGO, 1928, AND DETROIT, 1954

Occupation	Chicago Index	Detroit Index[a]
Stenographer	-24	+33
Accountant	-10	+ 1
Night watchman	-30	- 7
Overall Index	-12	- 2
Total Choices	93,432[b]	2,313[c]

[a]The index from the Detroit Area Study data was computed from the totals of only those who selected either public or private employment, i.e., the No Difference and Not Ascertained responses were eliminated before calculating the percentages and the positive or negative difference on the status of public employment. The rationale behind this procedure is that White's questionnaire did not permit a No Difference response and the number of items not marked (not ascertained) was extremely small (.2 of 1%). Therefore, these responses in the Detroit Area Study were eliminated before calculating the prestige index. This affected the indexes by no more than an integer, except in the case of the stenographer where the effect was to increase its positive standing by seven.

[b]Total choices on all twenty items.

[c]Total choices on all four items.

The prestige index was the method employed by White to quantify the positive or negative status of a specific occupation in the public service or of the public service in general (the overall index). It is the numerical difference between the percentage of total choices favoring public employment and the percentage of total choices favoring private employment. If the total number of choices of private employment exceed those of public employment then the prestige index is minus (-),

indicating the negative prestige (from the public employment point of view) of that occupation. The overall index is the prestige index of public employment based on all of the occupational items included in each study.

On the basis of the occupation items used in the Detroit study, even though small in number, we can fairly conclude that the prestige of public employment has sustained a pronounced change in the positive direction since 1928. Each of the occupations occurring in both surveys show a shift toward more favorable esteem accorded public employment today than in the past. Nowhere is this more striking than in the position of stenographer in the public service. From the strongly unfavorable status of the occupation in White's study (-24) it has now attained a highly esteemed status in comparison with the same occupation in private employment. Considered in the light of turnover statistics in government employment, it might seem peculiar that the position of the stenographer should enjoy such a favorable status. It is necessary to recognize however, that it is probably the mobility aspect which gives this occupation its positive status. The opportunity to obtain a fairly secure good-paying job relatively easily certainly contributes to a favorable attitude toward the position in the public service.

A comparison of the overall indexes also gives evidence of the rise in the prestige for public employment. The comparability of these indexes is limited first by the smaller number of occupational items used in the Detroit study and second by the inclusion of the occupational item on the doctor, an occupation which was not used in the Chicago study. The prestige index for

the doctor in the Detroit area public service was a minus thirty-six (-36).

At this juncture it is appropriate to point out a severe limitation on the use of the prestige index as a statistical device for measuring prestige. It is possible to reach widely different conclusions about the prestige of public employment by using different occupational items to measure prestige. For example, the mere exclusion of the doctor occupation item from the present study would raise the overall prestige index to a plus eight (+8). The inclusion of the same item in the Chicago study might have made that prestige index somewhat more negative. The effect of this one item on the Chicago study would be appreciably less than on the present study since the former study employed twenty occupation items. Therefore each item by itself was of less importance.

The actual prestige of the public service would be the average of the prestige indexes for every occupation category in public employment. Since it is operationally impossible to undertake such an extensive measure, it is necessary to use a selected list of occupations. The greater the selectivity the greater the opportunity for unrepresentativeness to occur. Thus, with a small number of items the extensive use of the prestige index as a quantative measure may produce very misleading results. To overcome the inherent dangers involved in using the prestige index, a methodological technique known as Guttman scaling was

applied to the four prestige items in the Detroit study.[5]

The prime purpose of the Guttman technique is to rank order individuals according to their responses to a carefully designed set of questions. The questions (items) used must have special cumulative properties such that all persons who answer a given item positively have higher ranks than persons who respond negatively to the same item. If the responses to the set of items "scale," it is possible to predict with a fair degree of certainty the individual's rank on the scale from the most "difficult" item to which he responded positively. To illustrate from the prestige items used in the Detroit study, a person replying that the doctor in the public service has greater prestige than the doctor in private employment would be expected to select the public position in all three other items. If the items were "scalable" this response pattern would be expected since the doctor item is the most "difficult" one on which to choose the public position, i.e., the fewest number of persons

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[5]The material on the Guttman scaling technique is extensive. The foremost authority on the subject, Louis Guttman, is the man who developed the technique. He has written numerous articles for educational, social, and psychological journals. He has definitively described his method in "The Basis for Scalogram Analysis," Chapter 3 in Measurement and Prediction, Volume IV, Studies in Social Psychology in World War II, Samuel A. Stouffer, et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950). Chapter 1 of the same volume, "An Overview of the Contributions to Scaling and Scale Theory," by Stouffer, describes the theoretical basis of the Guttman technique. Additional helpful discussions are to be found in Pauline V. Young, Scientific Social Surveys and Research (2nd ed.; New York: Prentice-Hall, 1949), p. 361-365; and Matilda W. Riley, John W. Riley, et al., Sociological Studies in Scale Analysis: Applications, Theory, Procedures (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954), Chapter 12, "A Rapid Scoring Procedure for Scaling Attitude Questions." This latter citation is especially helpful in understanding the detailed procedures involved in scaling a set of items.

gave a response favorable to public employment on this item. While only four items were employed to test the scalability of prestige in the Detroit study, there was a sufficient degree of consistency in the response patterns for concluding that the prestige items did form a Guttman scale.[6]

Depending on their response patterns to the four occupation items, the Detroit area respondents were classified into one of three rank groups of approximately equal size. The somewhat arbitrary designations of low, middle, and high prestige were the ratings attached to the three groups.

The Guttman scaling technique has its limitations but, as will be seen in a moment, these limitations are outweighed by a distinct advantage which makes it especially applicable to the problems of this study. The one major disadvantage of the method as it is employed in this study is that no zero point is established for the prestige of public employment. The fixing of the zero point is useful because it enables one to establish whether the prestige of public employment is positive or negative, favorable or unfavorable. The Guttman scale simply rank orders individuals relative to the attitudes of one another. We can say that one group is less favorable toward the prestige of public employment than another group. But we cannot say that such and such a group holds negative attitudes toward the prestige of the public service.

The special advantage of the Guttman technique is that so long as a set of occupational items on the prestige of public employment "scale," the respondent will always fall into approximately

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[6]The coefficient of reproducibility was .913.

the same rank order in relation to each other regardless of the number or character of the occupational items used. Therefore, the findings and relationships established on the basis of one set of occupational items will be maintained even if different occupational items are used, provided of course, that both sets of items measure the same variable and both "scale." It is this feature--the relative independence from the number of character of occupational items employed--which commends the prestige scale for extensive use in this study.

Prestige and Other Administrative Perspectives

The administrative perspectives investigated thus far have been the desirability of working for government, the evaluation of personal dealings with public employees, and the prestige of public employment. Since prestige is the central variable of this study, the relationship between prestige and other administrative perspectives will now be examined. This approach is adopted for the following reasons: (a) to place in sharper focus the nature of the attitude called prestige, (b) to indicate what factors underlie the improved position of the prestige of public employment, and (c) to point out those attitudes toward public administration which are and are not correlates of the prestige of public employment.

This section will first consider the relationship between prestige and three administrative perspectives: (1) the desirability of working for government, (2) the relative courtesy of public employees as compared with the courtesy of private employees, and (3) general evaluations of personal dealings with public employees. These three variables were expected to be positively related to the prestige

of the public service, i.e., they were expected to be administrative correlates of prestige.[7]

Second, this section will deal with the relationship between prestige and demands regarding the scope and content of the administrative activities of government. It was expected that those expressing a desire for increased administrative activity would give higher prestige to public employment than those desiring that the public bureaucracy perform fewer functions than it presently undertakes.

What relationship exists between the desirability of working for the United States government and the prestige of public employment? If a positive relationship exists between a preference for government employment and high prestige for public employment then the security aspect of government work is undoubtedly an important factor contributing to the improved status of the public service. To link the security feature with prestige, it is only necessary to recall the large percentage (73 per cent) that offered security as the reason for their preferring government employment.

Table 10 clearly shows the existence of a positive relationship between the two variables. The 39 per cent preferring government employment and giving high prestige to public employment is significantly larger than the 17 per cent selecting private employment and giving high prestige to public employment. Furthermore, of those who selected private employment nearly one-half (49 per cent) accorded low prestige to public employment, whereas only about one-fifth (21 per cent) of those selecting government employment fell in the

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low prestige group. This percentage difference is also statistically significant. The desirability of working for government is, then, a correlate of the prestige of public employment and the security feature of a government job appears to be an important factor contributing to high prestige for the public service.

TABLE 10

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVES BY THE PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Employment Preference[a]	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
U.S. Government	21%	38	39	2	100%	430
Private firm	49%	31	17	3	100%	227
Courtesy[b]						
City	21%	36	42	1	100%	208
About equal	26%	45	25	4	100%	219
Big companies	48%	27	23	2	100%	186
Dealings with Public Employees[c]						
Very good	33%	34	30	3	100%	126
Good	30%	37	31	2	100%	369
Fair	23%	44	29	4	100%	167
Poor	56%	24	16	4	100%	45

[a]Question asked: "If the pay were the same, would you prefer to work for the United States Government or for a private firm?"

[b]Question asked: "Would you say that generally you get more courteous attention in dealing with city employees than in dealing with employees of big companies?"

[c]Question asked: "In general, would you say that your dealings with public employees were: Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good?"

Another administrative perspective expected to be a correlate of prestige was the citizen's judgment about his dealings with public employees. This expectation is borne out on at least one aspect of the inter-personal relations between the public servant and the citizen. That aspect is the relative courteousness of public employees. A positive relationship is revealed between high prestige and a response that is favorable to the public employee. (Table 10) The same relationship also holds for low prestige and a response that is favorable to private employees.

The relationships are clear and marked. Nearly one-half (48 per cent) of those who said employees of big companies are more courteous gave low prestige to public employment. This figure is significantly greater than either the one-fourth (26 per cent, to be exact) who replied that public and private employees were equally courteous or the one-fifth (21 per cent) whose reply was favorable to city employees. Forty-two per cent of the persons giving a response favorable to city employees gave high prestige to public employment. This percentage is significantly larger than the 25 per cent of those replying About Equal and the 23 per cent replying Big Companies.

Judgments about the courteousness of public employees is a correlate of prestige and, by implication, favorable inter-personal relations between the public employee and the citizenry also contributes to high esteem for the public service.

If courteousness and prestige are positively related then the citizen's general evaluation of his dealings with public employees should also be positively related to the prestige of public employment. Is not the individual's evaluation of his dealings with public employees the sum of his specific evaluations of the behavior of public employees?

Interestingly enough, the positive relationship is not consistently maintained. (Table 10)

It is apparent from previous discussion of Table 10 that for a positive relationship to be established between two variables the percentages in the low prestige column should become larger as one proceeds down the column (in this instance from the response categories Very Good to Poor) and the percentages in the high prestige column should become smaller. The expected percentage differences do not materialize. In fact, the percentages in the low prestige column become smaller from Very Good (33 per cent) to Good (30 per cent) to Fair (23 per cent). These differences are not statistically significant but they are in the reverse direction from what one would expect. The percentages in the high prestige column show very little variation within the three response categories just mentioned.

Only those respondents who evaluate their dealings with public employees as Poor fit the expected pattern. A majority of this group (56 per cent) rate the prestige of public employment as low; only 16 per cent rate it as high. These percentages are significantly larger and smaller, respectively, than the other percentages in the low and high prestige columns. It is only those who give the lowest possible evaluation about their dealings with public employees that evidence markedly lower esteem for the public service.[8] For the remainder of the population varying evaluations of dealings with public employees seem to be unrelated to the prestige of public employment.

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[8]It should be noted that just 45 respondents, or about 6 per cent of the total sample, rate their dealings with public employees as Poor.

Why should two administrative perspectives be correlates of the prestige for public employment, yet a seemingly similar perspective show no marked relationship with prestige? For one thing, the questions tapping the first two perspectives--working for government and courteousness of public employees--were posed in such a way that the respondent was required to compare public employment, or the public servant, with a specific alternative, either private employment or private employees. Furthermore, not only was the standard of comparison specific, but the administrative perspective was also more precise--desirability of public employment and courtesy of public employees. This specificity, both as to attitude and standard for comparison, was lacking in the question which required the respondent generally to evaluate his dealings with public employees. That question was phrased to secure a broad overall evaluation of the citizen's contacts with the public servant.

It appears that people tend to give responses that are favorable to the public service when no specific frame of reference or standard for comparison is established. When a specific comparison is introduced, the responses are less favorable. This is especially true when the basis of comparison is private industry. White's data in the Chicago study revealed the same tendency although he did not generalize about this particular finding.

The lack of a clear relationship between evaluations and prestige contrasts with the findings regarding the two administrative perspectives which are related to prestige. Questions about working for government and courtesy of public employees were most likely interpreted in terms of the respondent's immediate self interest and his specific relationship to the public service or the public servant.

Would he like to work for the government? Was a public servant discourteous to him lately? On the other hand, the question about dealings with public employees was most likely answered in terms of the general or total impact of the administrative process on the population. How well is the public service operating? Are public servants doing a reasonably good job? Variables measured by these latter questions might be expected to be non-correlates of prestige because they focus on general aspects of administrative operations.

The remainder of the present chapter will deal with an additional administrative perspective which is expected to be a correlate of the prestige of public employment, namely, the scope and content of public administrative activities.

One of the most fundamental questions about the administrative process is what shall be the scope and content of the operations it performs. In different words, this might be phrased as, what shall be the sphere of activity which government shall undertake in the society? While the broad political attitudes involved in this question are obvious, an attempt will be made to focus on the attitudes toward the administrative operations of government.

Broadly speaking, it is possible to separate the functions which government (or the <u>state</u>) performs into two categories. First, there are those functions which assist the people to engage in the cooperative activities of human livelihood. In this category we would include functions such as education, public health, social security, unemployment compensation, and so forth. These are chiefly the "service-type" functions of government. We shall designate these as <u>integrative</u> functions. Secondly, there are those functions which fix

and distribute the duties and responsibilities that government must impose. Examples of this type of activity are taxation and conscription. These are largely the "regulatory-type" functions. We shall call them allocative functions.

The demand for more or less of each of the above types of functions expresses the individual's desire about the amount and type of administrative action. This typology is therefore useful in determining attitudes toward public administrative activities. Each respondent in the Detroit area was classified as to whether he demanded more or less integrative activity, more or less allocative activity, or whether he had no demands at all. (Table 11)

TABLE 11

DEMANDS WITH RESPECT TO THE ALLOCATIVE-INTEGRATIVE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Demands	Percent	Number
More allocative activity	3%	26
More integrative activity	52	391
Less allocative activity	10	79
Less integrative activity	3	23
No demands	26	198
Not ascertained	6	47
Total	100%	764

Table 11 attests to a reality of American political life. That reality is the great demand upon government, not just the national government but government at all levels, to undertake integrative or service-type activities. The 52 per cent figure demanding such activity is twice as large as the status quo group (No demands, 26 per cent). This 52 per cent is also more than five times as large as those who

demand less allocative activity. A response illustrative of this last mentioned category would be, "Taxes are too high!" Demands for positive services far outweigh demands for fewer burdens.

Table 11 is revealing in and of itself, but the typology presented there is even more illuminating when those who demand more or less of either type of activity are tabulated according to the prestige they accord to public employment. Table 12 presents such a cross-tabulation and indicates that a positive relationship exists between high prestige and the demand for more public administrative activity.

TABLE 12

DEMANDS MADE FOR CHANGES IN THE AMOUNT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Demands	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
More allocative or more integrative activity	28%	37	33	2	100%	417
No demands	32%	37	29	2	100%	198
Less allocative or less integrative activity	37%	36	23	4	100%	102

One-third (33 per cent) of those who demand more administrative action, whether allocative or integrative, accord high prestige to public employment. This figure is significantly larger than the 23 per cent who demand less administrative action and give high prestige to public employment. Conversely, a significantly larger percentage of those who demand less administrative action (37 per cent) fall in the

low-prestige group than do those who desire more government activity (28 per cent). In both the high and low prestige groups the percentages for those who expressed no demands are between the percentages for the two groups which expressed demands. The latter point reinforces the conclusion that a positive relationship exists between high prestige for public employment and demands for increased administrative action.

Summary

There is a strong preference for government employment as opposed to employment by a private firm in the Detroit metropolitan area. This preference is perhaps indicative of a larger trend throughout the United States toward a more favorable position for government employment. The main reason for preferring government employment is the security aspect of the public job. A comparison of the Detroit Area Study's findings with those of White's Chicago study revealed that the populace's evaluation of their dealings with public employees has improved, that public employees are thought to be more courteous than previously, and that the prestige of public employment has risen.

Certain administrative variables were found to be correlates of the prestige of public employment, and, in addition, there was some indication as to which administrative variables might be non-correlates of prestige. The administrative correlates of prestige are (1) the desirability of working for government and obtaining job security, (2) the relative courteousness of public employees, and (3) the demand for increased public administrative action. Each of these three variables have to do with the immediate self-interest and specific relationship of the individual to the public bureaucracy, e.g., the material benefits and security features attached to a public position.

By contrast, the one non-correlate of prestige was an administrative variable which seemed to focus on the broad aspects of the public service in its impact on the population. That variable was the population's general evaluation of its dealings with public employees.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL STRUCTURE VARIABLES

This chapter has two purposes. The first is to explore the relationship between the prestige of public employment and several social structure characteristics. What are the social correlates of the prestige of the public service? The prestige scale, as explained in the previous chapter, will be employed to answer this question. Cross-tabulations will be made between prestige and such variables as social class, sex, age, income, education, and so forth.

Since White, in his Chicago study, investigated many of these same social structure variables, this chapter will serve the second purpose of comparing the 1954 Detroit findings with his 1928 data. Has the prestige of public employment risen? Do the same groups still give low prestige? This comparison will employ the prestige indexes to compare the prestige given to public employment by similar social groupings in both the Chicago and Detroit studies. It is again necessary to take cognizance of the limitations on the use of the prestige index and of the general problems of comparability between the two studies.

The material dealing with prestige and the various social structure variables is divided into three sub-topics: (1) prestige and socio-economic variables, (2) prestige and demographic variables, and (3) public employees' ratings of their own prestige.

Prestige and Socio-Economic Variables

Socio-economic variables are those variables which determine an individual's social status in the community. The following variables are included under this heading: social class position, income, education, and occupation. It should be noted at the outset that an inter-correlation exists between all four of these variables. That is, an individual with much education would most likely be in the upper income brackets, hold a fairly responsible position, and attain a higher social class status. Table 13 shows that an inverse or negative relationship is established between the prestige of public employment and social class. It is no surprise then, to find that this inverse relationship is maintained for the other socio-economic variables as well. Low prestige is associated with higher class, income, education, and occupation position. High prestige is associated with a lower class, income, education, and occupation position. (Table 13)

The following patterns emerge. Without exception, as one proceeds up the class, income, education, and occupation hierarchies, each succeeding group has a larger percentage giving low prestige to public employment. This consistency is not maintained in the high prestige column for all of the variables. The percentages of those offering high prestige are consistently smaller for each succeeding class and occupation grouping. However, only for those groups which have the most income and most education is there a substantially smaller percentage falling in the high prestige group.

TABLE 13

SOCIAL CLASS, INCOME, EDUCATION, AND OCCUPATION BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Social Class[a]	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Lower lower	21%	38	37	4	100%	250
Upper lower	26%	39	31	4	100%	207
Lower middle	36%	32	25	7	100%	186
Upper middle[b]	43%	34	14	9	100%	106
Income[c]						
Under 2,000	21%	42	29	8	100%	81
2,000-3,999	24%	38	31	7	100%	145
4,000-5,999	27%	36	33	4	100%	269
6,000-7,999	35%	36	28	1	100%	134
Over 8,000	44%	33	16	7	100%	97
Education						
0-6 years	16%	47	27	10	100%	105
7-8 years	24%	38	35	3	100%	133
9-11 years	26%	40	31	3	100%	173
12 years	33%	31	31	5	100%	236
more than 12 years	47%	34	14	5	100%	109
Occupation[d]						
Service workers and laborers	19%	37	39	5	100%	77
Operatives (semi-skilled) and kindred workers	20%	38	37	5	100%	186
Craftsmen, foremen & kindred workers	29%	38	29	4	100%	214
Clerical, sales & kindred workers	32%	34	25	9	100%	89
Managers, officials & proprietors	40%	34	20	6	100%	98
Professional	41%	34	17	8	100%	71

TABLE 13--Continued

[a]The social class in which the respondent was classified was the social class of the head of the household, e.g., a housewife was assigned to the social class of her husband. Determination of social class position was based largely on the occupation of the family head with factors of income, education, and ethnic background also considered. See, "Determination of Social Class for Detroit Area Study, 1953-1954" (Ann Arbor: Detroit Area Study, 1954, mimeographed).

[b]Includes 8 cases who were classified as lower upper class.

[c]Income figure used was that of the reported annual income of the family head for 1953.

[d]The occupational classification of each respondent was the occupation of the head of the household.

The inverse relationship between the prestige of public employment and these socio-economic variables was to be expected in the light of White's earlier findings. He found that high prestige was associated with little education and lower status occupations and that low prestige was related to more education and higher status occupations. The continued existence of this inverse relationship has already been indicated by Table 13 and is further clarified by a comparison of the prestige indexes for the various occupation and education groups in the Chicago and Detroit studies. (Table 14) The indexes from the Detroit Area Study reveal that greater education and higher status of employment lead to lower prestige.

Table 14 also attests to the improved position of public employment since 1928. With one exception, every occupational grouping evidenced a less negative stand toward public employment in Detroit as compared with Chicago. The prestige indexes for housewives and for

clerical and sales personnel show the improved status of public employment in the eyes of these two particular groups.

TABLE 14

COMPARISON OF PRESTIGE INDEXES FOR EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION GROUPINGS, CHICAGO, 1928 AND DETROIT, 1954

	Prestige Indexes[a]					
	Education					
	under 8 years	8 years	9-11 years	12 years	13-15 years	16 years and over
Chicago	+12	-7	-2	-6	-23	-42
Detroit	+ 7	+6	+3	-3	-25	-52

	Occupation						
	Unskilled	Semi-skilled	Skilled	Clerical & Sales	Managers	Professional	Housewives
Chicago	+34	--[b]	0	-15	-46	-35	-32
Detroit	+14	+5	-7	- 2	-36	-33	+ 4

[a]To obtain comparable categories it was necessary to collapse some education and occupation categories used in White's study and to recalculate the prestige indexes for the new groups from his raw data.

[b]This occupation category was not used in the Chicago study.

The tendency for women to view public employment favorably will be discussed in the following section. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to suggest here that equality of treatment is certainly one factor which has helped foster a favorable evaluation of public employment by a majority of women.

One factor contributing to the improved status of public employment for persons in the clerical and sales group is that government jobs in these white collar categories compare favorably

with private employment on matters of pay, security, hours, and so forth. No doubt this factor also influenced some of those in the managerial occupational group, and is reflected by the less negative prestige index of that occupation group in the Detroit study. This would be especially true for those in the lower management echelons of large industrial enterprises for whom a shift from a private to public employer would mean little or no change in bureaucratic patterns of behavior. The one exception to the general tendency of less negativism toward public employment is found in the prestige indexes for the skilled worker group. (Table 14) Here a change occurred from an evenly balanced attitude in the Chicago study (0) to a negative one (-7) in the Detroit survey. Several factors might explain the slight lowering of prestige for public employment among workers in this occupational category.

First of all, there are relatively fewer positions demanding this type of blue-collar worker in government than in private industry. The unfavorable attitude toward public employment may arise from the large concentration of this occupational-type worker in the Detroit metropolitan area and the comparatively smaller opportunities for government jobs.

Secondly, there is the lack of vigorous unionization within the public service and, of course, the prohibition of strikes against national, state, county, or local units of government. This also might lower the status of public employment for workers in this occupation category, particularly in such a highly unionized city as Detroit.

Thirdly, there are the alleged wage differentials between blue-collar jobs in government and in private industry. Compensation

rates for jobs in federal employment have often been set on a nation-wide basis. In Detroit, where wages paid in private industry are among the highest in the nation, compensation for public jobs in the blue-collar categories sometimes compares unfavorably with wages for similar jobs in private industry.

Fourthly, it is possible to explain the negativism of the skilled worker group toward public employment by pointing to anti-white-collar attitudes held by this group. General antipathy of blue-collar workers toward white-collar workers may persist to the extent that government jobs, the bulk of which are of the white-collar variety, are not held in high regard. Perhaps these four factors taken together outweigh other considerations which might predispose skilled workers toward a favorable view of the prestige of public employment.

All four factors mentioned above can also be adduced to explain the drop in the positive attitude on the part of the unskilled worker group. (Table 14) Unskilled workers in the Chicago study had a prestige index of +34. In Detroit the figure was +14. Certainly, access to government jobs, little unionization, wage differentials, and anti-white-collar attitudes would be relevant factors in explaining this drop in prestige among the unskilled workers. An additional factor in explaining this drop arises from the requirements of government jobs and the inability of the unskilled worker to meet these requirements. Many, if not most, of the civil service positions today demand a special skill or training and moderately high educational requirements. The unskilled worker, who ordinarily has none of these, finds the bulk of government jobs permanently closed to him. While he may be attracted by security features of a government job, his inability to secure such jobs may have induced lower esteem for public employment than in the past.

It would be interesting to compare the indexes for semi-skilled workers if this group had been separated in the Chicago study. Based on the findings for the skilled and unskilled groups, we would expect that the prestige index in Chicago would have been more favorable than the -5 recorded in Detroit.

The Detroit prestige indexes for the educational variable in Table 14 display a consistent pattern of change from less positive to increased negative prestige as education increases. The indexes range from +7 for those with less than 8 years of education to -52 for those who completed college. When the indexes of the two studies are compared, no extremely large changes are revealed. A 13 point improvement (-7 to +6) occurs for those who completed grammar school. However, a 10 point decline (-42 to -52) is registered in the highest education category.

These data in Table 14 call into question a common assumption that the educational system, in general, and college in particular, is able to foster a balanced view of the public service. It has been clearly indicated that the greater a person's education, the lower is the esteem he has for the public service. It is important to determine the factor or factors contributing to this low esteem on the part of higher educated people.

Probably the main factor is the inherent selectivity involved in determining who receives an education, and especially, who goes to college. It is a generally proven and accepted fact that the lower classes are financially prevented from securing the same educational opportunities available to the middle and upper

classes.[1] Thus, one would expect that those who come in the lower socio-economic groups and confer high prestige on public employment are exactly those who are unable to obtain the higher education which might fit the intellectually capable ones for a responsible public position. In a manner of speaking then, governmental agencies have two strikes against them when they attempt to recruit college-trained people. A selective factor has operated to exclude from higher education many individuals who, because of their social origins, are the ones most likely to view the prestige of the public service in a favorable light. Instead, public employers are faced with the problem of trying to attract college students who have often come from backgrounds which bias them against public employment.[2]

To better pinpoint the effect of education on the prestige accorded public employment it is useful to separate the lower class persons from persons in the middle class. Table 15 effects such a separation. Within the lower class, increased amounts of education have the effect of raising the percentage of those giving low prestige to public employment whereas more education does not appear to either raise or lower the percentage of lower class individuals who give high prestige to public employment. For the middle class more education leads to greater amounts of low prestige given to public employment. In addition, within the middle class those who attend college give less high prestige than those with lesser amounts of education.

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[1]Specific data are obtainable from The President's Commission on Higher Education (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947), 6 Vols.

[2]"They [government jobs] do not interest me, because I am convinced that there are too many on government payrolls and the free enterprise system may break down." Statement of a college senior in "Federal Recruitment of Junior Engineers," by George P. Bush and Lowell H. Hattery, Science, Vol. 114 (November 2, 1951), p. 457.

TABLE 15

SOCIAL CLASS AND EDUCATION BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Education	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Lower Class						
0-6 years	16%	44	33	7	100%	107
7 or 8 years	25%	41	33	1	100%	83
9-11 years	23%	37	36	4	100%	131
12 years or more	29%	34	34	3	100%	131
Middle Class						
11 years or less	29%	40	23	8	100%	78
12 years	38%	29	26	7	100%	130
Attended college	51%	32	11	6	100%	81

The especially low status of public employment is seen among those middle class persons who have attended college. Fifty-one per cent of this group gave low prestige to public employment and only 11 per cent gave high prestige. When it is recalled that the sons and daughters of this group are best situated to attend college, the outlook for government recruitment of college students is less than encouraging. Fortunately, more opportunity to attend college is now being extended to persons from the lower classes. Empirical research would probably reveal that in the past a majority of our public servants have come from lower class origins. It is important that the lower classes, through increased educational opportunities, continue to have access to public employment.

Because the whole concept of social class is often used in a vague and imprecise way, and because the term middle class is especially subject to this problem of usage, the following quotation is offered as a working definition of the middle class:

> It is important to realize that the 'middle class' . . . are not the bourgeoise of nineteenth-century Europe, who used to be identified (and still are to some extent) as those who owned sufficient property to insure their subsistence without working. The term middle class is now used to denote the large and expanding section of the urban population who do no manual labor, follow the norms of respectability, are educated beyond the legal minimum, are actively concerned with personal advancement, and are ordinarily able to devote part of their income to display. The high standard of living which characterizes this group is typically founded on occupational income and not on inherited property or privilege.[3]

Mr. Caplow's definition removes much of the generality from the term middle class and helps clarify the entire concept of social class. It is important to have something more than just a general notion about what social class is since this variable is used again and again throughout the study.

Prestige and Demographic Variables

Four demographic variables form the basis for this discussion. The variables are sex, race, foreign background, and age. Table 16 shows the percentages resulting from a cross-tabulation of each of these variables by the prestige of public employment.

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[3]Theodore Caplow, The Sociology of Work, p. 253.

TABLE 16

SEX, RACE, FOREIGN BACKGROUND, AND AGE BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Sex						
Men	34%	34	26	6	100%	360
Women	24%	39	31	6	100%	404
Race						
White	31%	37	26	6	100%	658
Negro	18%	33	44	5	100%	106
Foreign Background						
Native born white, native born father*	37%	35	24	4	100%	283
Native born white, foreign born father*	29%	37	30	4	100%	219
Foreign born white	22%	43	24	11	100%	141
Age						
21-29	30%	32	35	3	100%	174
30-39	30%	40	27	3	100%	214
40-49	37%	35	25	3	100%	142
50-59	26%	32	32	10	100%	113
60 and over	19%	44	25	12	100%	121

*Father here denotes the father of the family head and not necessarily the father of the respondent.

As between men and women, a significantly larger percentage of men rate prestige lower than do women (34 per cent to 24 per cent respectively). This significant difference between men and women giving low prestige was maintained in both the lower and middle

classes. A larger percentage of women than men rate the prestige of the public service as high, but the difference is not statistically significant. It was suggested previously that equality of treatment under civil service rules is one factor inducing a favorable view of the public service by women. In addition there is a comparatively larger number of jobs open to women in public employment than in private employment. Government jobs are relatively more obtainable to women than to men. The accessibility factor is especially effective in government clerical positions where the turnover rate is high, creating a heavy demand for women to fill these positions.

A comparison of the prestige indexes for men and women in the Chicago and Detroit studies discloses two developments. First, it reveals that women continue to have a less hostile attitude toward the prestige of public employment than men. Second, it underscores the improved prestige for public employment on the part of both men and women. In 1929, White found the prestige index for women was -8, for men -19. The Detroit Area Study findings registered prestige indexes of +3 for women and -10 for men.

The difference between attitudes of Negroes and whites toward the public service showed a wider statistical divergence than any other social, or economic grouping. (Table 16) Forty-four per cent of the Negroes gave high prestige to public employment as contrasted with 26 per cent of the whites who gave high prestige. Thirty-one per cent of the whites rated the prestige of public employment as low, whereas only 18 per cent of the Negro group gave such a rating.

Two conditions undoubtedly account for this significant attitude difference between Negroes and whites. First, there is the feature of job security connected with government employment which has special appeal to Negroes. As a low-status group occupationally, the Negro is especially vulnerable to technological changes in production and business cycle adjustments. Layoffs strike this group harder than most others and so job security becomes a highly desirable asset.

Secondly, the equality of opportunity for employment under civil service procedures operates to produce a favorable perception of the public service for the Negro. Besides the federal agencies in the Detroit area, the state of Michigan, Wayne County, and Detroit all have well-established civil service systems. The lack of discriminatory hiring policies by all these units of government undoubtedly adds to the prestige which Negroes accord public employment.

Once again a comparison of White's findings and those of the Detroit Area Study bears out the general thesis that much the same groups still view public employment with high esteem. White's prestige indexes were +12 and -22 for Negroes and whites respectively. The Detroit Area Study found the respective indexes to be +21 and -10.

The Detroit Area Study findings on foreign background and prestige in one way support, and in another way contradict, the findings of White in Chicago. The percentages for this variable in Table 16 reveal that those of foreign birth and those whose fathers were foreign born give lesser amounts of low prestige than do native whites. For native born whites of native born fathers the figure is 37 per cent. This declines to 29 per cent for native born whites of foreign born fathers, with a subsequent drop to 22 per cent for foreign

born whites. In a negative way these figures tend to support White's conclusion that persons of foreign origin hold the public service in higher esteem than do native Americans. That is, in Detroit persons of foreign origin give less low prestige to public employment than do native born whites.

However, the percentages in the high prestige column for the various nativity groups suggest that White's conclusion may require some modification. The presence of foreign origins in one's background does not lead to high esteem for the public service. Twenty-four per cent of the foreign born whites give high prestige to public employment. This figure is smaller than the 30 per cent who are of native birth with foreign born fathers and is no different whatsoever from the 24 per cent who are of native birth and have native born fathers.

Any conclusions from the above data are highly tentative, especially in view of the large percentage (11) of foreign born who were not ascertained regarding their prestige for the public service. The data do suggest however, that the presence of foreign origins mitigates low esteem for public employment but does not contribute significantly to high esteem for public employment. The greater the connection with foreign origin, the greater is the percentage of middle-range or moderate attitudes toward the prestige of public employment.

The prestige indexes from the Chicago and Detroit studies for the various nativity groups bear out the foregoing observations. For native born whites of native born fathers the Chicago and Detroit prestige indexes were -22 and -15 respectively. The prestige indexes for native born whites of foreign born fathers were -14 in Chicago and 0 in Detroit. Finally, the respective indexes in Chicago and Detroit for those of foreign birth were 47 and -3.

One explanation for the divergence of the Chicago and Detroit findings is the assimilation of the foreign born and first generation immigrants into American society. In this process, their attitudes toward public employment have shifted from high esteem to an intermediate category. This finding in no way contradicts the central conclusion linking low position in the social structure and positive attitudes toward the public service. It merely underlines the assimilation of the foreign born into all levels of the social structure and suggests that new groups, particularly Negroes, now constitute a large part of the lower class in the urban industrial community.

Age is the last variable to be discussed in this section on demographic factors and prestige. It is apparent from the percentages for the various age groups in Table 16 that no clear and consistent relationship is established between age and prestige. This contradicts White's evidence that as age increases, negative attitudes toward the public service increase. Quite to the contrary, the Detroit Area Study data reveal that beyond the age of fifty there is a decline in the percentage of those giving low prestige to public employment. (Table 16) Percentage variations in the high prestige column show no consistent pattern. This suggests that, since White's study, certain factors have operated to modify the attitudes of various age groups toward the public service.

The clarity and direction of these attitude changes are indicated by a comparison of the prestige indexes for various age groupings in the Chicago and Detroit studies. (Table 17) Only for the age group from forty to forty-four did the Detroit Area Study find

a strong negative attitude toward the public service. Beyond this age negative attitudes abate sharply with those over fifty evenly divided between prestige for public and private employment. For the older age groupings in particular the indexes of the Detroit study are markedly less negative than the one in the Chicago study.

TABLE 17

COMPARISON OF PRESTIGE INDEXES FOR AGE GROUPINGS, CHICAGO STUDY, 1928 AND DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Age						
	21-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	over 50
Chicago	-8	-10	-26	-24	-32	-34	-40
Detroit	+4	- 1	- 6	+ 3	-18	- 7	0

It is not necessary to search far to explain why increased age is no longer associated with low esteem toward public employment. The proposition was stated earlier that one factor contributing to higher prestige of the public service was an extension of governmental services and benefits. Since individuals in the higher age brackets have been the beneficiaries of governmental welfare programs, it is not surprising that earlier patterns of attitudes have been greatly modified.[4]

[4]A discussion of specific benefit programs and their general impact is in a collection of papers entitled, Economic Security for Americans: An Appraisal of the Progress Made During the Last 50 Years, The American Assembly (Graduate School of Business, Columbia University, 1954).

In attempting to specify the relationship now existing between age and prestige it is helpful to separate lower class individuals from middle class individuals. This is especially desirable because of the known relationship between high prestige and low social position. Table 18 presents the findings on prestige by age when social class is held constant.

TABLE 18

SOCIAL CLASS AND AGE BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Age	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Lower Class						
21-34	28%	35	35	2	100%	177
35-49	21%	41	34	4	100%	139
over 50	19%	40	33	8	100%	141
Middle Class						
21-34	36%	36	23	5	100%	113
35-49	50%	29	17	4	100%	97
over 50	29%	33	23	15	100%	82

Table 18 reveals that within the lower class, increased age results in a smaller percentage of persons giving low prestige to public employment. The percentages are 28, 21 and 19 for the respective age groups 21-34, 35-49, and over 50. Increased age has practically no effect on the percentages of persons in the lower class giving high prestige to public employment. Here the percentages are 35, 34, and 33 for the three age groupings. A similar pattern emerges in the middle class among those who accord high prestige to public employment.

Increased age has little effect on the percentage of the respective age groups falling in the high prestige column. Granted that welfare benefits influence prestige, the influence of these benefits are chiefly reflected in mitigating low prestige among older people in the lower class.

However, for middle class persons in the 35-49 age group, one-half (50 per cent) give low prestige to public employment. For those aged fifty and over the percentage in the low prestige column drops significantly to 29 per cent. The 50 per cent figure is significantly larger than the 36 per cent in the 21-34 age group. How are these significant variations to be explained?

One possible explanation is that in the age bracket from thirty-five to forty-nine competition for occupational advancement probably reaches its peak for the middle class family head. During this period of life we would expect that goals of initiative, individualism, competition, etc.--in short, traditional business values--would be emphasized. These values would tend to foster low esteem for the public service on the part of the family head, and perhaps his spouse. Prior to this hyper-competitive period these values would be less dominant and the public service would be less disparaged. Once past this competitive period, the middle class individual may experience a "mellowing." Note the smaller percentage of the over fifty group giving low prestige (29 per cent) as compared with the 50 per cent in the thirty-four to forty-nine age group.

Another factor might account for the lessened disparagement of the public service by those over fifty years of age. That factor is the anticipation of receiving governmental benefits upon reaching

a certain age, and the attitude change which the anticipation brings about. Of course, the anticipation of such benefits applies to the lower class as well as the middle class, but insofar as it applies to the middle class, it attests to the impact of government welfare programs at different levels of the social structure.

Naturally enough, the arbitrary breaks employed to separate the population into different age groups do not operate with the rigidity or consistency which might be inferred from the discussion. The statements above are simply clues to broad attitude trends which are suggested as taking place in American society.

The relationships between prestige and several other demographic variables were examined but the inconclusive results of these investigations do not warrant detailed presentation.

First, it was thought that there might be a difference in the prestige for public employment between residents of the city of Detroit proper and residents of suburban communities. No large or significant differences were encountered.

Second, an attempt to discover differences in esteem for public employment between individuals of rural and urban migration backgrounds failed to reveal any significant differences or consistent trends. This was true both for place of birth and for place where the person lived longest before coming to the Detroit area. Nor did native Detroiters display any significantly different attitudes toward the prestige of public employment than migrants coming to Detroit from out-state Michigan or other parts of the United States, whether urban or rural.

Third, no significant differences were disclosed between the prestige that home owners gave public employment as opposed to the prestige given by renters. In this case social class was held constant.

Finally, as between Catholics and Protestants there were no significant differences in prestige which were not due to the influence of social class.

Public Employees' Ratings of Their Own Prestige

Where do public employees rank themselves on prestige as compared with the rest of the population? What is the public employees' perception of his own status in the society? One might expect that public employees would certainly rank their own prestige higher than the rest of the population ranks it. However, loyalties to the public service in the United States are not solidified to the degree that one would expect public employees to perceive of themselves as constituting an elite group in the society. In other words, public employees would not accord extremely high prestige to their own positions.

From information secured in the Detroit Area Study survey it was possible to determine the degree of relationship which each respondent had with a public employee. Of the 764 interviews taken, twenty-five were with respondents who were public employees. Seventy-eight interviews were taken in dwelling units in which at least one of two conditions were met: (1) one member of the household was a public employee, or (2) the father or the head of the household was a public employee. Thus a total of 103 persons, or 14 per cent of the sample, were interviewed who had a direct or immediate relationship with an employee of some governmental organization.

An additional question was asked of each respondent to determine whether he or she had any relatives, not living in the immediate household, who were employed by a governmental unit. One-hundred twenty-one respondents, 16 per cent of the sample, reported that they had a relative or relatives having such employment. These respondents were classified as having an indirect relationship with a public employee. Five-hundred thirty-five respondents, 70 per cent of the sample, were classified as having no direct or indirect relationship with a public employee.[5] Employing this threefold classification, respondents in each category were tabulated according to the prestige given public employment. (Table 19)

TABLE 19

DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLIC EMPLOYEE BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Relationship with a Public Employee	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Direct relationship	38%	29	31	2	100%	103
Indirect relationship	26%	36	36	2	100%	121
No direct or indirect relationship ascertained	28%	38	27	7	100%	535

Table 19 is surprising, to say the least. A larger percentage of those directly related to a public employee give low prestige than

[5]The total number of respondents, adding the number in each of the three categories (103, 121, and 535) sums to 759. Five respondents could not be ascertained as to their relationship with a public employee.

do those with an indirect or with no relationship with a public employee. The 38 per cent in the low prestige column is significantly larger than the 28 per cent figure for those who have no relationship with a public employee. Also, within the group having a direct relationship with a public employee, the 38 per cent giving low prestige is larger than the percentages falling in the middle and high prestige columns. Certainly these findings warrant further verification, but at this stage it is a startling fact that public employees and their immediate kin hold public employment in lower esteem than the rest of the population.

It is worthy of note that a larger percentage of those in the direct and indirect categories give high prestige to public employment than do those in the no relationship group. (Table 19) The percentages are 36 for those in the indirect relationship group, 31 in the direct relationship group, and 27 per cent for those in the no relationship group. While these differences are not significant, they do prompt some observation.

High esteem for public employment appears greatest in that group which has an intermediate degree of relationship to a public employee. Perhaps we see here in a modified form the operation of the old axiom, "The grass is greener on the other side of the fence." Those who hold the most esteem for public employment are far enough removed from direct contact with a public employee that the attractive aspects of the public service stand out and the less favorable aspects are not experienced directly. On the other hand, this same group is not so far removed from contact with a public employee that the traditional and popular stereotype of the public service lowers the high esteem which they have for it.

A question might be raised about the comparatively large percentage (7 per cent) of persons in the no relationship group whose prestige for public employment was not ascertained. There is no reason to believe that all of these would fall in one prestige ranking and even if this did occur the general pattern would still remain.

Why do public employees and member of their immediate family have a low perception of their own status? Such a condition is the result of a number of imponderables. One can do no more than suggest some of them.

For one thing, the public employee and his close relatives may be self-conscious about the position in which they find themselves.[6] Perhaps they feel that the rest of the population has little respect for public employment. Therefore, they tend to depreciate their own status even lower than the status of public employment as it is collectively ranked by the rest of the population.

Certainly another contributing factor to the low esteem with which the public employee and his family perceive their position is the lack of an esprit de corps within the public service. While such a feeling may attach to special organizational units at the different levels of government, there seems to be no indication from the findings presented here that public employees view themselves as belonging to an elite class. The lack of such an elitist notion of the public servant is probably a desirable condition from the point of view of a democratic society. Certainly, we in the United States have not been confronted with a cohesive and monolithic body of public servants.

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[6]The reality of this situation can be appreciated from the story of a federal administrator's daughter who came home from her first day at school in tears because she was not able to tell her class what her father did.

Nevertheless, some writers have felt that such a group cohesiveness was developing.[7]

From the data presented here it appears that public employees and their close relatives are even more conscious of their own subordinate position than is the rest of the population. If any adjustment is needed, it is for the public employee to give himself a little more respect.

Summary

A comparison of the Detroit and Chicago survey's findings reveals that the prestige of public employment has risen within nearly every social grouping. However, the groups giving highest and lowest prestige to public employment in Detroit were much the same groups as White had discovered in Chicago. Like White's findings, the Detroit data reveal that low position in the social structure is related to high prestige for public employment and high position in the social structure is related to low prestige for public employment. More specifically the lower class, lesser educated, and low income groups invariably have higher esteem for the public service than do their socio-economic opposites. Likewise, women accord higher prestige than men and Negroes higher prestige than whites.

On the basis of both the Chicago and Detroit studies it can be concluded that the social structure correlates of prestige are social class, occupation, education, income, race, and sex. To a lesser degree age and nativity are also correlates.

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[7]See James Burnham, The Managerial Revolution (New York: John Day, 1941).

Some data from the Detroit study indicate that a change in attitudes toward the prestige of public service has taken place among age and nativity groups since 1928. Where White found that increased age resulted in lower prestige for public employment, the Detroit data reveal that for the population at large, increased age results in lesser amounts of low prestige. The patterns within the lower and middle classes were varied but regardless of class, persons over fifty held the public service in higher esteem than persons under fifty.

Also, foreign background, or nativity, no longer appears to be the clear correlate of prestige that White found it to be. Persons of foreign birth do not, as White found, hold the public service in much higher esteem than persons born in this country.

Three reasons were offered to explain why the prestige of public employment has risen: (1) the security features attached to a public position, (2) the equality of treatment in handling applicants for a government job and (3) the wider extension of government services and benefits on all segments of the population. Each of these factors has a special effect in improving the prestige of public employment for certain groups, e.g., lower classes, Negroes, women, and the aged.

Perhaps the most salient finding in the Detroit study is that public employees and their immediate kin do not rank the prestige of the public service higher than the rest of the population ranks it. In fact, the data suggest that public employees are especially self-deprecating about their own status in society. This finding warrants further research and continued attention.

This latter finding does not negate a general pattern which persists throughout the data in this chapter. That pattern is that the prestige of public employment is most markedly related to those variables which can be best termed as the self-interest orientation of the individual. These "self-interest" variables are social class, occupation, income, education, race, sex, and age. They appear to be the most important determinants of the prestige accorded to the public service. In short, those who benefit the most, those who have prospects of benefitting the most, or those who perceive that their interests are best protected by government, hold the public service in highest regard.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

High position in the social structure has been linked with low prestige toward public employment and low position in the social structure has been linked with high prestige for public employment. From this central conclusion of both the Chicago and Detroit studies we now turn to the question of what influence political perspectives have on the prestige accorded to public employment.

The data relating to various political perspectives will be treated under three headings: (1) the proper role of government in the society, (2) party identification and political activity, and (3) self-confidence in political affairs. These broad categories are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive. They do, however, provide a substantive framework for specifying the relation between political perspectives and prestige.

The Proper Role of Government

A basic attitude underlying many an individual's political opinions is his view of what role government (the state) shall play in the society. In the United States, present day division of opinion on this question largely centers around the scope and content of the national government's activities. The Detroit Area Study sought attitudes on three aspects of this controversy. One question was used to elicit judgment about some of the functional activities performed by the

national government, i.e., whether the national government has done too much, about right, or not enough, in such fields as housing, education, and unemployment. Second, each respondent was asked to select, among three alternatives, how he felt a proposed national health insurance plan should be run: (1) by non-profit agencies, (2) by the government, or (3) that people should pay their own medical bills. Third, each respondent was asked to evaluate a proposed change in the social security system under which all persons over sixty-five would receive the same pension, regardless of whether they had contributed to the social security fund or not.

When responses to the above questions are tabulated according to the prestige given public employment, a clear relationship is established between a "pro-government" response and high prestige and between an "anti-government" response and low prestige. (Table 20) In both the high and low prestige columns the percentage differences between the two extreme response categories are statistically significant. Also, the percentages for the intermediate or neutral response categories generally lie between the percentages for the other categories, thus underlining the consistency of the relationship. The general conclusion follows that those who prefer that the government be a more active agent in the society give higher prestige to public employment than do those who feel that government should be less of a participant in societal affairs.

The following data do not as yet indicate that political attitudes per se influence the prestige given to public employment. It would be desirable to know whether political attitudes, operating independently of social structure variables, are determinants of the

TABLE 20

THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Judgment about activities performed by the national government[a]	Prestige Scale					
	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Too much	56%	32	10	2	100%	52
About right	31%	37	29	3	100%	353
Not enough	25%	38	35	2	100%	305
Who should run a national health insurance plan[b]						
People pay own medical bills	34%	42	22	2	100%	221
Non-profit agencies	35%	34	28	3	100%	198
Government	23%	37	38	2	100%	269
Evaluation of change in social security[c]						
Poor idea	34%	38	25	3	100%	276
Pro-con	30%	37	27	6	100%	67
Good idea	26%	37	36	1	100%	348

[a]Question asked: "Some people think the national government should do more in trying to deal with such problems as unemployment, education, housing, and so on. Others think that the government is already doing too much. On the whole, would you say that what the government has done has been about right, too much, or not enough?"

[b]Question asked: "There is a lot of talk these days about a national health insurance plan to help people with their medical bills. Who do you think should run such a plan?"

(1) Non-profit agencies, or
(2) The government, or
(3) People should take care of their own medical bills.

TABLE 20--Continued

[c]Question asked: "There is a plan to change social security so that everybody over 65 would get the same pension regardless of whether they have been paying social security tax. What do you think of this idea?"

prestige of the public service. It has been established that social class, sex, race, and, to some extent, age all effect the prestige accorded public employment. It is therefore necessary to control for each of these variables in attempting to pinpoint the influence of various political perspectives on prestige. Ideally, it would be desirable to hold all of these factors constant at one and the same time but the small size of the sample precludes controlling for more than one social structure variable at a time.

Social class was found to be an important determinant of prestige. If social class is held constant and the relationship between political perspectives and prestige remains, then there is reason to believe that political attitudes do influence the prestige accorded public employment. Table 21 indicates that there is some association between attitudes about the role of government and the prestige of public employment. Here the responses to the three questions on the proper role are tabulated by the prestige accorded public employment with the responses of lower class persons separated from the responses of middle class persons.

The small number of cases in the Too Much and Pro-Con categories for the items dealing with national government activities and the change in social security necessitated that these responses either be combined with another response category or be eliminated before social class was held constant. The latter course was decided on to keep the original categories "pure." This explains why neither of these two responses, both of which appear in Table 20, is in Table 21.

TABLE 21

SOCIAL CLASS AND PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Judgment about activities performed by national government	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Lower Class						
About right	22%	39	36	3	100%	200
Not enough	24%	38	36	2	100%	214
Middle Class						
About right	44%	33	20	3	100%	147
Not enough	29%	35	34	2	100%	86
Who should run national health insurance plan						
Lower Class						
People pay own medical bills	22%	48	27	3	100%	111
Non-profit agencies	29%	38	31	2	100%	120
Government	21%	35	43	1	100%	190
Middle Class						
People pay own medical bills	46%	36	17	1	100%	106
Non-profit agencies	45%	27	25	3	100%	75
Government	31%	39	27	3	100%	77
Evaluation of change in social security						
Lower Class						
Poor idea	26%	41	30	3	100%	152
Good idea	20%	38	41	1	100%	227
Middle Class						
Poor idea	44%	33	21	2	100%	117
Good idea	38%	32	26	4	100%	118

Within both the lower and middle classes the direction of the relationship between attitudes about the proper role of government and the prestige of public employment is maintained. That is, those who think that the national government has not done enough, that the government should run a national health insurance plan, and that the change in the social security plan is a good idea, consistently give less low prestige and greater high prestige than those who select the more conservative or "anti-government" responses.

Several of the percentage differences in Table 21 are statistically significant. Even when not significant nearly all the percentage differences indicate that regardless of social class, persons inclined to favor a broad role for government give greater high prestige than those who are not so inclined. Conversely, persons less favorably disposed toward governmental activities give greater low prestige than persons favorably disposed, regardless of class position.

One departure from the pattern outlined above occurs in the national governmental activities item. (Table 21) Within the lower class, there is practically no difference in the percentages giving low, middle, and high prestige between the about right and not enough groups. This occurrence is suggestive of a general hypothesis which, unfortunately, cannot be verified with the data at hand. The hypothesis is that the socio-economic position of the lower classes is considerably more influential in determining the prestige they give public employment than are their political attitudes.

One other pecularity in the data appears in Table 21. On the question about national health insurance, within the lower classes only 22 per cent of those replying that people should pay their own medical bills gave low prestige to public employment. This figure is

somewhat less than the 29 per cent answering that non-profit agencies should run a national health plan, and barely more than the 21 per cent favoring governmental operation of the plan. It is difficult to reconcile the comparatively small percentage in the low prestige column with this ultra-conservative response. This alternative, "People should pay their own medical bills," contradicts the question as posed--Who should run a national health insurance plan? Selection of this alternative constitutes a rejection of the whole idea of a national health plan. As such, it should attract the politically conservative members of the society --the ones expected to give the lowest prestige to public employment.

Expectations in this regard are partially borne out by the percentages for the lower class in the high prestige column. (Table 21) Those selecting the most conservative response give the smallest percentage of high prestige (27 per cent). The 43 per cent for those selecting government to operate the health plan is significantly larger than the 31 per cent of those answering non-profit agencies and the 27 per cent falling in the most conservative response category.

Attitudes about the role that government should play in the society, independent of social class, influence the prestige an individual gives to public employment. But is this influence sustained when other variables such as sex, race, and age are held constant? Table 22 presents the responses to the health insurance question tabulated by the prestige accorded public employment with sex, race, and age held constant. To prevent the table from being inordinately large, only the responses for the national health insurance item are presented. Identical controls exercised on the two other questions dealing with the role of government revealed a similar general pattern.

TABLE 22

SOCIAL STRUCTURE VARIABLES AND NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Who runs health Insurance Plan	Prestige Scale					Number of cases
	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	
Sex						
Men						
People pay own medical bills	45%	35	18	2	100%	100
Non-profit agencies	42%	27	29	2	100%	83
Government	26%	39	34	1	100%	143
Women						
People pay own medical bills	24%	49	25	2	100%	121
Non-profit agencies	29%	40	28	3	100%	115
Government	21%	34	43	2	100%	126
Race						
Whites						
People pay own medical bills	34%	44	20	2	100%	201
Non-profit agencies	38%	36	24	2	100%	170
Government	25%	35	38	2	100%	217
Negroes*						
Age						
21-34						
People pay own medical bills	33%	41	22	4	100%	80
Non-profit agencies	36%	33	29	2	100%	93
Government	27%	33	40	-	100%	98
35-49						
People pay own medical bills	37%	45	17	1	100%	83
Non-profit agencies	36%	33	26	5	100%	58
Government	26%	32	41	1	100%	84

TABLE 22--Continued

	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
50 and over						
People pay own medical bills	29%	41	28	2	100%	58
Non-profit agencies	32%	38	30	-	100%	47
Government	16%	46	35	3	100%	87

*Because there were only 106 Negroes in the Detroit sample it was impossible to exercise controls that yielded large enough sub-groups to analyze. Therefore, this "control" examined differences only among white members of the population.

The general pattern is this. Different responses to questions about the role of government lead to many significant differences in the amount of prestige for public employment, in spite of the fact that sex, race, and age are held constant. Even where the percentage differences are not significant the direction of the percentage difference is consistent. Those whose responses are pro-government give less low prestige and more high prestige than those whose responses might be classified as "anti-government."

In Table 22 we again note the peculiarity of the percentages in the low prestige column for those who thought that people should pay their own medical bills. These percentages are often smaller than the comparable percentages for those selecting non-profit agencies. They were expected to be larger. All of which indicates that this self-reliant, individualistic response is not as "ultra-conservative" as one might think.

Party Identification and Political Activity

On the basis of the preceding findings, Democrats might be expected to give higher prestige to public employment than Republicans. This follows as a logical deduction from the general political orientation of the two parties--Democrats are generally more disposed toward greater governmental action than are Republicans. The expected relationship is found to exist in the Detroit area at least. (Table 23) Democrats give significantly less low prestige and significantly more high prestige than Republicans. Interestingly enough, the prestige accorded public employment by persons identifying themselves as Independents is very similar to the prestige accorded by Republicans.

TABLE 23

PARTY IDENTIFICATION BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Party Identification[a]	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Democrats	26%	38	34	2	100%	468
Independents[b]	37%	40	21	2	100%	60
Republicans	39%	36	23	2	100%	197

[a]Question asked: "Generally speaking do you consider yourself a Republican or a Democrat." If the respondent said "Independent" he was probed with, "Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or closer to the Democratic party?"

[b]Independents includes only those who maintained this designation after the probe indicated above. The Democrat and Republican categories include those who felt closer to one or another of the parties after the probe. If it did anything, the inclusion of these "leaners" in the respective party categories operated to mitigate the differences between the two parties on the prestige variable. It was justified primarily on the grounds of securing a sufficiently large group classified as Republicans so that controls could be exercised.

The question again arises as to whether the observed differences are traceable to political perspectives--in this case party identification --or to other social structure variables known to influence prestige. After holding social class, sex, race, and age constant, significant differences remain in some instances and in every case the direction of the expected difference persists. (Table 24) It is a reasonable conclusion then, that an individual's political party identification affects the prestige he gives to public employment irrespective of his social class, sex, race, and age.

An exception to this conclusion may be taken so far as Negroes are concerned. On a priori grounds, it would be expected that for Negroes the variable of race would be more influential than party identification in determining the prestige given public employment. That is, within the Negro sub-group, there would not be much difference in esteem for public employment as between Democrats and Republicans. This might apply to political perspectives in general, as well as party identification in particular. Analysis of this group indicated that the hypothesis may be true, but the very small number of cases included in the analysis cautions against generalization.

Party identification tells us something about individual's political allegiance--where his loyalties lie. But it is also pertinent to find out how strong these loyalties are, i.e., how these loyalties are acted upon. This leads to a consideration of political activity. Two dimensions of political activity are distinguished: (1) voting, and (2) contributing time or money to help elect a political party or candidate.

TABLE 24

SOCIAL STRUCTURE VARIABLES AND PARTY IDENTIFICATION BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Party Identification	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Social Class						
Lower Class						
Democrats	23%	37	37	3	100%	324
Republicans[a]	25%	44	31	-	100%	110
Middle Class						
Democrats	31%	40	27	2	100%	138
Republicans[a]	50%	29	18	3	100%	140
Sex						
Men						
Democrats	31%	35	32	2	100%	228
Republicans[a]	45%	35	18	2	100%	113
Women						
Democrats	21%	41	35	3	100%	240
Republicans[a]	34%	39	26	1	100%	144
Race						
White						
Democrats	27%	40	31	2	100%	380
Republicans[a]	41%	36	22	1	100%	243
Negroes[b]						
Age						
21-34						
Democrats	26%	36	36	2	100%	214
Republicans[a]	48%	32	17	3	100%	71
35-49						
Democrats	30%	35	32	3	100%	144
Republicans[a]	40%	39	19	2	100%	87
50 and over						
Democrats	20%	46	32	2	100%	110
Republicans[a]	30%	39	31	-	100%	99

TABLE 24--Continued

[a]Includes persons classified as Independents.

[b]Not a sufficient number of cases to permit controls to be exercised.

What is the expected relationship between political activity and the prestige of public employment? The general hypothesis is that those who are politically inactive will give higher prestige to public employment than the politically active. Independent of class, sex, or age, it was expected that the greater the inclination to permit others to make political decisions, i.e., the less the person's political activity, the greater will be his esteem for the public service. Conversely, the politically active persons were expected to give lower prestige to public employment than politically inactive persons.

Are these expectations fulfilled for the two dimensions of political activity--voting and helping in a political campaign? Table 25 presents the data on these variables tabulated by the prestige of public employment. In brief, these findings are this: those who voted in one or more elections gave significantly more low prestige than those who did not vote in any of the three elections inquired about, and those who helped in a political campaign also gave significantly more low prestige to public employment than those who did not do so. Neither voting nor campaigning had much effect on the amount of high prestige accorded to public employment.

Political activity seems to lead to more low prestige for public employment. However, even this finding is inconclusive since the variables of voting and campaigning are known to be partially dependent upon social class, sex, age, and race. When an attempt was made to control for each of these variables, the sub-groups

became too small so as to prevent generalization based on any statistical confidence. The tendency seen in Table 25 remained after social structure variables were held constant. The politically active groups generally gave lower prestige to public employment than did the politically inactive groups.

TABLE 25

POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Political Activity	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Voting[a]						
Voted in three elections	33%	36	30	1	100%	297
Voted in one or two elections	33%	34	30	3	100%	290
Voted in none of the elections	19%	48	28	5	100%	150
Helped campaign[b]						
Yes	41%	27	27	5	100%	118
No	28%	40	30	2	100%	623

[a]Question asked: "We know that there are many reasons why people don't get to vote in elections. Could you tell me whether you voted in these elections: First, the last local election? Now the presidential election (1952)--did you vote then? How about the 1948 presidential election when Truman ran against Dewey?"

[b]Question asked: "Have you ever helped campaign for a party or candidate during an election--like putting in time or contributing money?"

Certainly the entire area of political activity, and especially the political party process, warrants further study to assess the influence of these variables on the public administrative process.

Self-Confidence in Political Affairs

The preceding section on political activity focused on the relationship between prestige and the individual's inclination to take a more or less active part in the political process. In an oblique way that section is linked to the present one where the individual's feelings of self-assurance, effectiveness, and influence in political matters will be considered. Here the central concern is with the relationship between prestige and certain personality and psychological characteristics of the respondent.

The general hypothesis under investigation is that persons with high political self-confidence give lower prestige to public employment than do persons with low political self-confidence. The rationale behind this hypothesis rests on the expectation that those who are politically self-confident--those who rely on their own judgment in political matters--are less willing to place confidence in the ability of public servants and the public service to solve these problems. The politically self-confident person would therefore give lower prestige to the public service than the person not so self-assured and self-reliant in political affairs.

One aspect of a person's political self-confidence may be termed "politically efficacy," or feeling of effectiveness in political matters. The measurement of the respondent's political efficacy is based primarily on a Guttman scale of three items.[1]

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[1]This is the same scaling technique which was used to derive the prestige scale. Mr. Allan Silver developed the political efficacy scale. Mr. Silver was a graduate student in Sociology while working on the Detroit Area Study. His master's degree paper explains the detailed procedures of the scaling technique, "Case Study of a Scaling Procedure: A Guttman Scale for Political Efficacy" (Ann Arbor: Detroit Area Study, 1954, mimeographed).

The items used to develop the political efficacy scale were:

1. So many other people vote in elections that it doesn't matter much whether I vote or not.
2. People like me don't have any say about what the government does.
3. I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think.

These statements were on a card which was given to the respondent. He was asked whether he strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each statement. It was assumed that agreement with the statements indicated a low degree of political efficacy while disagreement with the statements indicated a high degree of political efficacy. The specific hypothesis here is that those who show high political efficacy (i.e., those who feel effective in the political decision-making process) give lower prestige to public employment than those who display low political efficacy (i.e., those who feel ineffective in political affairs). Initial support for the hypothesis is presented in Table 26. Those with high political efficacy give significantly more low prestige (38 per cent) than do those with low political efficacy (26 per cent). Forty-one per cent of those with low political efficacy accorded middle-range prestige to public employment. This figure is significantly larger than the 30 per cent of those with high political efficacy. Whether a person shows high, middle-range, or low political efficacy seems to make little difference in high prestige for public employment. It is worthy of note that the percentages for middle-range and low political efficacy are not greatly divergent.

TABLE 26

POLITICAL EFFICACY BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Political Efficacy Scale	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
High	38%	30	29	3	100%	314
Middle	25%	44	29	2	100%	207
Low	26%	41	32	1	100%	201

Once again the question of discovering the independent influence of a political perspective variable on prestige requires that social class, sex, race, and age be held constant. (Table 27) When these variables are held constant it is desirable to have as large a number of cases as possible in each group. Since the prestige accorded by the middle-range and low political efficacy groups was quite similar (see Table 26) there was some justification for combining these two groups and thus simplyifying Table 27.

Irrespective of class, sex, race, or age the relationship established between political efficacy and prestige in Table 26 is retained in Table 27. Without exception, those who rank high in political efficacy give more low prestige to public employment than do those who are in the middle and low political efficacy groups. On the other hand, those who rank in the low and middle-range groups for political efficacy invariably give more middle-range prestige than do those in the high political efficacy groups. Several of the percentage differences in both columns are statistically significant. It may be reasonably concluded that political efficacy is a political perspective which influences the prestige of public employment.

TABLE 27

SOCIAL STRUCTURE VARIABLES AND POLITICAL EFFICACY BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Political Efficacy	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Social Class						
Lower Class						
High	29%	30	37	4	100%	167
Low & Middle	21%	43	35	1	100%	272
Middle Class						
High	49%	28	21	2	100%	144
Low & Middle	34%	40	24	2	100%	127
Sex						
Men						
High	41%	32	26	1	100%	151
Low & Middle	32%	38	28	2	100%	193
Women						
High	35%	28	33	4	100%	163
Low & Middle	20%	47	32	1	100%	215
Race						
Whites						
High	39%	30	28	3	100%	284
Low & Middle	27%	45	27	1	100%	335
Negroes*						
Age						
21-34						
High	37%	29	31	3	100%	137
Low & Middle	26%	42	31	1	100%	151
35-49						
High	40%	30	26	4	100%	111
Low & Middle	28%	42	28	2	100%	123
50 and over						
High	35%	33	32	-	100%	66
Low & Middle	22%	45	31	2	100%	134

TABLE 27--Continued

*Not a sufficient number of cases to permit controls to be exercised.

Another dimension of an individual's self-confidence in political affairs is the way in which he approaches a government bureau--specifically, his willingness to deal directly and personally with government officials and agencies when confronted with a problem. It was expected that those who take such direct personal action would give lower prestige to public employment than those who rely on an intermediary to act as an agent to help them in handling their relations with governmental agencies. The rationale behind this expectation is similar to that underlying the relationship between political efficacy and prestige. The more an individual feels able to "go it alone," to solve his own government-related problems, the less respect he will have for the complexities of the administrative process and consequently, the lower will be the prestige he gives to the public service.

The above hypothesis is borne out by the data in Table 28.

TABLE 28

APPROACH TO A GOVERNMENT BUREAU BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Approach to a Government Bureau*	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Would do it himself	35%	36	26	3	100%	183
Would get help	27%	39	32	2	100%	453

*Question asked: "In general, if you had a problem to take up with a government bureau, would you do it yourself, or do you think you would be better off if you got the help of some person or organization?"

Persons not relying on an intermediary to handle their problems with government (would do it himself) give significantly more low prestige than persons relying on an intermediary (would get help). Those who said they would get help give more high prestige (32 per cent) than those who said they would do it themselves (26 per cent) but the percentage difference is not quite statistically significant. Furthermore, when the controls used previously were employed, some of the percentage differences were lessened but the direction of the differences remained consistent with the hypothesis.

Summary

It was found that after holding social class, sex, race, and age constant, certain political perspectives were still responsible for differences in the amount of prestige accorded to public employment. Prima facie evidence therefore exists to establish the following political variables as correlates of prestige:

1. Attitudes toward the role of government. Predispositions to favor a broad or expanded role for government in the society are associated with high prestige for public employment. Conversely, predispositions toward a narrowly circumscribed role for government are associated with low prestige for public employment.

2. Party identification. Percentage-wise, significantly more Democrats than Republicans and Independents have high esteem for the public service. Significantly more Republicans and Independents give low prestige to public employment than do Democrats.

3. Political Activity. Those who have voted and those who have taken part in political campaigns offer greater amounts of low prestige to public employment than those who have not voted or not taken part in

a political campaign. Because adequate controls for social structure variables were difficult this finding must be regarded as inconclusive.

4. Political self-confidence. Feelings of confidence, effectiveness, and self-assurance on political affairs are associated with low esteem for the public service. Those who rank high on a scale of political efficacy give more low esteem to public employment than do those who rank low or in the middle-range on the political efficacy scale. Those who report that they would rely on an intermediary to handle or advise them on government-related problems give less low prestige and more high prestige to public employment than do those who say they would handle these problems on their own without the aid of an intermediary.

The data in this chapter gives some indication that for persons in the lower classes and for Negroes, their class position and race are more influential in determining the prestige given to public employment than are their political perspectives. This tentative finding lends additional support to the contention that the self-interest orientation of the individual is the most important determinant of the prestige accorded to the public service.

CHAPTER VI

CONTACT AND EVALUATION

The first objective of this chapter is to single out those administrative variables, attitudinal and otherwise, which are non-correlates of the prestige of public employment. Chapter III, "Administrative Perspectives," indicated some administrative variables which <u>are</u> related to prestige. The data in that chapter have some relevance for our present undertaking. Table 10 included a variable which showed no clear relationship, either positive or negative, with the prestige of public employment. That variable was the general evaluation of dealings with public employees. Drawing upon that evidence, we suggest that the variables of contact and evaluation are unrelated to the prestige of the public service.

To take an illustrative hypothesis, some people may feel that, administratively speaking, public agencies are doing a poor job, yet the same individuals may offer high prestige to public employment. Others may feel that some or all public agencies are operating well, and yet they may give low prestige to public employment. Whatever the case, we should expect that no particular evaluation should be clearly associated with either high or low prestige.

Aside from designating the non-correlates of prestige, this chapter has the second objective of showing that the public bureaucracy is seen, to a degree at least, as an impartial or neutral institution.

Referring again to data presented earlier (Chapters III, IV, and V) it is possible to support the contention that the prestige of the public service is influenced by important "self-interest" variables --whether administrative, social structure, or political in nature. But if the public bureaucracy is to be recognized as a legitimate institution, it cannot attain such a position solely on the basis of satisfying the particular self-interests of major groups. The bureaucracy must also be perceived as transcending various special interests and as the protector of the "public interest," however vague that term may be. The end product of this view of the public service would be to place it in an "umpire" position, very similar to the capacity in which Hegel saw the German governing class functioning in his day. As Professor Sabine has expressed it, Hegel attached

> . . . high importance . . . to an official governing class, the "universal class" as he called it, which by birth and training is fitted to rule and which embodies a long tradition of hierarchical authority and orderly procedure. Such a class he regarded as detached from and impartial toward the private and social interests which it regulates. In a special sense, therefore, it represents the general will and the "reason" of society, in contrast with acquisitive self-interest or special and partial interests, and is the guardian of the whole public interest.[1]

But the crucial question for a democratic society is, are persons "enlightened" enough to see beyond their immediate self-interest and to judge rationally and realistically the public bureaucracy on its own merits, rather than on the basis of their socio-economic position or their political predispositions? If they are able to do this, on what matters do they do it? That is,

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[1]George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory (Revised ed.; New York: Holt, 1950), p. 662.

what administrative variables are based on rational and realistic considerations and therefore, should not be expected to influence prestige? Two such variables which meet the realistic and rational criteria are contact with and evaluation of public administrative agencies. If the public service is truly seen as a neutral agent, as an umpire, then varying amounts of contact with it or different evaluations of its operations ought not to give rise to greatly divergent prestige ratings. In other words, contact and evaluation ought to be unrelated to the prestige of public employment.

Contact

The impact of public administration on any community is largely the product of the contacts between the citizen and the public administrative agencies. A list of nine public agencies was used to determine the extent of contact with public agencies in the Detroit metropolitan area. The list included the public library, municipal transit system, street and alley cleaning division, tax assessor's office, police, public schools, selective service, employment security commission (unemployment insurance), and social security.

Most of the agencies in the list are local ones but state (unemployment insurance) and federal (social security) agencies are also included. The list was formulated on the assumption that the citizen is likely to have more contacts with local or municipal agencies than with agencies at other levels. Table 29 presents the number and percentage of respondents having different amounts of contact with this list of nine agencies. The frequencies (as well as the percentages) for each contact grouping approximate a normal distribution curve. This lends credence to the belief that the list of agencies by which contact was measured was not biased.

TABLE 29

CONTACT WITH NINE SELECTED PUBLIC AGENCIES IN THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Number of Agencies Contacted[a]	Number of Cases	Per Cent
None	25	3%
One	52	7
Two	129	17
Three	150	20
Four	165	22
Five	109	14
Six	67	9
Seven	26	3
Eight	8	1
Nine	2	-[b]
Not ascertained for two or more agencies	31	4
Total	764	100%

[a]The selected agencies were: public library, municipal transit system, street and alley cleaning division, tax assessor's office, police, public schools, selective service, employment security, and social security. Contact with the first five agencies--library to police--was subjectively determined by the respondent. For the remaining four agencies--public schools, selective service, employment security, and social security--contact with each unit respectively was determined objectively by the following conditions: child attending public schools, someone in family registered for the draft, family member received unemployment insurance, and family member receiving social security benefits.

[b]Less than .5 of one per cent.

Is the extent of a citizen's contact with public agencies related to the prestige he accords to public employment? Table 30 indicates that no consistent relationship is established between these two variables, although one or two rather large percentage differences occur. The lack of a consistent relationship between prestige and

contact does not prove conclusively that there is no relationship whatsoever between the two variables. Nevertheless, it is important to note that greater or lesser contact with public agencies does not lead to either predominantly high or predominantly low prestige for public employment.

TABLE 30

CONTACT WITH NINE SELECTED PUBLIC AGENCIES BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Number of Agencies Contacted	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
None or one	27%	53	20	-	100%	77
Two	24%	34	38	4	100%	129
Three	29%	41	28	2	100%	150
Four	36%	34	29	1	100%	165
Five	29%	34	34	3	100%	109
Six or more	34%	35	26	5	100%	103

Table 31 provides additional support for the hypothesis that contact with public agencies is not markedly related to the prestige given the public service. For each of the nine agencies the occurence of contact and the lack of contact are tabulated by the prestige given public employment. Only for the first and last agencies listed in Table 31--Public Library and Unemployment Insurance--is there an indication that contact and prestige might be related variables. For the other seven agencies there is practically no relationship, as is indicated by the small percentage differences in the low and high prestige columns. Furthermore, the direction of the percentage differences is not uniform. Those who have experienced contact do not consistently give either more or less low prestige to public employment

than those who have not had contact. The same inconsistency appears in both the middle and high prestige columns.

TABLE 31

CONTACT WITH SPECIFIC PUBLIC AGENCIES BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Agency	Contact with the agency	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Public Library	yes	35%	36	24	5	100%	204
	no	28%	39	31	2	100%	514
Transit System	yes	31%	35	31	3	100%	449
	no	30%	42	26	2	100%	272
Tax Assessor's Office	yes	34%	35	28	3	100%	181
	no	29%	39	30	2	100%	538
Street & Alley Cleaning	yes	33%	36	28	3	100%	283
	no	29%	39	30	2	100%	439
Police	yes	33%	33	30	4	100%	336
	no	28%	41	30	1	100%	397
Selective Service	yes	28%	39	29	4	100%	181
	no	31%	37	30	2	100%	553
Public School System	yes	30%	38	27	5	100%	341
	no	29%	36	30	5	100%	399
Social Security	yes	31%	39	27	3	100%	143
	no	31%	37	30	2	100%	561
Unemployment Insurance	yes	27%	35	35	3	100%	236
	no	32%	40	26	2	100%	484

For the public library and unemployment insurance the comparatively large differences seem to indicate that contact is related to

prestige. Respondents who reported contact with the public library give significantly more low prestige (35 per cent) to public employment than respondents who did not report contact with the library (28 per cent). Those who contacted the employment commission, i.e., who had a family member receive unemployment insurance, give significantly greater high prestige (35 per cent) to public employment than those who did not have such contact (26 per cent).

But is it really the contact variable which is influencing the prestige given the public service in these two instances? If we remember the nature of the services provided by these two agencies then, by deduction, we may assign the observed percentage differences to the social class position of those who had the contact rather than to the fact of contact itself.

It could be predicted on a priori grounds that the public library is used more by the middle classes than by the lower classes. Since the middle classes generally hold public employment in low esteem, one would therefore expect greater low prestige accorded to public employment by those who have contacted this facility as compared with those who have not contacted it. The expected impact of unemployment insurance on the lower class is obvious, as is the expectation that this selectivity of contact would lead to higher prestige for the public service on the part of those who had such contact.

Table 32 shows the greater amount of contact that the middle classes have with the public library and also the greater amount of contact with unemployment insurance on the part of the lower classes. These differentials in contact are statistically significant. Thus, class position, rather than actual contact, accounts for the spurious

relationship between contact with these two agencies and the prestige of public employment.

TABLE 32

SOCIAL CLASS BY CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, AND SOCIAL SECURITY, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Social Class			
Contact with the Agency	Lower Lower	Upper Lower	Lower Middle	Upper Middle
Public Library				
Yes	16%	25%	39%	39%
No	80	72	52	54
Not ascertained	4	3	9	7
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Unemployment Insurance				
Yes	40%	33%	25%	15%
No	57	64	67	75
Not ascertained	3	3	8	10
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Social Security				
Yes	21%	18%	16%	20%
No	71	78	74	73
Not ascertained	8	4	10	7
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	250	207	186	106

One further question may be considered. If the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits enhances the prestige of the public service, why is not the same true for receipt of social security benefits? Why is there not a more marked difference in prestige ratings between those who have had contact with social security and those who have not? (Table 31)

The answer to the preceding question becomes apparent when one realizes that social security benefits are rather evenly distributed

throughout the social structure. Therefore, the bias introduced into the prestige ratings by a certain class having proportionately more contacts with an agency does not exist in the case of social security. As evidence of this even distribution, note the similarity in percentages of those having "contact" with social security among the various social classes. (Table 32) Whereas 21 per cent of the lower lower class families had a member receiving social security benefits, 20 per cent of the upper middle class families had like contact with social security.[2]

Evaluation

Four dimensions of "evaluation" may be distinguished. First, there is evaluation of the performance of administrative agencies, regardless of whether the respondent has contacted the agencies evaluated. Second, there is evaluation of the performance of administrative agencies by persons who actually had contact with the agency evaluated. Third, there is the evaluation of certain "volatile" aspects of public administrative operations, e.g., political pull, red tape, and corruption. Fourth, there is the evaluation of the substantive programs undertaken by certain administrative agencies, that is, judgments about the purpose, content, and objectives of an agency's program. Each of these four dimensions will be considered separately.

The general expectation about the relationship between the prestige of public employment and these dimensions of evaluation is that of a null hypothesis. We expect that these dimensions are unrelated, or show no consistent relationship with prestige. Should a relationship appear between prestige and any one of the four dimensions the most

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[2]The basis for measuring contact with social security was whether a family member was receiving social security benefits.

likely dimension would be the evaluation of the substantive program of an administrative agency, since this aspect of evaluation may tap political attitudes.

A battery of six questions about administrative performance was asked of all respondents. The questions were as follows:

1. Do you think the (NAME OF LOCAL COMMUNITY) officials and bureaus are doing--
a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

2. What about the (NAME OF COUNTY) county government--do you think the county officials and bureaus are doing--
a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

3. And the state government--do you think the state officials and bureaus are doing--
a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

4. What about the County Sheriff's Department--what kind of a job are they doing?
Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

5. And the State Police--how good a job are they doing?
Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

6. What kind of a job would you say the (NAME OF LOCAL COMMUNITY) police are doing?
Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

The scope of performance evaluation covered by these questions was general--officials and bureaus--as well as specific--police agencies. In addition, the questions had the advantage of covering different levels of government.

Data from the above questions were employed to relate evaluations of performance to prestige. (Table 33) Table 33 supports the general hypothesis that different evaluations of administrative performance do not lead to markedly different attitudes toward the prestige of the public service. This holds true for the performance evaluation of the aggregate of all officials and bureaus at the state, county, and local levels, as well as for the performance evaluation of specific law

enforcement agencies at the same three levels. The percentages in each prestige column are very similar no matter what the evaluation of performance. This is strikingly so for the evaluation of officials and bureaus at the three levels of government.

TABLE 33

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF STATE, COUNTY, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS AND BUREAUS AND STATE, COUNTY, AND LOCAL POLICE AGENCIES BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

Officials and Bureaus	Prestige Scale: Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Very good	31%	35	32	2	100%	184
Good	32%	37	29	2	100%	216
Fair	31%	37	29	3	100%	174
Poor	30%	39	29	2	100%	83
Police Agencies						
Very good	28%	37	33	2	100%	229
Good	35%	35	28	2	100%	265
Fair	32%	34	33	1	100%	85
Poor	26%	32	39	3	100%	38

A word of explanation is in order regarding the evaluation terms in Table 33. The evaluations are the product of two scales constructed from the questions appearing above. One scale was developed from responses to the three questions about officials and bureaus. The other scale employed the responses to the three questions on the various law enforcement agencies. The evaluation categories in Table 33 are related to the evaluation categories of the original questions in the following way: "Very good" means very good or good responses on all three of the original questions; "Good" means very good or good

responses on two of the three original questions; "Fair" means fair or poor responses on two of the original questions; and "Poor" means a fair or poor response on all three of the original questions. It should be pointed out that the tabulation of each original question by the prestige of public employment revealed substantially the same patterns as appear in Table 33. The scales were constructed only to condense the data and to simplify its presentation.

The data presented in Table 33 were retabulated with social class held constant. If any relationship between prestige and evaluation existed it should be revealed under these control conditions. This operation did not reveal any findings which run counter to the findings presented above. The percentage point differences did diverge slightly more than they do in Table 33 but the differences were neither consistent nor significant.

The second dimension of the evaluation variable focuses on the evaluations of persons coming in contact with a specific agency and their prestige for public employment. Among those who have contacted a particular agency, do those who express a favorable evaluation of its operations give markedly higher prestige ratings than those who express less favorable evaluations?

Respondents having contact with four municipal administrative units were ask for their evaluation of each agency's performance. Table 34 presents their evaluations tabulated by the prestige of public employment. The lack of any large percentage differences suggests that the null hypothesis regarding the relationship between the two variables is a tenable one. However, a word of caution is necessary. The sizes of the sub-samples are quite small, in three places between 5 and 10 per cent of the total sample, and in three

other instances so small as to render presentation completely meaningless. Nevertheless, the lack of any large or consistent differences between the percentages is more striking in view of the greater opportunity for chance error to occur among the small sub-samples.

TABLE 34

EVALUATION OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE BY THOSE WHO HAVE CONTACTED THE AGENCY BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
Evaluation	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Public Library						
Very good	34%	38	23	5	100%	98
Good	36%	39	20	5	100%	88
Fair & Poor[a]	--	--	--	-	---	
Transportation System						
Very good[b]	--	--	--	-	---	
Good	29%	39	27	5	100%	123
Fair	38%	34	26	2	100%	99
Poor	30%	30	38	2	100%	182
Tax Assessor						
Very Good[c]	--	--	--	-	---	
Good	35%	34	29	2	100%	119
Fair & Poor	35%	35	28	2	100%	43[d]
Street and Alley Cleaning						
Very Good	34%	33	28	5	100%	39[d]
Good	27%	40	31	2	100%	97
Fair	33%	38	24	5	100%	58[d]
Poor	40%	30	29	1	100%	78

[a]Only 12 cases.

[b]Only 18 cases.

[c]Only 15 cases.

[d]Less than 10% of the sample.

One significant difference occurs in Table 34. Of those who had contact with the transportation system and rated its performance as poor, 38 per cent gave high prestige to public employment. This percentage is significantly larger than the comparable percentages for those who rate the performance of the transit system as fair or good (26 and 27 per cent respectively). In other words, those who give a poor performance rating actually give higher prestige to public employment than do those with a more favorable evaluation of this agency's performance. This difference can be explained by the selective factor which operates to determine who has contact with the public transportation system. The lower classes would undoubtedly have more occasion to use the public transit system. To some extent this was found to be true. Sixty-three per cent of the lower lower class had contact with the public transit system as opposed to 50 per cent of the upper middle class. Although this difference is not astounding it is statistically significant. This proportionately greater contact with the transit system by lower classes helps to account for the anomalous situation in which those who offer a low evaluation of the system's operation give high(er) prestige to the public service.

So far as several aspects of our data are concerned there is no basis for modifying the hypothesis that evaluation of performance and prestige are unrelated variables. Evaluation of performance is a non-correlate of the prestige of public employment.

Another dimension of the public's evaluation of administrative operations was explored by asking questions about certain aspects of administration which are emotionally charged. These aspects were (1) the role which political pull plays in helping a private citizen get

aid from the government, (2) the respondent's definition of red tape, and (3) whether there is any corruption in the collection of taxes. These topics--political pull, red tape, and corruption--gave considerable opportunity for expressing any latent hostility toward government, the administrative process, or administrative officials which was not otherwise expressed in the course of the interview.

It might seem that the hypothesis about these variables being unrelated to prestige is highly questionable and doubtful. Some of the doubt about this hypothesis is dispelled by the data in Table 35. There appears to be no relationship between prestige and political pull or red tape. The pattern is unclear on the corruption item and more will be said about it in a moment.

Besides the lack of a relationship between prestige and political pull, an additional observation about the political pull item bears mentioning. The three-hundred-eleven persons who felt that political pull played an important part in whether the government helps a private citizen constitute 41 per cent of the total sample. There were 28 per cent (215) who thought political pull played some part and only 15 per cent (113) who claimed it played no part. Sixteen per cent gave other responses--don't know, depends, or not ascertained. More than two-thirds (69 per cent) of the population expressed the belief that political pull exists to a greater or lesser degree in the administrative process while less than one-sixth of the population feel that the administrative process is free of favoritism. These figures may reflect a cultural proneness to believe that most everyone is entitled to "special consideration." They might also be interpreted as attesting that the public bureaucracy is not seen as very neutral or impartial.

TABLE 35

ROLE OF POLITICAL PULL, DEFINITION OF RED TAPE, AND CORRUPTION IN THE COLLECTION OF TAXES BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Role of Political Pull[a]						
Important part	31%	38	30	1	100%	311
Some part	34%	34	28	4	100%	215
No part	31%	37	32	-	100%	113
Definition of Red Tape[b]						
Tolerant	31%	38	29	2	100%	309
Hostile	33%	37	28	2	100%	299
Corruption in Collection of Taxes[c]						
Yes, probably there is	39%	35	24	2	100%	256
Believes there isn't	22%	40	36	2	100%	132
No, none, not much	30%	35	32	3	100%	232

[a]Question asked: "Some people think political pull plays an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen with some problem he has; other people don't think so. In your opinion, does political pull play an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen?"

[b]Question asked: "Many people use the words "red tape" to describe their experiences with government. Could you tell me what you think they mean by 'red tape'? Could you give me an example of that from your personal experience?"

[c]Question asked: "In general, do you think there is any corruption in the collection of taxes?"

However interpreted and however worthy of note, the percentages in the paragraph preceding Table 35 are really secondary to our present

concern. Primary attention is focused on whether persons evaluating the role of political pull differently give widely dissimilar prestige to public employment. Table 35 reveals practically no difference in the prestige accorded public employment as between those replying that political pull plays an important part, some part, or no part in obtaining help from the government.

Those who define red tape differently--in a tolerant or in a hostile manner--also give very similar prestige ratings to the public service. (Table 35) "Tolerant" definitions were those such as paper work, procedures, filling out forms, channels to handle a problem; all were rather objective and descriptive terms. Definitions that were classed as "hostile" were delay, buck-passing, the run-around, unnecessary procedures, political pull, and too many details. Each of these definitions carried with it an implicit or explicit value judgment, e.g., unnecessary procedures, too many details. Only one or two percentage points separate the figures in the low, middle, and high prestige columns for this item.

The cross-tabulation of the corruption item with prestige presents a picture somewhat different from the red tape and political pull items. (Table 35) There is some indication that a relationship may exist between prestige and corruption but the pattern is rather confused. Those who only "believe" there is no corruption give less low prestige and more high prestige than those who definitely state that there is no corruption. A plausible explanation for this inconsistency is not readily discernable. Even the relationship indicated by percentage differences between the two extreme categories (Yes and No) is somewhat suspect since the differences are barely statistically significant in the low and high prestige columns.

What then, can we say about this dimension of evaluation and its relationship to prestige? It should be noted that the political pull, red tape, and corruption questions were directed at broad aspects of the administrative process--its impartiality, efficiency, and honesty. The fact that two of these variables are unrelated to prestige contrasts with and complements earlier findings in Chapter III. There the administrative variables related to prestige were the desirability of working for government, the inter-personal relations between the citizen and the public servant, and the demand for increased administrative action. These were termed "self-interest" variables, and had to do with the public service. They are to be contrasted with the administrative variables just considered. These latter variables, contact and evaluation, deal with the broader, more comprehensive aspects of the public administrative process.

The variables of political pull and red tape give substantial support to our expectations about the neutrality with which the public service is seen and also to our expectations about the administrative non-correlates of prestige. The data from the corruption item caution against over-generalization and suggest that other variables need to be investigated.

This section on evaluation concludes with the fourth and last dimension of the evaluation variable--evaluation of the substantive program of an administrative agency. Are varying evaluations of the substantive program of an administrative agency related to the prestige accorded the public service? The answer seems to be yes and no, depending on the particular program and its impact on the population.

Table 36 presents the evaluations of the programs of the two agencies--social security and unemployment insurance--tabulated by the prestige of public employment. As between the different evaluations of the adequacy of the social security program there is not much variation in the percentages in the low, middle, and high prestige columns. By contrast, different judgments about the value of unemployment insurance to the country are related to significantly divergent attitudes toward the prestige of the public service.

TABLE 36

EVALUATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAMS BY PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT, DETROIT AREA STUDY, 1954

	Prestige Scale					
	Low	Middle	High	Not ascertained	Total	Number of cases
Evaluation of Social Security Program[a]						
Adequate	32%	37	29	2	100%	169
Inadequate	29%	41	29	1	100%	286
Very inadequate	34%	39	25	2	100%	125
Evaluation of Unemployment Insurance[b]						
Yes, definitely	25%	41	32	2	100%	297
Yes	30%	36	31	3	100%	310
Neutral and no	40%	35	21	4	100%	112

[a]Question asked: "How well do you think social security benefits will meet your needs when you retire?"

[b]Question asked: "Do you think unemployment insurance is good for the country?"

It thus appears from the available data that evaluations of the substantive content of the administrative programs may or may not influence the prestige accorded public employment. If the administrative program is generally accepted by the community and benefits are rather broadly diffused, then program evaluation is unrelated to prestige. But if the program is controversial and if the benefits are not broadly diffused, then program evaluation and prestige will probably be related variables. Whether the relationship with prestige is direct or inverse probably depends on whether the benefits are proportionately greater to the lower classes or to the middle classes.[3] Again it is proper to inject a note of caution into the discussion. The data here are very limited. The programs of only two administrative agencies were evaluated. Both intensive and extensive investigations of this variable are needed.

Summary

Contact with and evaluation of public administrative agencies are variables which, in most respects, are unrelated to the prestige of public employment. In a few instances where contact or evaluation appeared to be related to prestige it was usually found that a selective factor operated to create the apparent relationship. This selective factor was the proportionately greater impact of the particular administrative program on a specific socio-economic stratum of society.

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[3]In retrospect it would have been desirable to have sought evaluations of a program which has proportionately greater impact on the middle classes. We would expect that those who are favorable toward the agency's program would give greater low prestige and less high prestige than those who are critical of the program. An agency which might have been used to test this hypothesis is the Parks and Recreation Department. This unit might be expected to have proportionately more of its clientele coming from the middle classes.

Specifically, when contact was measured on the basis of a list of nine agencies operating in the Detroit area, the number of contacts approximated a normal distribution. This indicates that the aggregate impact of public administration in a metropolitan community is quite extensive with half the population contacting four or more of nine selected agencies. Moreover, a large number of contacts with administrative agencies did not lead to either high or low prestige. Nor did few or no contacts induce either high or low esteem for the public service.

Four dimensions of the evaluation variable were distinguished. The relationship between each dimension and the prestige of public employment was examined.

1. Evaluation of an agency's performance, irrespective of contact with the agency evaluated, was unrelated to prestige.

2. Evaluation of an agency's performance by those who had contacted the agency was unrelated to prestige.

3. Evaluation of certain emotionally charged aspects of administrative operations appeared to be unrelated to prestige. This was especially true for the importance of political pull in the administrative process and for the respondent's definition of red tape. There is some doubt as to how this finding may be interpreted since responses about corruption in the collection of taxes did appear to be related to prestige.

4. The evaluation of the substantive content of administrative programs was found to be related to the prestige of public employment for one agency and unrelated for another. Evaluation of the adequacy of social security was unrelated to prestige. Evaluation of the good of

unemployment insurance for the country was related to prestige. The crucial factors in determining the relationship here seem to be the degree to which the administrative program is accepted or non-controversial and whether the benefits of the administrative program are broadly diffused.

Contact with public administrative agencies and some aspects of the evaluation of their operations are non-correlates of the prestige of public employment. The chief distinguishing feature which separates the administrative variables related to prestige from those which are not is the generality of specificity of the particular variable. The variables unrelated to prestige are concerned with broad, comprehensive aspects of administration, e.g. fact of contact, evaulation of performance, general evaluation of dealings with public employees (from Chapter III), and attitudes about red tape and political pull. The administrative variables related to prestige were specific and directly connected with the respondents' immediate situation--desirability of working for government, inter-personal relations between respondent and public employees, and the demand for increased administrative action.

Besides being non-correlates of prestige, the contact and evaluation variables also support the contention that the public bureaucracy is perceived as a neutral body. The fact that differing contacts and evaluations do not lead to widely divergent prestige ratings means that an area of judgment exists in which the populace rationally and objectively weighs the operations of the administrative process on its own merits. To the extent that this occurs the public bureaucracy is seen as something above class, above party, and above special interest.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATIONS

The hypotheses investigated in this study were classified into three general types. The findings concerning each type will now be reviewed and some interpretative observations will be made.

Time Trends in the Prestige of Public Employment

Nearly three decades have passed since Professor White undertook his research which established the low prestige of public employment. During the time since White's studies there had remained a presumption among students of public administration that public employment has been held in low esteem. Studies undertaken in the last ten years seem to buttress this presumption. However, most of these studies focused on specialized groups and inquired after their opinions on working for government. Unlike these recent studies and like White's research, this research has focused on the attitudes of the population at large and has assumed that the variable called prestige is more than just the desire to work for government.

It was expected that contemporary data, when compared with earlier data, would show a rise in the prestige of public employment. On all counts, attitudes toward the public service and the public servant were more favorable than they had been previously. Not only on prestige, but also on such matters as courtesy and evaluation of dealings with public employees, there were changes in a direction favorable to public employment and public employees.

As an additional indication of the relative status of the public service the Detroit study included a question on the desirability of working for government as opposed to private employment. A majority (56 per cent) preferred government employment while only 30 per cent expressed a preference for private employment. When the results of this question were compared with the findings of two national surveys this aspect of the status of public employment also showed an improvement. A comparison of findings of surveys in the United States with those in Australia and Canada revealed that public employment in the United States is at least as desirable as public employment in these other democracies.

Increased prestige for public employment can be accounted for chiefly by two developments in American society. First of all, the increased number of benefits conferred by government on many segments of the population could be expected to enhance the prestige of those dispensing the benefits--the public service and the public servant. Several aspects of the data, when taken together, support the view that those who receive benefits, or have immediate prospects of receiving benefits, give high prestige to public employment.

The second development expected to account for increased prestige was a general shift in career values in the United States, with job security becoming a dominant value. The data also supported this expectation. Nearly three-fourths of all the persons who preferred to work for government gave some aspect of job security as the reason for their preference.

It needs to be emphasized that the two developments which account for increased prestige are factors which are largely beyond the control of any agency or administrative unit of government. These

findings have to do with the way the public service is seen in a broad context. This is necessarily so because of the methodology employed --population survey.

These broad social developments should by no means obscure the importance of specific organizational variables to the effective operation of the public service. The ability of specific units to attract high calibre persons from select groups to serve in specialist capacities will still be a crucial problem for each agency to meet. Such considerations as recruitment techniques, leadership, internal organization, clientele relations, etc., will necessarily be important and probably of greatest concern to the practicing administrator. For that reason such promising innovations as Federal Service Entrance Examination need to be continually sought after.[1] In the last analysis however, the fact remains that the general climate within which all of these organizational variables operate has improved. The trend toward higher prestige for public employment may continue to rise or it may well have reached a plateau. But there is no reason to expect a sudden reversal in the present pattern of attitudes.

Correlates and Non-Correlates of Prestige

What are the variables which are most important in determining the prestige accorded to public employment? Are there any important or significant variables which are unrelated to prestige? Here the discussion considers the social structure, political, and administrative variables which were examined in the previous chapters.

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[1] See a trio of articles on this new civil service exam by Philip Young, James Stockard, and Henry Reining, Jr. in Public Administration Review, Vol. 16 (Winter, 1956).

White found that several social structure variables were markedly related to prestige. The correlates he found were occupation, economic position, education, sex, age, nativity, and race. The way in which these variables were related is best expressed by White himself:

> Employment by the City of Chicago apparently tends to command the respect of the immature, the uneducated, the foreign born and the laboring people. Among persons of maturity of judgment, substantial education, native to Chicago, high in the economic and business world, a position with the City of Chicago is normally rated as one of low prestige.[2]

In undertaking the Detroit research it was expected, with minor modifications, that similar attitude patterns would still persist. True to expectations, it was found that occupation, income, social class, race, and sex were correlates of prestige. The particular relationships established were explained on the basis of three factors.

First, the lower classes, lower income, and lower status groups have been the recipients of government benefits aimed at providing relief from some of the hardships which these groups face. For this reason it was expected that such groups would, as White found, give higher prestige to public employment than their socio-economic opposites.

Second, the lower class, lower income, and lower status groups are the very groups to whom the security features of government employment would be most attractive. To them public employment represents a steady, dependable job and these features would enhance their perceptions of the public service.

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[2]The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 144.

Third, for Negroes and for women, equality of treatment under civil service rules would help to account for those two groups being favorably disposed toward public rather than private employment.

The relationship between education and prestige has not been discussed. On this relationship the Detroit data generally support White's findings that higher education leads to lower prestige. Although the Detroit data do not reveal quite as clear and marked a relationship between these two variables as did White's data, they do show that persons who have attended or graduated from college give low prestige to public employment. This datum represents a special problem and a challenge to the educators and practitioners of public administration who are concerned with placing the best college students in the public service.

The solution to the problem does not lie with college curriculum revision or changed teaching emphasis, although in some instances these might help. Nor will new types of examinations or improved recruitment procedures for government jobs reach the heart of the difficulty. The problem needs the "root and branch" attack. This means that our higher educational system must be democratized. It must be democratized not in the sense that college doors must be opened to all comers. Rather, the opportunities to attend college must exist for intellectually capable youth from lower socio-economic origins. To some extent this problem is being met by the public and private scholarships available to needy students. Persons from lower class origins are most favorably disposed toward the public service and ought to have the opportunity of obtaining jobs in it.

Certainly private business firms, in establishing their scholarship funds, are recognizing the need for developing talent which would otherwise be lost.[3] It is to be hoped that not all the recipients of these benefits will ignore the prospects of government employment. The writer is one who does not subscribe to the proposition, as some once did, that the best public servant is the worst one.[4]

There remain two variables, age and nativity, for which the Detroit data indicate a slightly modified relationship between them and prestige since White did his Chicago study. Increased age no longer leads to lower prestige for public employment. The chief reason offered to explain why the upper age brackets now have more esteem for public employment is the increase in governmental benefits for those groups. Most older persons are receiving or can anticipate receiving benefits dispensed under one of several governmental programs designed to help the aged and infirm.

The nativity variable also indicates that attitudes toward the prestige of public employment have changed, particularly for those of foreign birth. Contrary to White's findings, the foreign born no longer have higher respect for the public service than persons born in the

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[3]Of special note is the establishment of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation by joint action of several large private firms. See the New York Times, September 7, 8, and 11, 1955.

[4]"A thoroughly first-rate man in public service is corrosive. He eats holes in our liberties. The better he is and the longer he stays, the greater the danger. If he is an enthusiast--a bright-eyed madman who is frantic to make this the finest government in the world --the black plague is a house pet by comparison." Homer Ferguson, "A Flea for Inefficiency in Government," Nation's Business, Vol. 16 (November, 1928), p. 20. (Note: Not former senator Homer Ferguson from Michigan.)

United States. The most likely explanation for this change is the assimilation of many foreign born into American society and their accompanying social and economic advancement. New groups, such as Negroes and rural migrants, now form a large portion of the lower class in the urban industrial community.

A surprising but preliminary finding indicated that public employees and their immediate kin rate the prestige of public employment lower than does the rest of the population. While the finding must be regarded as provisional, there is considerable assurance that public employees do not rate their employment any higher than the rest of the population rates it. When one considers this finding along with the data about the present level of the prestige of the public service, there is no reason to feel that the public service constitutes an elite or monolithic group which acts solely to its own advantage.

In turning from the social correlates to the political correlates of prestige we enter an unexplored field. White's findings provided a basis for comparing the social structure correlates of prestige at two different time periods. Thus, these variables are more definitely established as correlates of prestige. Here for political variables, and subsequently for administrative variables, there is no previous research with which to compare the Detroit findings. Therefore, these findings should be viewed as a first step in identifying the variables which are and are not related to the prestige. Only other studies, similar in nature, over time, and in metropolitan and rural areas will permit more conclusive statements about the factors which influence the prestige of the public service.

Political variables were treated under three broad classifications: (1) proper sphere of governmental activity, (2) party identification and

political activity, and (3) feelings of political self-confidence. Except for political activity, where the data were very inconclusive, the variables in each of these three general categories were found to be correlates of prestige. More specifically the following relationships were found to exist, regardless of social class position:

1. Persons who thought that the national government was not doing enough in the area of social welfare gave higher prestige to public employment than those who thought the government was doing about right or too much.

2. Persons favoring government operation of a system of health insurance gave higher prestige than did those who preferred non-profit agencies to run the insurance plan or those who preferred no health insurance plan at all.

3. Those who favored a social security pension system on a non-contributory basis gave higher prestige than those who were opposed to such a plan.

4. Those who identified themselves as Democrats gave higher prestige to public employment than those who identified themselves as Republicans or as Independents.

5. Individuals who scored high on a scale of political self-confidence gave lower prestige than individuals who scored low on such a scale.

6. Individuals who replied that they would contact a public agency personally in attempting to solve a government-related problem gave lower prestige than did individuals who said they would rely on an intermediary in dealing with public agencies.

In brief, the public service commands highest respect from persons who are willing to tolerate governmental intervention in the

economic sphere, from Democrats, and from those who lack confidence in themselves on political matters. With particular reference to the latter point, it may be that the size, complexity, and impersonality of administrative organization have generated a considerable measure of awe and helplessness as well as hostility toward the public service. Higher prestige may be, in part, the resultant of this awe and helplessness. Hostility toward the administrative leviathan may be reflected in the large percentage of the population which feel that political pull plays a part in getting aid from government.

There are indications that for the lower classes and for Negroes, class position and race are more influential in determining prestige than are political predispositions. In addition, it is of particular importance to note that party identification alone is inadequate to account for the prestige accorded public employment. For that matter, it is impressive to observe that the political variables used in this study are not as sharply related to prestige as one might expect them to be. This is suggestive of a larger hypothesis, examined elsewhere, that the public's perspectives toward the administrative process are substantially different from the public's perspectives toward the election process.[5]

Three administrative variables were found to be correlates of prestige. These were (1) the desirability of working for government, (2) the courteousness of public employees, and (3) demands for increased governmental administrative activity, particularly of the integrative

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[5]For elaboration of this hypothesis and its application to administrative variables other than prestige, see "Administrative Perspectives in a Metropolitan Community," Morris Janowitz and Deil Wright. Paper delivered before the American Political Science Association Convention, Washington, D.C., September 6, 1956.

or service type. Using each of these three variables as a basis for generalizing about broader attitude dimensions we can say that the prestige of public employment is related to (1) the material advantages of a position in the public service, (2) the specific inter-personal relations between public employees and the citizenry, and (3) the scope and content of the functions performed and benefits conferred by the public bureaucracy. Increased or decreased prestige for public employment ought to be traceable in some measure to changes which occur in these three areas. Reflection upon the events of the last twenty-five years shows some "improvements" in each of these three areas. It was not without justification then, that the prestige of public employment was also expected to show some improvement during the same period. Two administrative variables were found to be non-correlates of prestige. These variables were contact with and evaluation of public administrative agencies. Different amounts of contact with administrative agencies and varying evaluations of the operations and performance of such agencies did not lead to greatly divergent attitudes toward the prestige of the public service. The broader implications of this finding for a democratic society are examined in the following section but the finding also has immediate practical significance.

Mere contact with administrative agencies is not a crucial determinant of the prestige of public employment. Contact with administrative agencies is distributed throughout the metropolitan community on a mass, rather than on a class or party basis. Because contacts are so broad and diffused public agencies must serve a population which has varying estimates of the status of the public service. This requires civil servants to act with no little measure of circumspection and self-restraint so as not to alienate those whom they serve.

The net effect of this is to provide an additional popular check upon the public bureaucracy.

Neither is evaluation of administrative performance a crucial variable in determining the prestige of the public service. Evaluations of administrative performance appear to be arrived at without regard to the prestige which the person has for the public service. The citizenry seems to judge administrative performance on its own merits and not on the basis of the prestige which is accorded to public employment.

In concluding this section on the correlates and non-correlates of prestige it is appropriate to repeat a caution mentioned previously. This research must be seen in proper perspective. The findings are chiefly exploratory and suggestive rather than definitive and final. For example, the statement that prestige is influenced by the interpersonal relations between the citizen and the public employee is supported only by the data showing a positive relationship between courtesy and prestige.

Doubts and questions will certainly arise about the findings of this study, and properly so. This study is subject to the characteristic difficulties of social science research. Because of limited resources, vast proliferation, and insufficient interchange of ideas between academic disciplines generalizations are often of limited applicability.

More research is needed to reinforce or modify the variables that are correlates and non-correlates of prestige. Such research need not rely on the methodology of the sample survey. Perhaps the most fruitful areas of research lie in the case study of specific agencies. Here the approach could be two-fold.

First, an analysis of the social origins, career patterns, attitudes, and social-psychological predispositions of the public employees might be made. This would be necessary in order to learn the attitudes of public employees toward the public at large and toward the clientele of the agency: What is the employee's view of the "public interest?" How is this view reconciled with the agency's need to cultivate the support of its clientele? What are the employee's goals? Do these conflict with organizational goals?

The second approach might center around interviews with a sample of the clientele of an agency, preferably the same one whose employees are interviewed. Here the emphasis would be on securing the clientele's views of the agency. Do they think the personnel are qualified? How firm are they in pressing the agency to meet their demands? Do they have high or low esteem for the agency and its personnel? Do they think there is corruption or favoritism in dispensing benefits or in enforcing regulations?

It goes without saying that considerable care and forethought are needed in undertaking research like that suggested above. But by using both these approaches such research should arrive at a more definitive statement about the inter-relationships between the public and the public service.

The Public Service in a Democratic Society

The thesis about the proper perspectives toward the public bureaucracy in a democratic society has been developed earlier.[6] Based on the prestige of public employment, are there findings which support

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[6]See Chapter II, "Major Hypotheses."

the contention that the public's self-interest is being served? Are there also findings which support the idea that the public service is perceived as an impartial agent?

An affirmative answer to both of these questions should not obscure the preliminary nature of these findings. At best, a prima facie case exists to support such affirmation. Even in this regard we must remember that the data pertain only to prestige which is, after all, only a limited aspect of total public perspectives toward the public service. A more complete treatment of public perspectives toward the web of adminstration is considered in another analysis of the Detroit Area Study data.[7]

So far as the self-interest requirement is concerned the variables which are correlates of prestige are all factors which are of central importance to most individuals. That is, the variables which are related to prestige are those which refer to the social, economic, and political position of the individual. Likewise, the administrative variables which are correlates of prestige--working for government, courteous treatment by public employees, and demands for services--border on the generalized concept of self-interest. Thus, a person's self-interest orientation is crucial in determining how he perceives the public bureaucracy.

There is also empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that the public bureaucracy is seen as a neutral agent. In this regard the citizenry judges the bureaucracy on rational and objective factors and not on the basis of self-interest. The empirical evidence

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[7]Janowitz and Wright, op. cit.

referred to is that which shows contact with and evaluation of administrative agencies to be non-correlates of prestige. Those who have great amounts of contact do not give the high prestige which would suggest that such persons are pawns in the hands of the public bureaucracy. Neither do those who have little contact give the low prestige which would indicate extreme hostility toward the bureaucracy and the impossibility of reconciling themselves to the goals of the bureaucracy. Parallel observations can be drawn for the evaluation variable.

To a degree then, there does exist a sphere of independent, critical judgment of the public service on its own merits. The lack of such judgment is one of the many conditions which underlie the rise of totalitarianism. This is particularly true of such a society's inability to find rational solutions to its problems and to seek refuge in mystical or irrational devices.

The public service in a democracy must never be in the position where it is composed of a particular class and serves only the interests of that class. The impact of administrative programs must be so distributed throughout the society so as to command allegiance from almost all segments of the population.

> Democratic government must provide for all classes a degree of social stability and economic security sufficient to keep these elements loyal to the community of purposes that makes the state possible. Democracy will collapse if it creates irreconcilable minorities.[7]

Paraphrased, this statement means that democracy is not government of a class, by a class, and for a class.

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[7]E. Pendleton Herring, Public Administration and the Public Interest (New York: McGraw Hill, 1936), p. 6.

The upshot of the two contrasting and conflicting views of the public service outlined here is that a continuous process of adjustment must take place between impartial and self-interest considerations. The public service must maintain a difficult balance between harsh master over the citizenry and servile agent to special interests or to momentary whims of public opinion.

In one sense the discussion can be set in the framework of the "politics-administration" dichotomy so familiar to students of public administration. Unless the people see the public service in a political context, i.e., accessible and responsive to their demands, the public service fails in its function for lack of popular support. At the same time, unless the people are aware of the need for neutrality, efficiency, and impersonality, essential organizational goals as well as extensive popular support are sacrificed. The lesson from this is that "politics" and "administration" constitute a seamless web. Attempts to isolate one from the other have been more productive of academic debate than progressive research.

The public bureaucracy must be both a servant and a master in a democratic society. This study has focused on prestige as an attitude which may preserve or upset the balance between these two contradictory tendencies.

APPENDIX A

Sampling Error and Significant Differences for the 1954 Detroit Area Study

TABLE I

APPROXIMATE SAMPLING ERRORS FOR PERCENTAGES BASED ON DIFFERENT SIZED GROUPS

Chances are 95 in 100 that central value lies within the reported value, plus or minus the number of percentage points shown in this table.

Sample Size	Sampling Errors for Reported Percentage Around 5% to 95%	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	50%
50			11	14
75		7	10	12
100		6	8	10
150	4	5	7	9
175	4	5	7	8
200	4	5	6	8
250	3	4	6	7
300	3	4	5	7
350	3	4	5	6
400	3	4	5	6
500	3	3	5	6
764	2	3	4	5
1400	2	3	3	4
1668	2	3	3	4

Referring to Table 3 on page 42 we note that the Detroit Area Study found that 430, or 56 per cent, of the 764 persons interviewed preferred to work for the United States government than for a private firm. Table I above indicates that the sampling error for this size group at this percentage is 6 per cent. This means that the chances are 95 in 100 that the actual percentage of persons in the Detroit area preferring government employment is 56 per cent plus or minus 6 per cent, i.e., between 50 and 62 per cent.

TABLE II

SAMPLING ERRORS OF DIFFERENCES
95% Probability

Differences required for significant in comparisons of percentages from two different subgroups.

Size of Sample or Group	Size of Sample or Group							
	75	100	200	350	500	750	1000	1500
For Proportions from about 30% to 70%								
75	15	14	13	12	12	11	11	11
100		13	12	11	10	10	10	10
200			10	9	8	8	7	7
350				7	7	6	6	6
500					6	6	5	5
750						5	5	4
1000							4	4
1500								4
For Proportions Around 20% or 80%								
75	13	13	11	10	10	10	10	10
100		11	10	9	9	9	9	9
200			8	7	7	7	7	6
350				6	6	6	5	5
500					5	5	5	5
750						5	4	4
1000							4	4
1500								3
For Proportions Around 10% or 90%								
75	10	10	8	8	8	8	8	7
100		9	8	7	7	7	7	7
200			6	6	5	5	5	5
350				5	5	4	4	4
500					4	4	4	3
750						3	3	3
1000							3	3
1500								3
For Proportions Around 5% or 95%								
75								
100								
200			5	4	4	4	4	4
350				4	3	3	3	3
500					3	3	3	3
750						3	2	2
1000							2	2
1500								2

Is there a significant difference in the prestige accorded public employment as between men and women? Table 16 on page 79 presents the respective percentages of men and women giving low, middle, and high prestige to public employment and the frequencies (number of cases) in each sex group. Examination of the two percentages in the low prestige column (34 per cent and 24 per cent) indicates that we should consult that part of Table B handling proportions from about 30 per cent to 70 per cent. The frequencies of the two groups, when rounded to fit the table, are 350 each. A difference of 7 percentage points is required for the difference to be significant with groups of these sizes and with these percentages. The reported percentage point difference between the low prestige subgroups is 10 percentage points (34 per cent minus 24 percent). Thus, there are slightly more than 95 chances in 100 that this reported difference actually exists in the population at large and is not due to chance error. We can say, then, that a significantly greater proportion of men than women give low prestige to public employment.

APPENDIX B

Some Questions Used by the 1954 Detroit Area Study

CENSUS DATA QUESTIONS

Social Structure Variables

1. Race (BY OBSERVATION): White____ Negro____ Other____ (specify)

2. Sex (BY OBSERVATION): Male____ Female____

3. Age:_____

4. Do you own this house or are you renting?

5. What was the highest grade of school you completed?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 More

   (IF ATTENDED COLLEGE) 5a. How many years of college did you attend?_____

6. Do any of your close relatives that do not live here work for the government? Yes____ No____

7. (ASK EVERYONE, EXCEPT NEGROES)
   The forefathers of all Americans came from outside the United States originally.

   Was the head of the family's father born in the United States, Canada, or some other country?
   U.S.____ Canada____ Other____

8. What is the head of the family's occupation? (What sort of work does he do?)

   _____
   (lathe operator, stock clerk, etc.--if unemployed or retired, also ask what he does (did) when working)
   (If retired, check here____)

   (IF APPROPRIATE) 8a. What kind of business is that in?

   _____
   (steel mill, grocery store, bank)

   8b. Does he work for himself or someone else?
   Self____ Someone else____

9. What was your total family income in 1953, considering all sources such as rents, profits, wages, interest, and so on?

   (DO NOT ASK IN ONE-ADULT HOUSEHOLDS) 9a. How much of that was the income of the head of the family?_____

10. (DO NOT ASK IF RESPONDENT IS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY)
What is your occupation? (What sort of work do you do?

_____
(lathe operator, stock clerk, housewife--if unemployed or retired, ask what he or she does (did) when working)
If retired check here_____

(IF APPROPRIATE) 10a. What kind of business is that in?

_____
(steel mill, grocery store, bank)

11. How long have you lived in the Detroit Area? (IF NEEDED, ADD: The Detroit area is any place in Wayne, Macomb, or Oakland counties.)_____

(IF NOT ENTIRE LIFE)
11a. Where did you live most of your life before you came to the Detroit Area?
_____(TOWN) _____(STATE)
11b. Where were you born?_____(TOWN)_____(STATE)
11c. Have you ever lived on a farm? Yes__ No___

12. What is your religious preference?

SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

Administrative Perspectives

1. In general, would you say that your dealings with public employees were:
Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good?

2. Would you say that generally you get more courteous attention in dealing with city employees than in dealing with employees of big companies?

3. If the pay were the same, would you prefer to work for the United States Government or for a private firm?

3a. Why?

4. How many of the high government officials would you say are probably dishonest and corrupt--many of them, just a few, or none at all?

5. As we know, all government bureaus have some red tape. On the whole, how much of it do you feel is really necessary?
(1) Most
(2) More than half
(3) Less than half
(4) None

6. Many people use the words "red tape" to describe their experiences with government. Could you tell me what you think they mean by "red tape?"
   6a. Could you give me an example of that from your personal experience?
7. Some people think political pull plays an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen with some problems he has; other people don't think so. In your opinion, does political pull play an important part in whether the government will help a private citizen?

8. We'd like to know what people think of government jobs and government workers. If these jobs are about the same in kind of work, pay, and so forth, which have the most prestige?

   (a) a stenographer in a life insurance company, or
   a stenographer in the city tax assessor's office
   (b) an accountant in the Detroit Department of Public Works, or
   an accountant in a private accounting firm
   (c) a night watchman in a bank, or
   a night watchman in the City Hall
   (d) A doctor in the Detroit Receiving Hospital, or
   a doctor who is on the staff of a private hospital.

9. As some people see it, there are different kinds of things the government has to do. The government has to provide help for people. The government also has to make people carry their share of the burdens and make sacrifices. Which one of these statements comes closest to your own opinion about this--

   (1) The help and services that the public gets from the government is worth what it asks from the public.
   (2) The government asks more from the public than it gives in help and services.
   (3) The public gets more from the government than it gives the government.

10. Some people feel that they pay more taxes than they should, considering what they get from the government. How do you feel about this?

    10a. Why?

11. In general, do you think there is any corruption in the collection of taxes?

Political Perspectives

1. Some people think the national government should do more in trying to deal with such problems as unemployment, education, housing, and so on. Others think that the government is already doing too much. On the whole, would you say that

what the government has done has been about right, too much, or not enough?

1a. How do you mean?

2. There is a lot of talk these days about a national health insurance plan to help people with their medical bills. Who do you think should run such a plan?

(1) Non-profit agencies, or
(2) The government, or
(3) People should take care of their own medical bills.

3. There is a plan to change social security so that everybody over 65 would get the same pension regardless of whether they have been paying social security tax. What do you think of this idea?

4. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Republican or a Democrat?

(IF R SAYS "INDEPENDENT") 4a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or closer to the Democratic party?

5. Have you ever helped campaign for a party or candidate during an election--like putting in time or contributing money?

6. In general, if you had a problem to take up with a government bureau, would you do it yourself, or do you think you would be better off if you got the help of some person or organization?

(IF GET OUTSIDE HELP) 6a. Who would that be?

7. We know that there are many reasons why people don't get to vote in elections. Would you tell me whether you voted in these elections--

7a. First, the last local election? (IN DETROIT, add: "That would be in November, when Lincoln ran against Cobo.")
7b. Now, the presidential election--did you vote then?

(IF RESPONDENT UNDER 25 OMIT THIS QUESTION) 7c. How about the 1948 Presidential election when Truman ran against Dewey?

8. Now I'd like to read some of the kinds of things people tell me when I interview them and ask you whether you agree or disagree with them. I'll read them one at a time and you tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

(a) So many other people vote in elections that it doesn't matter much whether I vote or not.
(b) People like me don't have any say about what the Government does.

(c) Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
(d) Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things.
(e) I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think.

Contact

1. Are you, or is anyone in your immediate family, now registered with selective service? (IF EXPLANATION NEEDED, ADD: For the draft?)

2. Have you ever had to get in touch with the police for help about a problem?

3. Do any members of your family receive social security benefits?

4. Have you had any dealings at all with the Michigan Employment Security Office? That's the state office that handles unemployment insurance and helps people get jobs.

5. (Aside from yourself) has anyone in your family ever received unemployment payments?

6. (IF R HAS CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE OR OLDER) Have your children ever attended a parochial grade or high school?

Contact and Evaluation

1. Here is a list of some agencies. Would you look at it and tell me which of these you have had any dealings with in the past year?

(a) Public Library
(b) Public Transportation System
(c) Tax Assessor's Office
(d) Street and Alley Cleaning

2. (ASK FOR EACH AGENCY CONTACTED:) What sort of a job did you feel that they were doing?

Evaluation

1. Do you think that the draft board handles deferments fairly here in the Detroit Area?

2. How do you feel about the public schools in (COMMUNITY NAME)?

3. Do you think unemployment insurance is good for the country?

4. (IF R IS UNDER 65) How well do you think social security benefits will meet your needs when you retire?

(IF R OF 65 OR OVER) 4a. How well do social security benefits meet your needs?

5. Do you think the (NAME OR LOCAL COMMUNITY) officials and bureaus are doing--
   a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

6. What about the (NAME OF COUNTY) county government--do you think the county officials are bureaus are doing--
   a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

7. And the state government--do you think the state officials and bureaus are doing--
   a Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good job?

8. What about the County Sheriff's Department--what kind of a job are they doing?
   Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

9. And the State Police--how good a job are they doing?
   Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

10. What kind of a job would you say the (NAME OF LOCAL COMMUNITY) police are doing?
   Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good

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