

# Governing the Brave New World

PARIS ARNOPOULOS

**Our Global Neighbourhood**  
by I. Carlsson & S. Ramphal  
The Report of the Commission on  
Global Governance  
Oxford University Press  
430 pp., \$19.95 pb

**Canada's Century: Governance in  
a Maturing Society**  
edited by C.E.S. Franks, et al  
Essays in Honour of John Meisel  
McGill-Queen's University Press  
376 pp., \$49.95 hc

**Governance in a  
Changing Environment**  
edited by B. G. Peters & D. J. Savoie  
Canadian Centre for  
Management Development  
McGill-Queen's University Press  
334 pp., \$49.95/\$22.95 pb

**Federalism and the  
New World Order**  
edited by S. Randall and R. Gibbins  
International Centre  
Conference Presentation  
University of Calgary Press  
301pp., \$24.95 pb

**Changing Maps: Governing in a  
World of Rapid Change**  
by S. A. Rosell, et al.  
Report of the Project on Governing in  
an Information Society  
Carleton University Press  
253 pp. \$21.95 pb

A trend is a trend is a trend  
But when and how does it bend?  
Does it rise to the sky  
Or lie down and die?  
Or asymptote on to the end?

—S. A. Rosell,

*Changing Maps:  
Governing in a World of Rapid  
Change*

**T**he cover story of a 1989 issue of *Time* magazine asked 'Is Government Dead?' Since then, similar questions about the *raison d'être* of government are being asked by other pundits and publications around the world. Eminent scholars and popular journalists alike have noticed many disturbing trends which show that governing is not what it used to be. Once the exclusive domain of statesmen and politicians, government has now become too important and incontinent to be left to the governors alone.

Canadians, as evidenced by the books under review here, have been a part of the trend. For some, the crisis of governance is

a passing phase of the growing pains into post-modernity, while for others it may be the terminal illness of a dying civilization. Reality probably lies closer to the middle of the two positions. Although there is much that is wrong with government, rumors of its imminent demise are premature.

Here, I examine only the tip of this massive discussion about the deteriorating political climate and declining governmental role in post-modern societies, by perusing two thousand pages of its latest annual crop. The five books listed above are of particular interest because they consist of compiled reports or edited anthologies that involve the expertise of up to a hundred specialists in political science and public administration. They are therefore quite representative of the academic discourse and professional discord surrounding this issue, both in Canada and abroad.

The present problem of governance is the product of a general ecosociopolitical environment combined with specific administrative malfunctions of the state machinery. Legislation, taxation and coercion, the levers traditionally available to governments, are now increasingly ineffective. How are societies to govern themselves as they enter the new millennium?

Within this wide range of problems, the essays in *Federalism & the New World Order* concentrate on national and regional levels. The articles contained in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society* focus particularly on Quebec and Canada, while *Our Global Neighbourhood* offers a more comparative and international perspective. *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change* examines the broadly social aspects of politics, while *Governance in a Changing Environment* focuses on the strictly technical side of government.

Consistently, the basic thesis of all contributors is that the ability of the polity to control society and economy has deteriorated over the years. The conclusion that there is indeed something rotten in the realm of governance is inescapable, but I would say that the unpleasant smell emanating from government seems to be a symptom of a larger social pathology. It is not only government, but everything that seems to be changing rapidly and radically nowadays. Concerned citizens, as well as committed professionals, have noticed that we are right in the midst of a fundamental social transformation whose extent and implications can only be weakly grasped.

Indeed, many macrohistorians are saying that all major trends at the turn of this millennium point towards the end of an era and the beginning of another. In their terms, our epoch marks the transition from the modern industrial to the post-modern technological age. It is said that the ideal of modernity has lost its legitimacy and credibility, thus creating a cultural vacuum which begs to be filled by a novel and as yet unknown paradigm. It seems that we are blessed (or cursed) to live in very interest-

ing times of dramatic and paradigmatic change. It therefore behooves us to try and understand what is going on, so that we can at least improve our chances of survival, even if we cannot control our eventual destiny. The books under review here try to do just that by presenting a diagnosis and prognosis of our modern malaise, as well as proposing a historical etiology and post-modern therapy.

As early as Nietzsche, who is credited with launching the first incisive critique of modernity, post-modern thought developed into a potpourri of creative ideas, destructive ideologies, strident arguments, brilliant insights, stupid polemics and pretentious obscurantisms. Post-modernism has become a source of an immense emotional energy and, at the same time, a colossal intellectual mess. But, as in the case of God, post-modern pronouncements about the death of government are somewhat exaggerated. So, without engaging in futile arguments into the labyrinthine aspects of post-modernism, these books highlight its more serious political elements.

As Alfred North Whitehead observed, great ideas often appear in strange guise and disgusting company. The same insight was conveyed by Daniel Yankelovich in *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change* in retelling the crude old joke of a farmer digging into a huge pile of manure. When asked why he kept digging, he replied: 'Because there's a pony under all this horseshit.' Let us then try to uncover the best ideas hidden under all this verbiage.

## II.

To begin with, the experts brought together in these five collections agree that the world is in disequilibrium, if not desperate disorder. In order to support this thesis, they present the salient ecological and sociological symptoms of this global indisposition.

Globally, perhaps the most troublesome index is the widening ratio between population and provisions. The world's population continues to grow, while the earth's natural resources continue to decline. As it is spreading throughout the planet, this mass of humanity is creating environmental pollution, resource depletion, physical erosion and biological extinction of all other life forms. As a result, the population explosion lowers the quality of life and threatens everything else in its destructive path.

Most of the six billion earthlings eke out their subsistence in miserable conditions. Absolute poverty characterizes the bottom fifth of the world's population, who earn 20 times less income than the top fifth. This means that 20% of the people consume 80% of its products. Moreover, North America, Europe, and Japan, with 10% of the world's population, control 90% of its wealth and power. The infamous North-South gap between the haves and have-nots dichotomizes the planet into an economic apartheid; while at the same time rapid transportation and mass communication fuses it into a global

village. This modern paradox, emphasized by *Our Global Neighbourhood*, shows that never have so many people had so much in common, yet never have their differences been so starkly exposed.

These differences create frictions and conflicts within and between countries and classes. Currently, 30 major wars are being fought around the world; many of which are inter-ethnic conflicts taking place mostly in high poverty regions. Because of this instability and insecurity in both culture and nature, traditional governance can simply no longer cope, let alone control what is going on. As Richard Simeon put it in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, governments seem to lurch between spasm and stasis, disoriented and disoriented in the strange but not brave new world they find themselves.

Realizing the impotence of states, people take matters into their own hands by challenging public authorities, organizing grassroots movements, increasing transborder crossings, or engaging in criminal activities. As the essays in *Our Global Neighbourhood* show, massive international trade of goods and services, arms and drugs, movements of people and ideas, flows of energy and data, bypass political jurisdictions altogether and render the world economically open and interdependent. At the same time, parochial ethnic groups undermine territorial nations by demanding local autonomy or political independence. Governments can no longer control populations who have withdrawn their support and loyalty. Large heterogeneous countries thus break up into their tribal components; rarely peacefully, more often in protracted violence and bloody civil wars.

These two concomitant yet contradictory tendencies — global economic interdependence and local political independence — show that the modern nation-state has become too small for big global problems and too big for small local concerns. So, it is said — in *Governance in a Changing Environment* particularly — that states are 'leaking away at the edges,' forced to relinquish their sovereignty to both infranational factions and supranational institutions.

The current globalization of economics shows that states have lost control of their financial function. The high mobility of capital alone, exemplified in trillion-dollar-a-day international transactions, indicates to what extent national borders have become permeable and governments vulnerable to transnational market forces. The extraordinary monetary mobility forces governments to engage in intense competition for investment funds by interest inflation, tax concession and labor restriction. In spite of industrial strategies and sectorial subsidies, complex economies become more chaotic and regulation resistant, so that government intervention is as often as not ineffective or even counter-productive. The concurrent contemporary phenomena of high unemployment, inflation and depression, have negated conventional wisdom and Keynesian finesse of how governments can manipulate their economies.

In order to manage their complicated problems, politicians were forced to hand over power to a vast civil service of career professionals. Modern governments have thus developed into notorious technocracies unaccountable to the people they are supposed to serve. This situation creates a democratic deficit decried by everybody and denied by none. Moreover, as many of the essays in *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of*

## The widespread disenchantment with government means that they can neither rise up to the gigantic tasks facing them, nor respond to the heavy demands put upon them. Consequently, the deteriorating climate has evolved into a full anti-government gale.

*Rapid Change* argue, modern bureaucratic compartmentalization and impersonal objectification is universally detested, not only as inefficient and ineffective, but odious and offensive to our humanity.

The number and proportion of people raising their voices against the state is increasingly heard, spread, and amplified by the media, thus exacerbating political inconsistency and social instability. The mounting anxiety of the public for the economy, safety, and morality of society blame the government for their decline and demand more protection, while simultaneously carrying out tax-revolts which deprive states of their wherewithal. This erosion of confidence and end of affluence then put in doubt the state's capacity to secure either economic growth or public welfare. As a result, its response to demands deteriorates, thus creating a vicious circle of increasing needs and decreasing abilities.

The widespread disenchantment with government means that they can neither rise up to the gigantic tasks facing them, nor respond to the heavy demands put upon them. Consequently, the deteriorating climate has evolved into a full anti-government gale. Recently mobilized groups press their demands for fairer redistribution, better protection and fuller participation, if not privileged treatment. As *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society* shows, the proliferation of two new political configurations— independent public interest groups and programmatic minority rights lobbies — replaced traditional party membership by pressure group identification and single-issue voting. Since they cannot cope with the demands made upon them, governments everywhere are rolling back the administrative state by loosening its grip on society, privatizing the economy, and reducing the polity. The role of the state has been significantly diminished by deregulating industry, transport and services, because, as Richard Schultz argues in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, regulation was inefficient and ineffective, as well as unpopular. Same for auctioning off public property and contracting out social services in order to reduce both debt and taxes.

In conclusion, the contradictory phenomena of globalization, participation, fragmentation, and consolidation, seem to have hamstrung governments while at the same time raised expectations of them. As many of the contributors to *Federalism and the New World Order* demonstrate, the new politics of environmental awareness, minority empowerment, and global perspective, add new items to the old political agenda, leading to a devolution of legitimacy and deconstruction of authority.

### III.

From the above diagnosis, we can see that the phenomenon of accelerating social change has triggered complex (even multiple) political, economic and ecological repercussions. Never before has change been so fast, global, and visible. More people have been added to the world in the last 50 years than in the past 50 millennia. This population explosion has happened in spite of at least 150 wars, with their 25 million

casualties, and the countless victims of disease and malnutrition.

In the political arena, the number of nation-states has increased almost fourfold. From its original 50 members fifty years ago, UN membership is presently pushing 200. Finally, the global economy has increased its real income and productive output faster than ever to reach five times its previous level.

Inevitably, in order to explain this extraordinary expansion, we have to go back to the roots of human nature. *Homo sapiens* is the only species which succeeded in integrating both symbolic (language) and instrumental (tool) functions 40 millennia ago as the basis for human mentality and dexterity. This synthesis created an iterative feedback loop between the way we use material resources and the way we organize our social systems. The process of transforming raw factual data to refined contextual information and finally digested internalized knowledge, enabled humanity to become the paragon of animals and the master of this planet.

Three quarters along the way, environmental determinism and incidental randomness pushed humanity to a quantum jump of socioeconomic development by launching the Agricultural Revolution. Along with it arose urbanity, literacy, and polity which eventually developed various cultures around the world.

It was only two centuries ago that another world-shaking event broke out in Europe and in a relatively short time changed the face of the earth. The Industrial Revolution, that fruit of science and technology, replaced the slow evolution of traditional societies with the rapid progress of modern countries. This historical acceleration is exemplified by the fact that it took Britain half a century to double its standard of living at the beginning of the industrial era, whereas it is now taking China, according to contributors of *Our Global Neighbourhood* only one decade to achieve the same result at the end of it.

Trying to make sense of this dramatic acceleration, historians like Schumpeter recognized three successive industrial wave phases: early 19th century dominated by iron foundries and cotton mills; late 19th powered by coal driven steam engines, and early 20th century characterized by steel production and electric generation. Now, in the late 20th century, we can add the spread of a petroleum driven economy and automobile culture, following which the early 21st century is expected to usher in the electronic age of computer automation and virtual reality.

Throughout this period, the major catalysts of social change have proven to be expanding scientific knowledge and its technical applications which created a strict division of labor and replaced manual with mechanical work. The effects of industrialism are well known: a higher standard of living for many people, an expansion of the middle class and the globalization of modern culture.

Beyond these, however, all experts tell us that we are now at the threshold of a third wave which is replacing the industrial with the post-industrial age when artificial intel-

ligence will replace natural brains, just as mechanical replaced animal power. Along with it, productivity increases tremendously, making work less labor intensive and more expert exclusive. As such, the transition from the modern to the post-modern era is not only transforming the economy, but the entire society and polity as well, thus going beyond their quantitative growth to a qualitative transcendence.

By now it is evident that the diminishing returns of the creeping specialism of industrial production is replaced by the galloping expertism of the post-industrial system which only has enough good full-time, well-paid jobs for a highly skilled, strongly educated minority of about a third of the available work force. The rest of the hapless masses are merely expendable consumers, whose frustration and alienation, according to some of the contributors to *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change* are now reaching revolutionary proportions.

Because of the extended human neoteny, learning is an inherently long social process. By extension, it also seems that societies require a long period of gestation and adaptation, while they learn to cope with new products and processes. It is during these periods of transition that social stability suffers and economic productivity declines. As Solow's Paradox recognizes, in spite of new technologies, there labour and capital productivity growth is sluggish and slower rate of growths mark all advanced social systems.

Such paradoxes create serious societal stresses and strains because great transformations do not happen evenly, nor do they affect people equally. Social change benefits some classes and hurts others, strengthens some people and weakens others, thus increasing socioeconomic differentials. Countries with steep gradients or high degree of social disparities, have overall poorer health and education than those with more even distributions. The process at work, according to *Governance in a Changing Environment* here exacerbates human fecklessness and obstinate reactionism, as well as the frenzied activity and myopic greed of large groups of people.

Under the circumstances, political turbulence grows and government support drops. It was this precipitous drop in public regard for government which began in the late 1960s and was transformed in the early 1970s into the crisis of governability. The troubles of contemporary governance, starting with the politics of energy scarcity and subsequent economics of budgetary restraint twenty years ago, soon triggered off the antigovernment revolt that has yet to reach its climax. As the welfare state of the 1950s and 1960s began to unravel with the socioeconomic shocks of the 1970s and 1980s, the authors in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society* agree that the modern bureaucratic paradigms of Adam Smith, Frederick Taylor and Max Weber are coming to an end.

Our social disease goes so deep that institutional defects alone cannot account for it. The answer is rather to be found in the two relentless forces of globalization and fragmentation. Globalization forces govern-

ments to emphasize productivity, competitiveness, and efficiency. Because of the mobility of capital, states have become competitors of investment which provides high-quality jobs for their citizens in an interdependent world. But globalization correlates with fragmentation by increasing local problems and decreasing the capacity of states to deal with them. It accentuates the mismatch between the scale or scope of issues and the ability of governments to manage them. The very tendencies which promote global governance then also hinder it. Ironically, the new politics of internationalism has a corrosive impact on the limited scope and domain of nation-states, thus making them an endangered species.

Nation-states are fixed and limited in space, whereas current problems spill over their boundaries. States are static and inert, the forces they face are dynamic and mobile, thus escape local control and metastasize. Globalization undermines state jurisdiction, yet engenders demands for government intervention. It strengthens mobile elites and capital which are plugged in the mainstream and weakens sedentary masses and labor which are left out in the margins. Some people thus become detached from their neighbors, fragmenting the solidarity of local communities and alienating their compatriots. Traditional cleavages of race, religion and region are exacerbated by new gaps of class and culture. Social consensus is thus fractured into sharply competing groups and individuals engaged in a deadly zero-sum game.

At this crucial juncture, the introduction of revolutionary cyber technologies amounts to a new social paradigm that is transforming the global system. Information and communication overload as well as social and spatial mobility, make the post modern person what Kenneth Gergen in *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change* calls a saturated self: a member of multi communities, a participant in multi networks, and a receptor of multi messages. The result of this multiple experience is multiphrenia, reflected in the fragmentation and confrontation of the post modern personality. The more complex a social system then, the more it is called upon to accommodate the diversified demands of disparate individuals and divided groups.

Yet, in spite of people's satiation with mass information, it has been found that knowledge of public affairs has hardly changed in the last 50 years. McLuhan suggested that telecommunication flows around the world are an extension of the human central nervous system, but the reality of that insight is that the more information there is, the more likely it is to be misused and misinterpreted. Mass media and politics are intrinsically antithetical, says Edwin Black in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, because the former are open and public, whereas the latter is closed and private. Journalists do not tolerate political compromises negotiated behind the scenes. Instead, they increase pressures upon the politicians to do something, thus forcing governments to act in order not to appear weak and indecisive. Consequently, whenever anything goes wrong, government is publicly condemned

for its impotence and incompetence.

Various ideologies tried to explain this puzzling situation. Although, since the demise of Marxism, neoliberalism now dominates the mainstream of academic discourse; both classic liberalism and orthodox Marxism assumed that if man is given the choice, he would put economic prosperity before cultural ideology, or class above nation. Accordingly, outside utopian models, it is more natural for economic man to strive for wealth and security than for virtue and loyalty.

But the logic of politics is not the same as that of either economics or ethnics. Their often antithetical values of popularity, profit and patrimony create impossible dilemmas of prioritization. Traditional cultures set their criteria so as to maximize their accommodation to nature. But the principal values of modern industrial or commercial culture by attempting to master nature, drive people to a Faustian bargain that ultimately threatens to destroy them.

Francis Fukuyama's explicitly Hegelian thesis that the globalization of western liberal democracy is the final form of human government, thus leaves a lot to be desired. Such triumphalism does not face the facts of collective suicide by ecological collapse, ruinous competition among nations, widening disparities in standards of living, and breakdown of authority as the poisoned legacy of decaying empires. As Peter Leslie writes in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, the explanations of liberalism, as much as Marxism, are outmoded because they do not consider the difficulties inherent in realizing their ideal visions.

These insolvable difficulties stem from the inherent inconsistencies of human nature and physical reality. Sociopolitical problems stem from a functional necessity to balance contradictory values, such as equality and equity, efficiency and legality, liberty and security, individuality and community. The deep challenges confronting governance are then neither managerial nor organizational, but human and historical. Moreover, social problems have now become more complex and wicked than ever before, so governments simply do not and cannot know how to solve them.

The demanding tasks of economic efficiency to fight structural unemployment, political legitimacy to face participation pressures, and social solidarity to forge state responsibility are almost impossible to fulfill at the same time or place, because of their inherent and inescapable contradictions. Caught between opposing pressures for both rationality and responsibility, security and liberty, governments have been painted into the corner of a no-win situation from which there is no real escape.

Yet, *l'Etat c'est nous!* We the people, by sowing our separate individual acts are now reaping their cumulative effects. The failure, then, does not belong to government but to the policies and practices of its constituents. It is true that governments are both dependent and independent variables in the causal chain, because they are the intervening factor of various forces acting upon society. But when they are expected to do the impossible, they cannot but fail miserably. It is thus incumbent upon us to realize the fragility of human institutions and try to solve our problems within the bounds of our imperfect knowledge, moot morality and limited power.

#### IV.

So where do we go from here? We must look ahead to see what may be coming, so that we may prevent or prepare it.

Demographic statistics, as we saw, point out the global population explosion which multiplied our numbers sixfold in two centuries. Given this trend, it is foreseen that the present population will double once again by 2045. Obviously such accelerated increase will cancel out any economic progress for most of the world. Resource scarcity and effluent plenty conspire to ensure that the bulk of the world's population cannot follow in the steps of the vanguard west and hope to live like it. The ecologic and economic repercussions of such demands are bound to be catastrophic merely for trying to carry them out. The question here then is how are governments to handle the crises arising from such impossible

social services.

Deriving from the fiscal and social crisis of post-industrialism, the new ideology of public management reform is primarily concerned with increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service. Most reformers make performance the central value against which to judge the regulation and legislation of command and control administrations. The US National Performance Review and Vice-President Al Gore's Reinventing Government Project are outstanding examples of this trend.

No longer able to afford expensive governments, some countries have gone further to propose a new social contract between state and people. Governance in a Changing Environment tells us that the UK Citizen's Charter, the French Charte des Services Publics, and the Canadian Public Service 2000 study emphasize Total Quality Management, treating the citizens as clients,



dreams?

New theories try to answer these and other nagging questions. The answers point out that the days when it made sense to divide politics, economics and ecologies are gone forever. In our dynamic and chaotic world, what anyone does may affect everyone else. Yet, the consequences of our acts, although highly interdependent, are largely indeterminate and often counter-intuitive.

For that reason, post-modern theories (i.e. Public Choice), emphasize the limited capacity of politicians to direct the state apparatus and others (i.e. Agency Theory), to hold it accountable. Consequently, post-modern governments seem to be moving from a Weberian rational organization to a capitalist/profitable corporation mode, thereby transforming citizens into customers. As such, depoliticized individuals are given a choice between public services in a free market setting where competitive advantage and purchasing power become the critical criteria.

Since complex systems require some central control, the Keynesian thesis of state intervention and the Reaganomic antithesis of state renunciation now seem to be converging into the new business-style public management synthesis of state marketization which employs commercial standards of allocating public resources and evaluating

customers or users of contractual public services. The new public management (NPM) is supposed to be leaner but not meaner, decentralized and debureaucratized, dynamic and pragmatic. In this new regime, front-line staff become the winners of the technological revolution, while secretarial, clerical, unionized and managerial are the losers. Nevertheless, as Sanford Borins claims in *Governance in a Changing Environment*, NPM so far still contains a high faith-to-fact ratio which raises many doubts as to its ultimate success.

In order to foresee some of the long-term potential of unfolding tendencies, some futurists attempt scenario-building as a hypothesis-forming process. Instead of trying to predict what is fundamentally unpredictable, these experts construct different scenarios of several possibilities by grouping various issue areas, such as the information economy, social contract, cultural values, and government relations, in various permutations.

Intersecting two opposing sets of alternative visions: one social (consensual vs conflictual) and the other economic (progression vs stagnation); a team produced four different (and entertaining) scenarios of possible worlds in *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change*:

-Futuristic Starship Earth: a Hi-Tech

society of advanced post-industrial age.

-*Natural Windjammer Eden*: a conserver society of optimal ecological economy.

-*Traditional HMS Bounty*: a hierarchical society of rigid elite-mass co-existence.

-*Doomed Titanic Disaster*: an entropic '1984' society of environmental catastrophe.

Of these, the *Starship* and *Bounty* scenarios may be the most probable, because they are the optimistic and pessimistic extensions of present trends. On the other hand, the *Bounty* and *Titanic* are the most deplorable, because their deprived and depraved conditions go against humanistic and egalitarian values. This leaves the *Starship* and *Windjammer* options as the most desirable, on the basis of the *summum bonum* standard combining social cohesion and optimal distribution.

On that basis, the next step is to determine how to realize such ideal. Although the *Starship* model seems more exiting and glamorous, many people prefer the windjammer as more suitable for a sustainable human development. In general, most writers agree that mobilizing the collective power of people to make life more democratic, secure and lasting is the foremost challenge of our generation.

This difficult task requires three things: the enunciation of core values which respect life, liberty, justice, integrity, and community; the legitimation of civic morals which assign common rights and shared responsibilities to all; and the adaptation of international laws which limit state sovereignty.

To attain these goals, Richard Simeon proposes in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society* deep social reforms which empower citizens and diffuse authority in each country, as well as free trade and organize transnational relations everywhere on Earth. The world society will have to assume greater responsibility in a wider range of issues by a multifaceted strategy of planetary governance which enables international institutions to articulate collaborative global ethics and world law, promote common security, manage economic interdependence and above all sustain social development.

Putting these principles into practice, particular suggestions have been made to reform the UN system, now in its Golden Jubilee. Documented in *Our Global Neighbourhood*, these include proposals enlarging and restructuring the highly political Security Council to promote world peace and direct a permanent volunteer peace-keeping force; complementing it with an economic Security Council to promote sustainable development. Next, transforming the Trusteeship Council into an earth protector along with a Global Environmental Facility which is responsible for planetary ecology. Finally adding a Parliamentary Assembly with direct taxation powers and an INGO Advisory Council to eliminate the democratic deficit of IGOs.

If the Kantian hypothesis that democracies are unlikely to fight each other is correct, democratization is the best road to world peace. As a balancing act between majorities and minorities, democratic politics empowers minorities to challenge majorities without resorting to violence or oppression. The main purpose of democratic legislation, according to Alan Cairns in



*Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, is not to express lofty ideals but to create practical means to ratify and reconcile individual human rights and clashing group interests.

If people have a right to security, then states have a duty to provide it by collectively preventing, responding and resolving social conflicts. The concept of common security has added educational and occupational opportunity, to the traditional idea of public order and military defense; thereby assigning to governments the task of preparing and providing enough work for everybody, by matching unfilled social needs with the available labor supplies.

Still, Christopher Pollitt in *Governance in a Changing Environment* notes that these common security functions involve the most resource-intensive parts of the public sector, therefore the least suitable for narrow-scope managerial techniques or formulae treatments. It follows that we should expect and encourage an organizational variety in the public sector. Simple and sweeping solutions, as reinventing or privatizing government, cannot solve the problem. Patricia Ingraham (in the same collection) concurs, arguing that no public management reform can be merely technical or purely managerial. It must inevitably be tied to the quality of government and the loyalty of its citizens.

For that reason, many contributors looked at the broader picture of social, rather than merely political, reform. One such approach is exemplified by Amitai Etzioni's natural communitarian movement in *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change*. In contrast to both liberal individualism and conservative nationalism, communitarianism is a social activity to change people's morals and civics towards a more fraternal society. This involves shared values, reduced disparities and pooled challenges as the necessary components of creating and maintaining any strong community.

In order to succeed in building such community, the most reliable predictor or critical factor is the existence of norms of reciprocity and networks of engagement: a dense interlocking web of associations which serve as the social capital of civic trust and mutual help. Only within the framework of a community spirit can a holistic development become sustainable. Economic wealth and political power then are the effects of social health, not its causes. Once a systemic equilibrium with high levels of trust, cooperation, reciprocity, engagement, and welfare are established, what Chris Freeman calls *Changing Maps: Governing in a World of Rapid Change* an Active Society creates a virtuous circle of continuous social progress.

One aspect of this society is Yankelovich's public-judgment model in which Public Policy Juries of citizens are formed to judge public issues, utilizing a wide range of interactive electronic fora to sustain a continuing public dialogue. Although the state cannot legislate social change, it can surely facilitate open debate by providing channels of communication. Dialogue is the single most powerful tool government has to help citizens navigate the journey from raw opinion based on mass information to public judgment based on civic education. Such consensus building procedures could attain the required critical mass of about 70% of the electorate, when it becomes sufficiently informed and concerned as to endorse and promote strong public policies.

Similar procedures can be repeated from the local and national to the regional and international levels by confederal means of shared sovereignties and divided jurisdictions. Some forms of functional federalism raise barriers in some areas and lowers them in others bringing about a pragmatic balance of power. Mathew Zachariah and Bohdan Harasymiw in *Federalism and the New World Order* decry federalism's excessive stability which has produced a boring, addictive, and catatonic states. But federalism's political separation, economic expansion by trade liberalization, and cultural protection by local particularization combines an optimal cooperation and desirable competition for peaceful coexistence.

For these reasons, large heterogeneous societies, like Canada, can do no better than federalism. If historical particularism or ethnic identity is part of the human condition, it cannot be suppressed, so all politics can do is contain it. Although permitting self-determination for every clan or tribe is a formula for disaster, Harriet Critchley in *Federalism and the New World Order* insists that minorities must be guaranteed their survival rights. Peter Leslie in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society* agrees, arguing that history and ethnicity give people a frame of reference in time and space within which they can situate and realize themselves.

Given the human propensity to attain simultaneously personal salvation, national interests and cosmopolitan values, the world will always be confronting various antinomies and antagonisms. Under the circumstances, both Roger Gibbins and David Whitefield in *Federalism and the New World Order* agree that only a federal system can tolerate such differences, at the same time as it promotes the human capacity to sustain multiple identities from the local to the global.

In any case, whether we look into the future through a local sociosystemic microscope or a global ecosystemic telescope, all we can see is a hazy fog of incongruent possibilities and contradictory potentials. Given the alternatives of the classic bureaucratic model to be either the public market thesis or its participatory community antithesis, our choice here is rather circumscribed. Perhaps a synthesis of these would combine them in a flexible, selective and pragmatic way, as appropriate in different areas and needs. The challenge then, Donald Savoie repeats in *Governance in a Changing Environment*, is primarily of policy, not management. What it requires is to rethink what is desirable and possible of government, rather than attempt to reengineer its machinery along the latest fashion or fad.

This agenda requires pragmatism in the best and most demanding sense: a judicious selection of the various possible means of collective action based upon a rigorous assessment of their likely contributions to these goals. As both Richard Schultz and Richard Rorty propose in *Canada's Century: Governance in a Maturing Society*, the rediscovery of pragmatism should evaluate ideas and actions on their effects alone, rather than on some dogmatic predisposition.

#### V.

As presented here, the central dilemma of social life is where to draw the line between the public and private domain. The question is: what is personal responsibility to be left to an open economy or free market and what

is everybody's business to be decided by the polity and implemented by the state? Historically, most societies vacillate somewhere between the ideal *laissez-faire* and totalitarian extremes. In some places and for some time, the pendulum might swing dangerously close to either one pole or the other, but as a real pendulum, it is most likely to rest in the middle, until an external force pushes it towards one side or another again.

For the past hundred years, the general tendency was towards the socialist ideal, where a modern welfare state was constructed to take care of the individual from the cradle to the grave. Like all extremes however, collectivism came at too heavy a price, both materially and spiritually. By now, it is admitted that although some social responsibility and controllability is unavoidable, both as a means of regulating behavior and minimizing risk; we hardly need a reminder of the catastrophic failure of the grand illusion of centralized state planning.

As a reaction to that failed God, the inevitable backlash is now hurling us to dismantle welfare statism and return to rugged individualism. As we saw, post-modern governance is supposed to correct the evils of oppressive bureaucracy and free the person from the shackles of a ubiquitous Big Brother. Having experienced the evils of the other extreme however, it is now claimed that the new government minimalism will avoid the pitfalls of the old maximalism and end up having the best of both worlds.

Yet, even if both extremes are judiciously avoided, Guy Peters, in *Governance in a Changing Environment*, considers it unlikely that any cybernetic combination can ever satisfy everybody. Incompatible means and contradictory ends ensure that our social enterprises will forever be suboptimal. Since all values cannot be maximized either simultaneously or universally, some always have to be sacrificed in order to attain others: security to liberty and equality to equity, or vice versa. Unfortunately, '*liberté, égalité, fraternité*' can never be had altogether, so many of the worst nightmares of the world are due to the wretched excesses carried out in their name.

Similarly, conflict and consensus, competition and cooperation, are opposite sides of the same coin and cannot stand alone. These contraries are irreconcilable and irreducible; efforts to make them so have failed repeatedly and is bound to fail again. Therefore, all attempts to reach peaceful coexistence and tolerant diversity, although laudable and necessary, also produce disparities which undermine peace and stability, just as fighting for one's right and truth, confronts others who do the same for theirs.

So, what's to be done? The only civilized answer for our interdependent world is politics: the classic game of dialectic compromise and accommodation *par excellence*. This procedural, rather than substantive response, assumes that the inevitable conflicts arising between rulers and ruled, rich and poor, insiders and outsiders, can only be partly and temporarily resolved by the continuing social drama or human comedy. In our complex context, the life cycle of any particular solution is necessarily fragile and ephemeral. All the more so now when we are undergoing a revolutionary transition from one era to another.

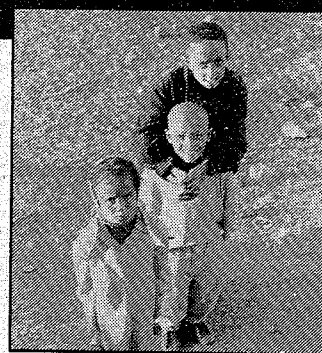
The emerging post-modern paradigm requires a continuous and extraordinary sociopolitical learning capacity. The first thing to be learnt in the new era is to live without

absolutes and act pragmatically. With learning comes creativity which involves breaking established rules, changing given parameters, and combining different things in novel ways. As the ability to encompass several fields and integrate various methods, Apollonian and Dionysian, originality is the only way to tackle the unprecedented problems we face at every step of the way into the future.

Most likely, a new paradigm combining post-modern culture, post-national politics, and post-industrial economics will define our future. Adapting to this paradigmatic change involves more than an amendment of the set of theoretical propositions and consequent research agenda. It rather means a *metanoia* or change of mentality towards shared beliefs and values. In other words, a change of mental maps which determine what to attend and what to ignore, what is important and what irrelevant.

As John Meisel recognized, the most important phenomenon in politics is the value system of a society and hence its dominant and contending political ideas. Real social change then requires an eventual moral shift. To be effective in a dynamic ever changing world, we must learn to rethink and reorganize, thus invest more time and energy in a process of revising our values and structures. The discussions in all these books helps us to do that, thereby contributing to ease our transition towards a better post-modern governance.

## Fatimah, Tewolde and Dawit...



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