

Skill Revolution and Consultative Commonwealth*

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My vision is a commonwealth in which human needs are discovered, human purposes formulated, and human problems handled by political processes better adapted to the requirements of a rapidly changing technological society¹ than are participative, representational, or bureaucratic processes alone. I am not saying that this commonwealth is one in which human needs are satisfied, human purposes achieved, and human problems solved. There is a world of difference between discovering and satisfying needs, between formulating and achieving purposes, between handling and solving problems. The vocabulary is experiential rather than existential, processual rather than programmatic.

My argument is that the "consultative commonwealth"² is at least one probable outcome of the relationship between the skill revolution

of modern times and some of the socially problematic consequences of modern technology. The consultative commonwealth is not an inevitable outcome of contemporary trends. It is, however, a plausible construct—more optimistic than Lasswell's construct of the "garrison state,"³ and more pessimistic than Bennis's construct of the "temporary society."⁴ My task is to explore some of the logical and empirical linkages between the skill revolution, an empirical phenomenon, and the consultative commonwealth, a developmental conception of the future.⁵

or worry about—and for *prospicere*—to provide for. In this usage, then, both an empathetic and a providential aspect of consultation are emphasized.

Thirdly, the related adjective *consultus*—one who is consulted—may be used as a synonym for *intellegens*, *peritus* or *eruditus*—intelligent, expert and learned; and the process to which *consultus* applies is supposed to be *diligens* or *accuratus*—careful or accurate.

In combination, the different meanings and uses of *consultare* yield a comprehensive profile of the consultative relationship. The relationship is entered voluntarily for the purpose of deliberation or consideration because one party, the seeker of advice, is ignorant or in need of help, while the other party, the consultant, is a skilled or learned person who gives advice diligently and intelligently. But the consultant is not just an expert but also a compassionate person who cares for and worries about the matter brought to him for counsel, and he has the gift of accurate diagnosis and wise prognosis.

³ See Harold D. Lasswell, "The Garrison State and Specialists on Violence," in *The Analysis of Political Behavior: An Empirical Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 146–57.

⁴ See Warren G. Bennis and Philip E. Slater, *The Temporary Society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969). In this utopia, problem solving by strangers with diverse professional skills is expected to occur through organic rather than mechanical means of interaction; the executive becomes a coordinator who mediates among task forces; and "people will be evaluated not according to rank but according to skill and professional training. . . . Adaptive, problem-solving temporary systems of diverse specialists, linked together by coordinating and task-evaluating executive specialists in an organic flux—this is the organization form that will gradually replace bureaucracy as we know it" (p. 74). Bennis's view of democracy, though he does not seem to know it, is anarchosyndicalist: ". . . democracy seeks no new stability, no end point; it is purposeless, save that it purports to ensure perpetual transition, constant alteration, ceaseless instability. . . . Democracy and our new professional men identify primarily with the adaptive process, not the establishment" (p. 12).

⁵ For a discussion of "developmental constructs," see Heinz Eulau, "H. D. Lasswell's Developmental Analysis," in *Micro-Macro Political Analysis: Accents of Inquiry* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 105–18.

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¹ By "technological society" I mean a society in which not only agricultural and industrial production have been automated, computerized, and otherwise rationalized, but one in which also the provision of human services is increasingly subject to technological innovation. I prefer this expression to "postindustrial society" because the latter does not really convey a meaning of the direction of change. A technological society need not be "technocratic." The construct of "consultative commonwealth" assumes the technologization (and professionalization) of the human services but not rule by technologists. See Victor C. Ferkiss, *Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality* (New York: George Braziller, 1969), or Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era* (New York: Viking Press, 1970).

² "Consultative" is related to consult and consultation. These words derive from the Latin *consultare* which has at least three behavior-relevant meanings. All of these meanings define, etymologically, the consultative commonwealth. First, depending on the context in which it is used, *consultare* can be translated as consider, deliberate, cogitate, reflect, think over, advise with, take advice from, and so on. The variety of these meanings is less helpful, however, than the meanings of the more primitive Latin verb *consulere*, which directly calls attention to the reciprocal character of the consulting relationship. On the one hand, *consulere* means to ask, question, or examine; on the other hand, it means to give counsel. The reciprocity appears even more strongly in the German translation of *consulere* where it simultaneously means to ask someone (*jemanden befragen*) and to advise someone (*jemanden beraten*).

To seek, give, or take advice is hardly the only property of professional behavior. Interestingly, *consultare* refers to a second family of meanings that define the consulting relationship. In some contexts, *consultare* is used as a synonym for *curare*—to care for

Skill Revolution

The skill revolution of the last hundred years is one of the significant factors in the development of industrial and technological society. Many occupations, and especially the oldest and still most prestigious among them—the professions of law, of the clergy, the academy, and medicine—have their roots in a distant past.⁶ What is new, and what not even Emile Durkheim envisaged when he sought to explain the consequences of the division of labor for society,⁷ is the incredible specialization in and proliferation of occupations that have accompanied industrial and technological developments. Harold Lasswell refers to this set of events as skill revolution and sees it as the basis for an observational standpoint in the study of politics “which cuts across the conventional categories of class and nation.”⁸

The emphasis on skill is not to provide an alternative but a complementary frame of reference for the observation of social and political situations. An integrative view of society and politics cannot neglect nation and class as both significant social realities and analytic categories. But cutting across these realities and categories is skill specialization which, it is clear, does not stop at national boundaries or class barriers. It is as much a part of social change in the United States as in the Soviet Union,⁹ and in the white-collar middle class as in the blue-collar working class.¹⁰

Skill specialization is probably the best di-

rectly available indicator of social and technological changes as behavioral dimensions. It has the virtue of empirical concreteness and relatively easy operational specification at the level of individual behavior. It therefore facilitates predictions about the future of political organization and processes in technological societies, regardless of their formal constitutional regimes.

Research on the political implications of the skill revolution has varying scholarly objectives. Lasswell was primarily interested in the rise and decline of skill elites for an explanation of the distribution of political values and the political transformation of societies.¹¹ Because scientific or other knowledge, higher education, and rational intelligence are important values, some analysts use similar notions to predict the emergence of societies in which owners, workers, or consumers have lost, and managers, scientists, or technologists have gained, control of the means of political power.¹² They do so by rather fanciful leaps of the imagination, not to mention neglect of intervening or contravening social processes. Changes in the composition of social and political elites will not be suspended in the future. But these changes rarely bring with them the one-tailed transformations that are so resolutely predicted.

The permeation of society's public and private spheres by the old professions and many new skill groups is likely to continue in the foreseeable future. Yet, it is premature to speak, as Frederick C. Mosher does, of “the professional state,”¹³ at least in the sense that the professions will, in Daniel Bell's terms, constitute “the leadership of the new society.”¹⁴ It

⁶ The classical work on the professions remains A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1933). See also these authors' article, “Professions,” in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1934), Vol. 12, pp. 476–80. For a contemporary overview, see Kenneth S. Lynn, ed., *The Professions in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

⁷ Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, transl. by George Simpson (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960). First published in 1893.

⁸ Harold D. Lasswell, “Skill Politics and Skill Revolution,” in Lasswell, *Analysis of Political Behavior*, pp. 133–45, at 135.

⁹ See Nicholas De Witt, *Education and Professional Employment in the U.S.S.R.* (Washington, D.C.: National Science Foundation, 1961), pp. 207–545; George Fischer, *The Soviet System and Modern Society* (New York: Atherton Press, 1968); for long-term transformations, see some of the essays in *The Transformation of Russian Society*, ed. Cyril E. Black (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Milton C. Lodge, *Soviet Elite Attitudes Since Stalin* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1969).

¹⁰ Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967); Richard H. Hall, *Occupations and the Social Structure* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969).

¹¹ See Harold D. Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and C. Easton Rothwell, *The Comparative Study of Elites* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952).

¹² See, for instance, John Kenneth Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967); Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1870–2033* (London: Penguin Books, 1961). For an earlier example of this genre, see James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution* (New York: The John Day Company, 1941).

¹³ Frederick C. Mosher, *Democracy and the Public Service* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968). This is not to say that I disagree with Mosher's appraisal that “the emergence of the professions [has] revolutionized the precepts and practices of public employment” (p. 123). By turning over the recruitment, training and accreditation of skilled employees to the professions and the universities, current practices “are challenging, modifying, or overturning the most central—and most cherished—principles associated with civil service reform . . .” (p. 124). It is unlikely, Mosher concludes, “that the trend toward professionalism in or outside government will soon be reversed or even slowed” (pp. 132–3).

¹⁴ “The leadership of the new society will rest,”

is a fragile presupposition that the possessors of new skills or specialized old skills will necessarily be dominant. If not exclusive, holders of political power. Tendencies contrary to the skill revolution evoked in response to social malfunctionings of technological society may attenuate or dissipate the concentration of power in the hands of those who have the new skills and specialized knowledge.

Imaginative extrapolations of trends in the structure and distribution of skills are conducive to the creation of benevolent or malevolent utopias; but constructs of the future are useful only to the extent that they permit us to orient ourselves meaningfully and correctly in the present. Apocalyptic visions of the future have just the opposite effect. They disorient the beholder and make it impossible for him to observe and explain the world as a prelude to predicting what it is likely to be or changing it in a preferred direction. What is needed to make research on the political implications of the skill revolution significant is a construct of the future that breaks with the familiar linear extrapolations of the effect of the skill revolution on the transformation and distribution of political power. The concept of the consultative commonwealth is such an alternative construct.

Research guided by the construct of the consultative commonwealth does not focus simply on the appearance of new elites whose influence is grounded in the possession of socially, economically, or politically useful skills and esoteric knowledge. Rather, it concentrates on the attitudes, orientations and, especially, modes of conduct in their relationships with others that skill specialists bring to the task of governance. If skill specialists are asked to help in the manipulation of social problems and in the delivery of human services, not their positions in the hierarchies of power but their ways of doing things deserve our close research attention. This focus does not preclude other types of investigation into the political implications of the skill revolution. However, with a few exceptions, political scientists have not been much concerned with the political behavior of individual professionals,¹⁵ or with professional as-

writes Daniel Bell, "not with businessmen or corporations as we know them . . . , but with the research corporations, the industrial laboratories, the experimental stations, and the universities." Daniel Bell, "Notes on the Post-Industrial Society I," *The Public Interest*, 6 (Winter, 1967), 27.

¹⁵ Among the few exceptions are Herbert Kaufman, *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1960); Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); Heinz Eulau

and John D. Sprague, *Lawyers in Politics: A Study in Professional Convergence* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company, 1964); Robert C. Wood, "Scientists and Politics: The Rise of an Apolitical Elite," in *Scientists and National Policy-Making*, ed. Robert Gilpin and Christopher Wright (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 41-72; Arnold A. Rogow, *The Psychiatrists* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1970); Harmon Zeigler, *The Political World of the High School Teacher* (Eugene, Oregon: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, 1966); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: The Free Press, new ed., 1971); Everett C. Ladd, Jr., and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Politics of Academic Natural Scientists and Engineers." *Science*, 176 (June 9, 1972), 1091-1100.

sociations as what Corinne L. Gilb calls "private governments,"¹⁶ or with professional organizations as conventional pressure groups.¹⁷ There is, then, a gap in our knowledge of the political implications of the skill revolution at the micro level of the individual as well as at the macro level of society.

Research on the professions promises to be a fascinating entry point into some problematic aspects of social structure and social change. The demographic and biographical approaches to the study of elites have not yielded the hoped-for results in contributing to an understanding of social and political change: The demographic approach is too aggregative and conceals more than it reveals at the level of the individual;¹⁸ the biographical approach is too molecular and reveals more than is needed at the level of society.¹⁹ Because politics is an

and John D. Sprague, *Lawyers in Politics: A Study in Professional Convergence* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company, 1964); Robert C. Wood, "Scientists and Politics: The Rise of an Apolitical Elite," in *Scientists and National Policy-Making*, ed. Robert Gilpin and Christopher Wright (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 41-72; Arnold A. Rogow, *The Psychiatrists* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1970); Harmon Zeigler, *The Political World of the High School Teacher* (Eugene, Oregon: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, 1966); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: The Free Press, new ed., 1971); Everett C. Ladd, Jr., and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Politics of Academic Natural Scientists and Engineers." *Science*, 176 (June 9, 1972), 1091-1100.

¹⁶ See Corinne Lathrop Gilb, *Hidden Hierarchies: The Professions and Government* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966); Martin Mayer, *The Lawyers* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968); Eliot Freidson, *Profession of Medicine* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1970).

¹⁷ The pioneering study is Oliver Garceau, *The Political Life of the American Medical Association* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941); see also Stanley Kelley, Jr., *Professional Public Relations and Political Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956); Harry Eckstein, *Pressure Group Politics: The Case of the British Medical Association* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960); Joel B. Grossman, *Lawyers and Judges: The ABA and the Politics of Judicial Selection* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1965); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).

¹⁸ See Donald R. Matthews, *The Social Background of Political Decision-Makers* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1954). See also Dwaine Marvick, ed., *Political Decision-Makers: Recruitment and Performance* (New York: The Free Press, 1961); Mattei Dogan and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Quantitative Ecological Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969).

¹⁹ For an appraisal, see Lewis J. Edinger, "Political Science and Political Biography: Reflections on the Study of Leadership," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 26 (May and August, 1964), pp. 423-39, 648-76. For a recent reassertion, see Fred I. Greenstein, *Personality*

emergent coefficient of the skill revolution, the professions are important topics of investigation.²⁰ For specializing professions are critical interstitial structures between the individual person and society.

If the emphasis is on those occupations conventionally called professions, it is not because there is a sharp dividing line between them and other vocations, or because the professions may in fact occupy positions of power and prestige in social and political systems.²¹ It is because the consultative processes stemming from professionalization in the wake of the skill revolution and the modes of conduct normally associated with professionalism have crystalized more fully in the professions and paraprofessions.²² The strenuous efforts made by many occupations to achieve professional status, whatever such status may mean to them, are further indications of the political implications of the continuing revolution in skills for the governance and servicing of modern societies.²³

Future-in-Coming: Emergencies

The consultative commonwealth is only a tentative construct, but among alternative models of the shape of political things to come it is more persuasive than most others. It is more persuasive because its emergence can be observed at the micro level of individual professional behavior. This is not to accept the convenient and comfortable assumption that present trends or countertrends will continue indefinitely into the future. Far from it. The weakness of futuristic extrapolation of trends is its neglect of the puzzling problem of how past, present, and future are connected in human action.²⁴

and *Politics* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969).

²⁰ On emergence, see Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), pp. 366-80.

²¹ See Albert J. Reiss, Jr., *Occupations and Social Status* (New York: The Free Press, 1961). For measurement aspects, see John P. Robinson and others, *Measures of Occupational Attitudes and Occupational Characteristics* (Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1967). For a broad overview, see Joseph Ben-David, "Professions in the Class System of Present-Day Societies: A Trend Report and Bibliography," *Current Sociology*, 12 (1963-4), 247-330.

²² Amitai Etzioni, ed., *The Semi-Professions and Their Organization: Teachers, Nurses, Social Workers* (New York: The Free Press, 1969).

²³ See William Mitchell, "The Ambivalent Social Status of the American Politician," *Western Political Quarterly*, 12 (September, 1959), 683-98.

²⁴ See, for instance, Daniel Bell, ed., *Toward the Year 2000: Work in Progress* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

Scenarios of the future are never played out as expected. There are two methodological points to be made about the construct of the consultative commonwealth. First, though a construct of the future, it is tutored by theory and empirical research. Its utility is to be judged not by its predictive power, for the future is not known and can therefore not be used to test derivative hypotheses. Rather, its utility must be judged by its ability to give rise to research and thought in the present that may be relevant to the future.

Second, not only is the future unknown but the laws of social development leading to the future are unknown. Every construct of the future therefore makes assumptions about the developmental process. The developmental model underlying the construct of the consultative commonwealth assumes oscillations between the polar ends of a temporal continuum. It assumes that there is no action without reaction, no force without resistance, no unity without plurality, no identity without difference, no growth without decay. The polar principle assumes that contradictory social processes are mutually entailed through time.²⁵

The skill revolution and notably its vanguards, the professions, provide a suggestive point of departure. The professional is not a man who creates knowledge but a specialist who translates knowledge into action. The man of knowledge is a "longhair," and a longhair is by definition an impractical person. The professional is not a longhair, for he applies knowledge to practical concerns.²⁶ Unlike the man of

²⁵ The polarity principle is explicated in the writings of the philosopher Morris R. Cohen. See, for instance, *Studies in Philosophy and Science* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1949), pp. 11-13: "The principle of polarity is suggested by the phenomena of magnetism where north and south pole are always distinct, opposed, yet inseparable. We can see it in general physics where there is no action without reaction, no force or cause of change without inertia or resistance. In biology the life of every organism involves action and reaction with an environment. There is no growth without decay. . . . This suggests a supplement to the principle of causality. Not only must every natural event have a cause which determines that it should happen, but the cause must be opposed by some factor which prevents it from producing any greater effect than it actually does. . . . The principle of polarity, of necessary opposition in all determinate effects, thus becomes a heuristic principle directing our inquiry. . . . Yet the principle of polarity is not the same as that of the Hegelian dialectic. . . ."

²⁶ Robert Boguslaw, *The New Utopians: A Study of System Design and Social Change* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 43, puts it nicely: "An applied scientist is a scientist who has had his hair cut." For further aspects of the problem, see Bernard Barber and Walter Hirsch, eds., *The Sociology of Science* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), as against

knowledge, the professional "does something" that is oriented to the future in terms of goal values to be realized. The physician seeks to make the sick person healthy; the lawyer tries to recover a victimized person's rights; the professor as teacher strives to lead the student out of ignorance to understanding; the minister hopes to ease the penitent's road to salvation. This is not all that physicians, lawyers, professors or ministers do, but their main task is to use their knowledge or experience in helping people meet problems which they cannot handle themselves;²⁷ and they do so by forming images of a desired future for their patients, clients, students, or parishioners.

Much of what the professional does is routine. It is routine because the problem at hand has usually been encountered before, or because the solution has been codified in a work of reference. But sometimes the professional confronts a genuinely new problem for which there is no ready-made solution. He then faces a situation of uncertainty that is, in effect, an emergent future because he must "do something" about it and cannot avoid the problem or postpone action.²⁸ In an emergency the professional will deal with the problem as best as he can, relying on his general skill, ingenuity, and what is called "intuition"—an estimate of the future. When the professional is involved in an emergency, the future is in the making. The future is simply the present-in-transition, and the present is the future-in-coming.

At the macro level of analysis, attention turns to the professions as collectivities and how they orient themselves to action in problematic social situations.²⁹ There is no lack of situations in contemporary society that call for professional intervention and the application of professional skills. How the professions relate themselves to problematic social and technological situations is therefore a matter of great significance for the future.

The relationship between the behavior of the

professions as prototypical carriers of the skill revolution in a rapidly changing world and a viable construct of governing processes in the future is directly pertinent to many critical social problems—for instance, the formulation of public policies concerning and the adequate provision of those human services in fields like health, education, welfare, and safety that are the domain of the highly skilled occupations. These are not the only fields in which the skill revolution has consequences for the problems of society; but the provision of professional services, from medical care to legal aid, education, welfare and protection—services on which modern society heavily depends for successful functioning—is inadequate in both distribution and quality.³⁰ Access to these services has come to be claimed as a common right of citizenship;³¹ it is a right in conflict with differential privilege inherent in a segmented and stratified social structure. The realization of the right of access to professional services cannot be left, therefore, to the spontaneous working of the economic market.³² Indeed, if there were no maldistribution and inadequacy in delivery, professional services in health, education, welfare, or protection would hardly be regarded as urgent matters of public concern.

The professions, paraprofessions and sub-professions are sufficiently diverse, and their circumstances sufficiently different, that it is dangerous to generalize about matters as complex and intricate as the provision of a multitude of services. This is why a developmental construct like the consultative commonwealth is useful, indeed necessary, for research. For it

²⁷ The literature on America's "unsolved problems" is legion, but few works treat the matter from the perspective of the professions. But see: Harold L. Wilensky and Charles N. Lebeaux, *Industrial Society and Social Welfare* (New York: The Free Press, 1965); Eli Ginzberg, with Miriam Ostow, *Men, Money, and Medicine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969); F. Raymond Marks, with Kirk Leswing and Barbara A. Fortinsky, *The Lawyer, The Public, and Professional Responsibility* (Chicago: American Bar Foundation, 1972); Rosemary Stevens, *American Medicine and the Public Interest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971); James Q. Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); Heinz Eulau and Harold Quinley, *State Officials and Higher Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1970).

²⁸ An early and still one of the best arguments in this regard is T. H. Marshall, "The Recent History of Professionalism in Relation to Social Structure and Social Policy," in T. H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1965), pp. 159-79. The essay was first published in 1939.

²⁹ Market regulation of human services is proposed by Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 137-60.

Alvin W. Gouldner and S. M. Miller, eds., *Applied Sociology: Opportunities and Problems* (New York: The Free Press, 1965).

²⁷ "The client," writes Everett C. Hughes, "comes to the professional because he has met a problem which he cannot himself handle," *Men and Their Work* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958), p. 141.

²⁸ See Renee C. Fox, "Training for Uncertainty," in Mark Abrahamson, ed., *The Professional in the Organization* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1967), pp. 20-4. See also Renee C. Fox, *Experiment Perilous* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959).

²⁹ The best discussion of what is meant by a "problematic situation" is still John Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1938).

should demonstrate that the problems involved in the provision of human services are not soluble simply by recourse to facile policy panaceas, faith in benign administrative palliatives, or dependence on political mobilization of inadequately served groups of clients.

This is not to say that these means are unimportant political change mechanisms or that their consequences, whichever, are unimportant. On the contrary, they are themselves issues in the relationship between skill revolution and consultative commonwealth.³³ For they are symptomatic of the strains and tensions between changing societal expectations concerning the delivery of human services, on the one hand, and difficulties facing the professionalization of these services, on the other hand.

Polarity: Professionalization and Deprofessionalization

Skill revolution is not to be equated with professionalization; it does not in itself generate either the process of professionalization or the ideology of professionalism.³⁴ Because the most highly developed skills are in short supply, the skill structure will remain stratified; and those most highly placed in the skill structure, the professions, will be responsible for the delivery of human services and decision making concerning these services. The shape of the skill structure, however, will not remain the same.³⁵ Internal differentiation among those at the top of the skill hierarchy and the addition of new skill specialists are likely to broaden the structure and to increase the pool of trained personnel available for service, potentially enabling both the public and private sectors to respond more adequately to the novel problems created by high technology—either those that are foreseeable byproducts of scientifically grounded technology or those that are the un-

anticipated and socially harmful consequences of technological change.³⁶

Although defining "profession" is important, it may become a passion, as it understandably is for those occupations that are striving for professional status.³⁷ In opting for a definition, one should let the problem at hand serve as the guide. The problem in this instance is to build a construct of the future commonwealth that pays attention not only to the professionalization of social or technical services and policy making, but also to a variety of countertendencies that are indicative of deprofessionalization.

On the one hand, the increasing application of scientific knowledge, technical skill and rational intelligence will professionalize the delivery of human services and bring professionals into the policy-making process, in both the public and private sectors.³⁸ Moreover, if present trends continue, the provision of a great variety of services to all citizens will be high on the agenda of politics. The availability of a basic body of abstract knowledge with connected skills, and the performance of services, then, are the defining properties of what is meant by profession, and the patterns of behavior or conduct associated with these properties are the building blocks of the consultative commonwealth.³⁹ In this perspective, the internal trans-

³³ There is a large literature on the consequences of technological change. Some of this literature is highly sensational; but see the Report of the Study of Critical Environmental Problems, *Man's Impact on the Global Environment* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970); William E. Ewald, Jr., ed., *Environment and Change: The Next Fifty Years* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968); Harrison Brown, *The Challenge of Man's Future* (New York: The Viking Press, 1954); William W. Brickman and Stanley Lehrer, eds., *Automation, Education, and Human Values* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1966); Albert Teich, ed., *Technology and Man's Future* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972).

³⁴ Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills, *Professionalization* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. viii, differentiate between professionalism and professionalization, as follows: "Professionalism as an ideology may induce members of many occupational groups to strive to become professional, but at the same time we can see that many occupational groups that express the ideology of professionalism in reality may not be very advanced in regard to professionalization. Professionalism may be a necessary constituent of professionalization, but professionalism is not a sufficient cause for the entire professionalization process."

³⁵ See Harold L. Wilensky, *Organizational Intelligence: Knowledge and Policy in Government and Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1967); Don K. Price, *The Scientific Estate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

³⁶ Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" p. 138, comes to a similar minimal set of criteria: "(1) the job of the professional is technical—based

³³ See Murray Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action: Mass Arousal and Quiescence* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1971).

³⁴ As Harold L. Wilensky points out, "while there may be a general tendency for occupations to seek professional status, remarkably few of the thousands of occupations in modern society attain it." See "The Professionalization of Everyone?" *American Journal of Sociology*, 70 (September, 1964); quotation is from p. 141.

³⁵ As William J. Goode observes, "the occupational structure of industrial society is not becoming generally more professionalized, even though a higher percentage of the labor force is in occupations that enjoy higher prestige rankings and income and that call themselves 'professions.'" See "The Theoretical Limits of Professionalization," in Etzioni, *Semi-Professions*, p. 267.

formation of the older professions and the appearance of some new professions, responding to changes in scientific or technical knowledge and the demand for new services, are significant social and political processes.

On the other hand, professional skill and expertise are being challenged in these fields by countercurrents to professional approaches released in the name of consumerism, community power, and open access for previously excluded groups, especially women and ethnic minorities.⁴⁰ First, because professionalism is a *political* ideology, it motivates not only those who use it to protect their social status and those who aspire to higher social status, but also those who see in professionalism a defense of the *status quo*.⁴¹ And second, professionalization—the transformation of an occupation into a profession—is a *political* process because it involves, among other things, a quest for statutory legitimacy and related publicly-sanctioned privileges as well as for public acceptance. It is therefore always exposed to the vagaries of politics.

Ironically, both professionalizing and deprofessionalizing tendencies derive from two major changes in the classical relationship between professional and client. First, professionals increasingly work in and for organizations with clients who are not their employers but rather the consumers of their services. And second, professional dominance in the professional's relationship with clients is contained by the appearance of client organizations which presume to speak for individual or collective clients.

A number of derivative consequences follow: As professionals come to work in political milieus, politicization of the professional-client relationship tends to undermine professional autonomy. The challenges encountered from clientele organizations, with their own ideas about the provision of services and performance, tend to undercut professional authority. The need of professionals to protect their own interests may lead to unionization, which, in the view of some, endangers the pro-

fessional norm of commitment to the public interest. The location of professionals in bureaucratic organizations with their tendency to inertia and ritualistic behavior can easily thwart experimentation, innovation, and discretion.⁴² Finally, the built-in obsolescence of professional skills in a rapidly changing scientific and technological culture makes for tensions within and between the professions that weaken professional credibility and legitimacy.

At the same time, society will also be much more demanding in its expectations concerning the delivery of services. The demand for more and better services combined with tendencies toward the deprofessionalization of services, represents a paradox. Rather than improving service, deprofessionalization would have just the opposite effect. This is so because it would involve an altogether irrational reversal of normal expectations. The normal chain follows a sequence in which a client in need of help seeks out a competent specialist whose professional authority he accepts and to whom he grants decisional autonomy. Deprofessionalization reverses this chain, because its main effect is to reduce professional autonomy. But reduced autonomy weakens professional authority; weakened authority devalues professional competence; and devalued professional skill will impoverish the quality of the service that is rendered.

In the perspective of contemporary countertendencies to professionalization, then, the consultative commonwealth would seem to breed the seeds of its own destruction and negate the promises of the skill revolution. Before accepting this dismal prospect, however, some other considerations are in order. One need not be a dialectician to recognize that deprofessionalizing tendencies in turn generate their own countervailing forces. The professions do not passively accept deprofessionalizing challenges, be they internal to a profession or external. They develop adaptive techniques and coping strategies that blunt the impact of deprofessionalization and, in fact, strengthen a profession's authority and autonomy.

The consultative commonwealth, in taking account of deprofessionalizing pressures in its consultative arrangements, also contains within itself the seeds of renewal.⁴³ It differs, then,

⁴² For a balanced view, see Victor A. Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Innovation* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969).

⁴³ For similar optimistic estimates of the future, see Amitai Etzioni, *The Active Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1968); and Warren Breed, *The Self-Guiding Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

on systematic knowledge or doctrine acquired only through long prescribed training. (2) The professional man adheres to a set of professional norms."

⁴⁰ See Frank Bowles and Frank A. DeCosta, *Between Two Worlds: A Profile of Negro Higher Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971); James L. Curtis, *Blacks, Medical Schools, and Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971); Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Woman's Place: Options and Limits of Professional Careers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970).

⁴¹ See Piet Thoenes, *The Elite in the Welfare State* (New York: The Free Press, 1966).

from those constructs of the future society that are based on one sided extrapolations of either tendencies alone, or countertendencies alone, in the formation and circulation of skill elites. These models are deficient in two respects. First, they fail to recognize the dynamics of the polarity principle in the development of societies, especially those in the stage of advanced technology. And second, they neglect the normative capabilities of politics. However, even if deprofessionalizing tendencies are accounted for, it is more probable than not that the future commonwealth will be highly dependent on professional services.

Because increasing demand for services will continue to exceed available supply, the power of skill specialists is always balanced by new demands coming from dissatisfied clientele. If all of this were only a matter of supply and demand in the economic sense, political science would not have much of a contribution to make to its understanding. But the problem of professional services is not just an economic question: it is also an eminently political question, for it involves relationships of authority and autonomy between those who provide and those who demand the services.

To appreciate the political issue, I take a clue from an insightful passage by that wise student of the occupations, Everett C. Hughes. Investigation of the challenges facing the professions and of their responses, Hughes suggested, "is study of politics in the very fundamental sense of studying constitutions. For constitutions are the fundamental relations between the effective estates which make up the body politic."⁴⁴ Professionals are involved in four constitutional relationships—with clients, with organizations, with their own colleagues, and with the larger society. The structures and functions of these relationships and the norms of professional conduct in a particular relationship, for the professional and his significant others, create political issues that differ a good deal from profession to profession, from one institutional setting to another, and from one set of relationships to the next. They should therefore be expected to have different consequences as one projects the consultative commonwealth of the future.

Relationship with Clients

Of all the professional's relationships, that with clients is of fundamental constitutional importance for the evolution of social institutions and public policies. The classical relation-

ship between professional practitioner and client is contractual and in the nature of an exchange. The client takes the initiative in seeking out the professional and, by paying a fee, employs him to perform the desired service. Professions differ in their responses to client initiatives; but, in general, the relationship is assumed to be reciprocal.

As the interaction proceeds, however, the relationship is transformed. Once having "placed himself in the hands" of the professional, the client becomes a dependent. The client is still free to reject the professional's advice and help, but he does so at his own risk and, for all practical purposes, does not do it. Client behavior is important, then, in defining the professional's role. As long as the relationship is built on trust which, in turn, derives from the client's recognition of his own ignorance and the professional's competence, the client is willing to accept the practitioner's decisions concerning his needs. In effect, then, what was initially a functional relationship is transformed into an intrinsically hierarchical relationship. This transformation is overlooked by those who take a benign view of professional expertise as purely functional and who expect the infusion of expertise into the creation and delivery of human services to have *ipso facto* salubrious consequences for society.⁴⁵

Because the relationship between professional and client is one of authority, in a generally democratic culture it is likely to be ambivalent, if not conflictual. Although, in essence, the client surrenders himself to the professional, neither party is fully comfortable. If the resulting ambivalence or conflict remains contained and does not seriously interfere with the service, it is because there also remains, in an open market, the possibility for the client to terminate the consultation or for the professional to withdraw his service. But if the market is restricted or state-controlled, and if free choice of services is impossible, tension and even hostility will characterize the professional-client relationship. Although maldistribution or substantive inadequacy of medical, legal, welfare, or protective services is the manifest target of current discontent, some of the dissatisfaction, especially among those who depend on state-provided and state-controlled services, stems from the tension build into the authority relationship.

Ambivalence and conflict may also arise be-

⁴⁵ See, for instance, Robert E. Lane, "The Decline of Politics and Ideology in a Knowledgeable Society," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 31 (October, 1966), pp. 649-62.

⁴⁴ Hughes, *Men and Their Work*, p. 85.

cause the client's perspective of professional service and what is brought to that perspective may differ from the professional's perspective in the first place. Because of this difference, as Hughes has noted, professionals, although "convinced that they themselves are the best judges, not merely of their own competence but also of what is best for the people for whom they perform services, are required in some measure to yield judgment of what is wanted to these amateurs who receive the services."⁴⁶ Professionals are understandably reluctant to do this. If, therefore, the professional wishes to insist on the correctness of his own judgment, it is incumbent on him to mold client expectations of what constitutes proper service. More often than not, however, in order to make clients accept their authority, professionals rely for persuasion on institutional means, notably the doctrine of "free choice,"⁴⁷ rather than on professional ways.

Reliance on the authority of status exacerbates the professional-client relationship in the contemporary democratizing environment. In the classical model, the environment in which professional-client interaction was played out did not consciously enter the relationship because professional and client could be assumed to share the same environment. Professionals, of middle-class status by definition, either served those above them in the class structure or those on their own level; and if they served the lower classes, their institutional authority was not questioned. Because of social class barriers, professionals found it difficult to empathize with the lower orders of society, even if they served them occasionally in charitable ways. It was the great genius of the Roman Catholic Church that by replicating in its own hierarchy the class structure of society, and by recruiting its servants from among all social classes to serve all social classes, it did not lose contact with its lower-class clientele, even as democratization of the hierarchy provided for mobility within the ranks of the clergy.⁴⁸ Such

rootedness in the total environment was never the case with physicians, lawyers, or professors, even after the social recruitment base was widened, precisely because institutional professionalization caused these professionals to consider themselves, and to be considered, middle-class in status. Identification with the middle class alienated professionals from the lower-class environment.

As a result of the extension of professional services to the working and lower classes, professionals now encounter clients whose perspective is very different from their own. The shock of recognizing the difference in environments is more or less shared in the different professions, and it has led to the belief that in at least some cases and situations not the individual client but his entire social environment requires professional treatment. Credit for discovering the salience of the environment in professional practice must be given to social work, but the discovery has now considerable influence in law, medicine and university teaching. In the academy, retreating into the "ivory tower" is no longer an appropriate professional posture as it is recognized that an environment favorable to the pursuit of knowledge cannot be taken for granted.

The discovery of the environment and the movement toward professional intervention in the environment has created a profound crisis in the professions. If the environment must be changed before the client's problems can be treated, the role of the client in the relationship with the professional comes to be redefined. This is so because clients are themselves a part of the environment and, as a result, are seen as important components in shaping the environment. The client perspective intrudes into the professional-client relationship more than it ever has. Much of the current crisis in professional services turns on the nature of client participation in decisions concerning these services. The professional schools, sensitive to this, increasingly try to give instruction not only in subjects that relate to the environment in which the prospective professional will work, but also in subjects that provide him with skills in organization, negotiation, human relations, and so on.⁴⁹

If the professionals fail to persuade clients of what constitutes proper service, they leave themselves open to client demands of what proper service should be. They allow them-

⁴⁶ Hughes, p. 54.

⁴⁷ This is reinforced by monopolistic practice, the prestige of the profession as a whole and the imputation of competence to the individual consultant. As Eliot Freidson, *Professional Dominance: The Social Structure of Medical Care* (New York: Atherton Press, 1970), pp. 120-1, points out, this doctrine is unsatisfactory because it allows the consultant "to rest on the authority of his professional status without having to try to present persuasive evidence to the client that his findings and advice are correct."

⁴⁸ See Aaron I. Able, ed., *American Catholic Thought on Social Questions* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1968).

⁴⁹ See Edgar H. Schein, *Professional Education: Some New Directions* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972).

selves to be pressured into conformity with client expectations, even if it violates professional criteria of service. As Hughes noted, this is especially likely in periods of social unrest: "In time of crisis, there may arise a general demand for more complete conformity to lay modes of thought, discourse and action."⁵⁰

The pressure for conformity to lay perspectives comes from people who occupy higher- or lower-status positions in society than does the professional himself. The legal profession, itself highly stratified, is especially exposed to client perspectives.⁵¹ In the academy some professors yield to student pressures for conformity to their interpretations of what learning and knowledge are all about by lowering standards and "being with it," sometimes assuming student styles and demeanor. Deprofessionalization has become a burning issue in social work. As one critic writes,

the new activist spirit in social work downgrades professional practice, which is ineffective in dealing with social problems. In place of professionalism the activists offer the idea that revolution will create change more rapidly than social work practice, which may be correct. But this is not what the profession prepares one to do, nor should it.⁵²

Professional consultants at the highest levels of policy-making often conform to policymakers' wishes and predilections, permitting their knowledge to be used for societal objectives that from a professional perspective may be undesirable.⁵³

Perhaps the problem of differing perspectives between professional and client is insoluble. If so, there will always be an element of conflict in the relationship. If the professional only relies on his authority without further efforts at persuasion, the client is in no position to evalu-

⁵⁰ Hughes, p. 83.

⁵¹ See Jerome E. Carlin, *Lawyers on Their Own* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1962); Jack Ladinsky, "Careers of Lawyers, Law Practice, and Legal Institutions," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 28 (February, 1963), pp. 47-54; Erwin O. Smigel, *The Wall Street Lawyer* (New York: The Free Press, 1964).

⁵² Harry Specht, "The Deprofessionalization of Social Work," *Social Work*, 17 (March, 1972); quotation is on p. 6.

⁵³ Although this theme has much agitated the academic professions in recent years, it is not especially new. Alexander H. Leighton, *Human Relations in a Changing World* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1949), p. 128, reports a Washington saying that "the administrator uses social science the way a drunk uses a lamppost, for support rather than illumination." See especially Gene M. Lyons, *The Uneasy Partnership: Social Science and the Federal Government in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969).

ate the grounds of the professional's advice. Under these conditions professionals will jealously guard their monopoly on expert knowledge and status, but clients will not comply with professional advice and, in some cases, they will revolt against the prescriptions of the experts. Most recently there has been a trend toward reducing professional autonomy and enabling clients to enforce professional responsibility in the provision of services that has hitherto been the professions' own prerogative. Professionals in turn resent lay interference, especially when, as in teaching or librarianship, clients can bring pressure on policy-making elected boards. In this context, present trends toward unionization of professionals takes on an aspect that goes beyond the bread-and-butter unionism of old, for it is as much a matter of politics as of economics. If professionals feel that laymen make undue demands in areas of competence they consider their own, the collective withdrawal of services—traditionally frowned upon as "unprofessional conduct"—is a very real possibility.⁵⁴

All of these developments could have possibly disastrous consequences for professional service. If the client cannot distinguish between the professional's authority that is based on expertise and his authority that is based on status or power, the basic trust on which the professional-client relationship is founded becomes eroded. In revolting against the professional's status and power, however, the client also revolts, if inadvertently, against professional knowledge and competence.

Relationship with Organizations

The professional increasingly encounters the client not in private but in organizational settings.⁵⁵ The original professions—clergy, law, academy and medicine—had been characterized as *freie Berufe* or "free callings." Freedom referred to independence from organizational constraints. Although clergymen and academics depended for support on church and university, the professions were assumed to be free in two senses: first, the professional's behavior was guided by norms created by himself and designed to protect him against external pressures

⁵⁴ Michael H. Moskow and Kenneth McLennan, "Teacher Negotiations and School Decentralization," in *Community Control of Schools*, ed. Henry M. Levin (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1970), pp. 191-215.

⁵⁵ For a variety of perspectives, see Barney G. Glaser, ed., *Organizational Careers: A Sourcebook for Theory* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968). See also F. William Howton, *Functionaries* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969).

—the professions enjoyed autonomy; and second, the professional worked alone with individuals by applying his best professional judgment and was unencumbered by responsibility to an employing organization—the professions had authority.

The professional's work today is likely to take place in organizational and institutional settings that restrict his freedom more than was the case before the skill revolution reached its apogee.⁵⁶ The professional in these settings is subject to two modes of authority—organizational-hierarchical authority in the hands of administrative officials, and the authority of skill and competence exercised by professional colleagues, both inside and outside the organization.⁵⁷ The two forms of authority are conflicting and make for stress and strain in professional conduct vis-à-vis administrators, colleagues, and clients.⁵⁸ As a result, "disjunctive processes" are widespread.⁵⁹ Speaking of the academy, for instance, Logan Wilson notes:

Even though academicians are professional men and women enjoying a high degree of independence as specialists per se, they function within an institutional framework which evaluates, ranks, and rewards them in terms of their presumed value to the organization. The whole process is so complex that it is inevitably a source of misunderstanding, and the results are unavoidably a further source of real or alleged grievance to some individuals.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ By 1962, it was possible to speak of a "knowledge industry," so pervasive had knowledge making become in the American economy. See Fritz Machlup, *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962). Also: D. N. Chorafas, *The Knowledge Revolution: An Analysis of the International Brain Market* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968).

⁵⁷ Robert L. Peabody, *Organizational Authority* (New York: Atherton Press, 1964), pp. 1–43.

⁵⁸ See Harold L. Wilensky, *Intellectuals in Labor Unions* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1956); William Kornhauser, *Scientists in Industry: Conflict and Accommodation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962); Barney G. Glaser, *Organizational Scientists: Their Professional Careers* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1964); Warren O. Hagstrom, *The Scientific Community* (New York: Basic Books, 1965); Spencer Klaw, *The New Brahmins: Scientific Life in America* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1968); Walter Hirsch, *Scientists in American Society* (New York: Random House, 1968).

⁵⁹ The president-elect of the American Chemical Society has complained recently that the first loyalty of chemists, seventy per cent of whom are employed in industry, is to their employers. He feels that for the chemist to discharge his responsibility to society, he must have a "professional atmosphere where [he] will identify with his profession rather than his employer." *Science*, 175 (February 4, 1972); quotation is on p. 501.

⁶⁰ Logan Wilson, "Disjunctive Processes in an Academic Milieu," in *Sociological Theory, Values, and*

If this is true in the highly permissive context of the university, it is surely even truer in the highly organized contexts of public or private bureaucracies.

If the professional's identification and commitment are stronger than his organizational loyalty,⁶¹ rather than being threatened by bureaucracy, it may be professionalism that disturbs administrative ways of doing things. Hierarchical authority in administrative decision making is being undermined, Francis E. Rourke suggests, by "the growing power of skilled professions in the work of public bureaucracy. . . . Professionalism is rapidly succeeding politics as the principal source of decentralization of authority in American bureaucracy. A subordinate who is master of esoteric skills is no easier to dominate than one backed by a strongly entrenched group of political supporters."⁶²

This transformation is by no means self-evident, because the problem of coordinating specialized expertise in organizations was long obscured by the ready availability of what Max Weber called "legal-rational authority" or bureaucracy.⁶³ The most obvious answer to the question of how best to coordinate specializations leads to the bureaucratic model that stresses rationalization, routinization, and standardization. Despite wide variations in practice, the organizational settings in which professionals work—hospitals, law firms, government bureaus, research laboratories, corporation offices, labor unions, religious organizations, universities, engineering firms, and so on—remain basically bureaucratic. What is happening, how-

Sociocultural Change, ed. Edward A. Tiryakian (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 293.

⁶¹ See Dwaine Marvick, *Career Perspectives in a Bureaucratic Setting* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1954), chapter 4. See also Alvin W. Gouldner, "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Toward an Analysis of Latent Social Roles," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2 (December, 1957) 281–306 and 2 (March, 1958), 444–80.

⁶² Francis E. Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1969), p. 105. Because he sees professionalism in government as a political force, yet insists that "the importance of preserving the independence and integrity of certain kinds of expertise in government is thus very great," Rourke concludes that "the need for professional autonomy begins to assert itself in all phases of bureaucratic policy-making" (p. 110). Rourke concedes that professionals are no more immune from political pressure than other public officials and suggests that public policy making in bureaucratic settings "becomes in effect a mixed system of politics and professionalism" (p. 111).

⁶³ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 329–41.

ever, is an interpenetration of bureaucratization and professionalization—"the culture of bureaucracy invades the professions; the culture of professionalism invades organizations."⁶⁴

In the broadest historical perspective, skill revolution, professionalization, and bureaucracy are symptoms of the same secular trend in Western society which Talcott Parsons describes as making for rationality, impersonality, functional specificity, and universalism.⁶⁵

If bureaucratic means of coordination had not been as well developed as they were when the skill revolution reached the professions, consultative modes of coordination as immanent properties of professionalism might have emerged sooner than they did. However, bureaucratization and professionalization are possibly isomorphic in structure and characterized by convergent tendencies with respect to authority—"professional authority is more similar to bureaucratic authority than is generally recognized. . . ."⁶⁶ While it is difficult empirically to disentangle the two phenomena because of their interdetermination,⁶⁷ the isomorphism between bureaucratic and professional authority, if true, casts doubt on some romantic notions that organization theorists have about the superiority of functional over hierarchical forms of coordination. If only professional or functional criteria were dominant in organization, bureaucratic pathologies like arbitrariness, unimaginativeness, authoritarianism, rigidity, and so forth, would miraculously yield to creativity, flexibility, involvement, and so on.⁶⁸ That the

professions themselves may be tainted by bureaucratic tendencies is, therefore, a sobering thought.

In addition, the organizational context of professional practice is a source of deprofessionalizing tendencies that are as yet little understood. Deprofessionalization, in this connection, means loss of professional identity. There are two contradictory possibilities. On the one hand, loss of professional identity may be due to initial overidentification with and subsequent overreaction against the organization. This makes it difficult to separate out the alleged evils of bureaucracy from the alleged evils of professionalism. Attacks within the professions on "professionalism" which is sometimes seen, probably rightly, as a conservative force, are easily misplaced. At least it is not at all clear whether they are directed at the bureaucratic or at the professional component of the organization that is seen as requiring change if policy formulation and human services are to be improved.

Deprofessionalization in this sense has become a very real issue, though it varies a good deal from profession to profession, depending to a large degree on a profession's involvement in public policy as a condition for the realization of its professional goals. For instance, a profession like social work, which is directly affected by public policy, has a strong stake in welfare policies and public financial support. Attacks on professionalism have become an almost endemic feature of discourse in social work. In teaching at the primary and secondary levels, the long quest for professional status seems to have abated in recent years as teachers turn to unionization rather than professionalization as a means to improve their working conditions, raise their social status, and influence public policy.⁶⁹ By contrast, however, technical professionals are reported to evince "a complete lack of consensus on what needs to be done," with unionizers in one camp and "professional purists" in the other.⁷⁰

On the other hand, loss of professional identity may be due to an inability to discover a specific client in organizational settings. A person's sense of identity is in no small part determined for him by the significant others with

⁶⁴ Wilensky, "Professionalization," p. 150. T. H. Marshall, *Class Citizenship*, p. 171, articulated the same idea as early as 1939 when he wrote that in modern democratic societies "State and professions are being assimilated to one another. This is not happening through the absorption of the professions by the State, but by both of them moving from opposite directions to meet in a middle position."

⁶⁵ Talcott Parsons, "The Professions and Social Structure," in *Essays in Sociological Theory* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1954), pp. 34-49.

⁶⁶ Freidson, *Professional Dominance*, p. 211. This is Freidson's central argument in analyzing professional dominance and the ordering of the health services; see especially pp. 127-64.

⁶⁷ There may be more than meets the eye in all this, for it has also been suggested that professional authority, in addition to being based on knowledge and competence, "does rest to some extent on tradition," and "to some degree the professional's authority is charismatic. . . ." See Nina Toren, "Semi-Professionalism and Social Work: A Theoretical Perspective," in *The Semi-Professions and Their Organization*, ed. Etzioni, p. 152.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Peter Blau, *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959); Victor Thompson, *Modern Organization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).

⁶⁹ See Harmon Zeigler, *The Political Life of American Teachers* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967); Joseph W. Gambino, "Faculty Unionism: From Theory to Practice," *Industrial Relations*, 11 (February, 1972), pp. 1-17.

⁷⁰ Deborah Shapley, "Unionization: Scientists, Engineers Mull over One Alternative," *Science*, 176 (May 12, 1972), 618-21, at 618.

whom he interacts. Loss of professional identity is inevitable if the professional cannot identify the clients whom he is supposed to serve.

In the classical model of the profession, the professional was expected to serve a particular client, usually in a face-to-face encounter, and by serving the client to serve, in a vague way, society. As long as client interests and societal interests could be assumed to be the same, there seemed to be no problem. Again, this consonance varied from profession to profession. Physicians, for instance, had little trouble in this respect, at least until recently. Health was a value on which a social consensus existed, and in treating his patient, the physician was serving society. Today the conflict over abortion and the disagreement about the artificial prolongation of life have created considerable affective dissonance about the value of life. Similarly, while justice is presumably the consensual aim of the legal profession, it has long been recognized that what may be good for the lawyer's client may not advance the best interests of society.

The complexity of modern social and technological problems defies the simplicity of the traditional model. "Client uncertainty" is so pervasive that it not only makes for deprofessionalization but prevents some aspiring occupations from becoming professionalized. Who, for instance, is the client of the corporate manager who so desperately seeks professional status? Is it the employing corporation, the stockholders, the consumers, or society at large?⁷¹ University professors are highly sensitive to client uncertainty. Who are their clients? The students whom they teach, the colleagues who benefit from their research, the governing board who pays their salaries, the publishers for whom they write texts, the government agency or business with whom they consult, or society at large? Client uncertainty obscures what providing a service means, and it suggests the great potential for conflict in the provision of services.

In some circumstances, the professional serving various clients is under enormous pressure to help some but not other clients. University professors have been subjected to much pressure, if not force, to refuse service to some clients whose policies or goals other clients dis-

approve.⁷² This type of pressure for *selective* service undermines professional autonomy, and without autonomy—the right to decide whom to serve—the very concept of profession is meaningless.

Relationship with Colleagues

The professional's best defense against client uncertainty caused by organizational complexity is his identification with colleagues. Strong collegial ties are an important requisite of professional autonomy. Yet the professional's relationship with colleagues is by no means always simple. It is *relatively* simple if two professional colleagues enter a reciprocally advantageous consultative relationship, for it is mutually deferential and consensual in the sense that both partners share a common perspective. As a result, control problems like those arising in the professional-client relationship because of the confusion between the authority of expertise and the authority of status do not occur. The ideally limiting case seems to be the kind of relationship that exists when one scientist consults another. Indeed, Hughes and Parsons suggest that there is a basic structural difference between science and profession which makes for differing authority relationships between scientific colleagues, on the one hand, and professional colleagues, on the other.⁷³ It seems preferable to make this role differentiation less sharp. The university-based scholar in his role as teacher stands in a professional relationship to his colleagues because they share a student clientele; the practicing attorney sometimes stands in a scholarly relationship to his colleagues at the bar or on the bench.

Nevertheless, as an analytic distinction the differentiation between the scholar-scientist and the professional with clients is suggestive; it calls attention to different control mechanisms and consultative relationships. Scientists control each other directly and publicly. They do so by frank and open reporting of the assumptions that go into the gathering of evidence, of the methods used in analyzing the evidence, and of the evidence itself.⁷⁴ Scientific associations are

⁷² See Sanford H. Kadish, "The Theory of the Profession and its Predicament," *AAUP Bulletin*, 58 (June, 1972), 120-5; Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Politics of Academia," in *Perspectives on Campus Tensions*, ed. David C. Nichols (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1970), pp. 85-118.

⁷³ Everett C. Hughes, "Psychology: Science and/or Profession," *The American Psychologist*, 7 (August, 1952), 441-3; Talcott Parsons, "Some Problems Confronting Sociology as a Profession," *American Sociological Review*, 24 (August, 1959), 547-559.

⁷⁴ Eliot Freidson, "The Impurity of Professional

⁷¹ See David W. Ewing, *The Managerial Mind* (New York: The Free Press, 1964); William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956); Roy Lewis and Rosemary Stewart, *The Managers: A New Examination of the English, German and American Executive* (New York: Mentor Books, 1961).

primarily learned societies whose principal goals are to publish journals and hold meetings in order to facilitate scientific communication and exchange.⁷⁵ Although there are standards as to what is good or bad scientific work, there is no such thing as a code of ethics for scientists in their role as scientists. Of course, when scientists become policy advisers or perform services for public or private organizations, they take on the professional role and come to be concerned about "proper professional conduct."

In contrast to pure scientific knowledge, much professional knowledge is a kind of tacit know-how that cannot be readily communicated and evaluated and that may even be secret or confidential.⁷⁶ Only extraordinary cases of abuse in professional behavior generally come within the purview of collegial control. Because direct control as in relationships among scientists is not available, the professions seek to maintain professional standards through their organizations, codes of ethics, and government-sanctioned licensing. Yet the professional control mechanisms are weak. Although holding a professional license implies professional authenticity, codes of ethics are poorly enforced,⁷⁷ and membership in professional associations, being voluntary, is far from universal.⁷⁸

Authority." in *Institutions and the Person*, ed. Howard S. Becker et al. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968), p. 26, points out that if this is so, it suggests an "unemphasized point, namely, that the type of influence or authority exerted by the professional on his clients must be quite different from that exerted by the scientist on his colleagues—that professional and scientific 'authority' are different even though profession and science are both characterized by special technical competence."

⁷⁵ Of course, professional associations like the American Bar Association or the American Medical Association are also devoted to the promotion of knowledge by way of learned meetings and journals. In turn, purely scientific societies share some of the characteristics of the professional associations. This is precisely the reason why the distinction between science and profession is at best of limited analytic value.

⁷⁶ Wilensky, "Professionalization," p. 149, also remarks that "the tacit component of their knowledge base is a seldom-recognized cause of the tenacious conservatism of the established professions."

⁷⁷ Jerome E. Carlin, *Lawyers' Ethics: A Survey of the New York City Bar* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1966), p. 170, estimates that "only about 2 per cent of the lawyers who violate generally accepted ethical norms are processed, and fewer than 0.2 per cent are officially sanctioned." If lawyers are so reluctant to enforce their ethics, other professions are likely to be even more lax.

⁷⁸ See Gilb, *Hidden Hierarchies*, pp. 117–28. Gilb reports that in 1960 less than half of attorneys belonged to the American Bar Association, and only 42

A profession as a whole, then, is by no means a community of like-minded equals or an *imperium in imperio* as is sometime claimed. It is a complex aggregate of skill specialists working in a great variety of setting and differentiated not only in function but also in esteem, status, authority and influence.⁷⁹ Specialization and subspecialization in the wake of the skill revolution accentuate these tendencies.

Stratification within and between the professions, as in all status systems, restricts vertical communication. As a result, although interprofessional collaboration may be needed—as in the modern hospital where physicians depend on nurses, technicians, pharmacists and other specialists—professionals of higher status may not get the cooperation they need from lower status professionals.⁸⁰ Stratification reduces society's potential for consultation even if there is growing professionalization of human services.

Whether efforts to democratize the professions will improve the delivery of services is an open question. It is probably true, as Cynthia F. Epstein observes in discussing the entry of women into the professions, that

many of today's gifted young professionals are no longer eager to enter the traditional inner corps of the professions. . . . This seems to be particularly so in law and medicine, where there are signs of a breakdown in the collegial structure and an increasing challenge to the traditional insistence on recruits of particular types.⁸¹

But this may actually reinforce already existing oligarchical tendencies in the professions. If the professional associations are to be the guardians of professional standards and interests, those best qualified in terms of professional rather than extraneous criteria will continue to emerge as professional leaders. This

per cent of the teachers to the National Education Association. Only 45 per cent of America's 344,823 doctors were reported to be dues-paying members of the American Medical Association in June, 1972, in *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 17, 1972), p. 5.

⁷⁹ Wilbert E. Moore, "But Some are More Equal than Others," *American Sociological Review*, 28 (February, 1963), 13–18.

⁸⁰ See William A. Glaser, *Social Settings and Medical Organization: A Cross-National Study of the Hospital* (New York: Atherton Press, 1970); Eliot Freidson, ed., *The Hospital in Modern Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1963); Charles Perrow, "Hospitals: Technology, Structure, and Goals," in James G. March, ed., *Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1965), 910–71.

⁸¹ Cynthia F. Epstein, "Encountering the Male Establishment: Sex-Status Limits on Women's Careers in the Professions," *American Journal of Sociology*, 75 (May, 1970), 968–82, at 981.

will mean, as Roberto Michels would predict, that associational oligarchs will continue to rule, though their ideological blinders may be different from those worn by their predecessors. If the leadership of the professions is to constitute an influential elite of merit, however, it will emerge not from the application of plebiscitary techniques to professional control but from consultative understandings and arrangements. As Wilbert E. Moore has put it well, "the criteria in organizational advancement tend to be mixed, and, as in all representational systems, the very attributes that distinguish a man from his colleagues may set him apart from their interests, rather than representing them with exceptional skill."⁸²

Relationship with Society

Society's dependence on specialized and skilled professional services is balanced, in a constitutional sense, by the professions' dependence on society for accreditation. Accreditation, a profession's success in having "license" to perform its services, is contingent on society's satisfaction with professional performance. Involved is not just the legal permission to practice a trade, with its complementary prohibition to others who do not have the requisite skills; also involved is the profession's legitimacy to carry out a "mandate" for society. This means that only the profession, and no one else, can collectively presume "to tell society what is good and right for the individual and for society at large in some aspect of life."⁸³

The relationship between profession and society is in a deepening crisis. At issue is the profession's authority within its area of competence. Authority is a precondition for the exercise of the profession's mandate to determine what is in the best interests of society as a kind of collective client. At issue also is the profession's autonomy from societal constraints which, in this connection, means that professional performance can only be judged by the profession itself, for only the profession is qualified to do so.⁸⁴ Professional authority and autonomy are threatened by a number of developments over which a profession has little control. One development, it was noted, is the organizational context in which professionals work, and in which the profession's functional and the organization's hierarchical authority

come into conflict. Another development is a generally more competitive environment. An old profession may encounter competition from new professions or semi-professions whose work is adjacent or overlapping. In the case of the legal profession, for instance, "tax accountants, trust officers in banks, insurance adjusters, marital counselors, labor arbitrators, and a host of others are engaged in matters that are in part legal."⁸⁵ What is challenged is the profession's claim to exclusive mastery of a body of unique knowledge and related skills.

Finally, professional services come to be seen not as purchasable private goods but as public goods with accessibility to all as a matter of right. Clients have come to the realization that professionals not only do things *for* them but also *to* them.⁸⁶ This varies of course considerably from client to client. While the big Wall Street law firm can do little to its corporate client but give it bad advice, the social welfare worker has almost absolute control over the poor welfare mother on relief.⁸⁷ While the corporation has effective sanctions over the law firm, the solitary welfare recipient has practically none. Like corporate clients, organizations of individual clients (e.g., welfare rights organizations) have come to demand a voice in the professional decisions affecting them.

This demand jeopardizes one of the professions' most cherished prerogatives—the authority to determine client needs. To protect this prerogative, the professions have always sought to justify themselves in terms of the mandate given them by society. Indeed, the mandate of service in the public interest more than authoritative expertise has been the justification for insisting on autonomy. Yet a profession's mandate is always probationary, in very much the same sense in which an elected representative's term of office is probationary.

A profession's persistence as a "community within a community" is contingent, as any mandate is contingent, on continued ability to satisfy the public trust placed in it as the custodian of esoteric competences.⁸⁸ At least until recently, the professions were given this public trust. The legal profession was expected to be directly concerned with the administration of

⁸² Moore, p. 112.

⁸³ Hughes, "License and Mandate," pp. 69–70.

⁸⁴ For some of the problems involved, see Michael Lipsky, "Toward a Theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy," in Michael W. Kirst, *State, School, and Politics* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Company, 1972), pp. 205–12.

⁸⁵ William J. Goode, "Community within Community: The Professions," *American Sociological Review*, 22 (April, 1967), 194–200.

⁸² Wilbert E. Moore, *The Professions: Roles and Rules* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1970), p. 167.

⁸³ Hughes, "License and Mandate," p. 79.

⁸⁴ Goode, "Theoretical Limits," in Etzioni, ed., p. 291.

justice and relevant legislation; and the medical profession was expected to concern itself with the organization, distribution and remuneration of medical services.

Their public roles expose the professions to public criticism, and their public mandate has come to be questioned. The professions are accused of not meeting societal expectations of proper policy or service, and their role as agents of the public interest in particular areas of policy or service is being attacked on the ground that they have been more self-serving than other-serving.⁸⁹ This criticism, Parsons suggests, tends to confuse private motivation with the institutional setting that differentiates professionals from those who, like businessmen, pursue private gain.⁹⁰ But the professions organize themselves as interest-group associations in the same way as do labor unions or business organizations. And although one should not confuse a profession as such with its associational instruments, the professions have been no less "selfish," whatever this means, than other interest groups.⁹¹ Public sensitivity to the professions' political involvement in favor of their own rather than public interests is widespread.

That they are in trouble as trustees of the public interest has not gone unnoticed in the professions themselves. How to respond to societal distrust of their integrity proves to be perplexing. Investigations conducted at Stanford over the last few years concerning the political behavior and attitudes of professionals in particular institutional settings or with respect to particular public issues, indicate much political ambivalence within the professions themselves.⁹² In the ministry a "new breed" of activ-

ist clergymen feel that the churches should give forceful leadership on public issues.⁹³ City planners have come to realize that they "must be able to persuade, bargain and compromise, lest decision-makers listen to those who are better able to persuade, bargain and compromise."⁹⁴ Law students evidently continue to prefer careers in the private sector to careers in the public sector, but extracurricular experience may be an increasingly important factor in determining their choice.⁹⁵ Countergroups in law and medicine organize law communes and people's clinics that challenge the traditional priorities of these professions.⁹⁶ Policy-oriented scientists "go public" and expand the scope of conflict over issues of public policy.⁹⁷ Journalists seem to be quite sensitive to the problem of how their reporting the news affects the success or failure of protest groups in different fields of welfare.⁹⁸ Black professionals are concerned about the effect of their work environment, whether predominantly black or white, on their leadership potential in home communities.⁹⁹ All of these studies reveal tensions that arise out of the relationship between the professions' presumed obligations to the public interest, their investment with a public trust, and the increasing criticism of their work both inside and outside the professions.

The Stanford studies show that ritualistic invocation of the professions' mandate to serve the public interest is not sufficient to help them out of their quandary. For it is the definition of the public interest that is the quandary. The problem of definition is of course not unique to the professions.¹⁰⁰ In the absence of an ac-

⁸⁹ Harold E. Quinley, *The Prophetic Clergy: Social Activism among Protestant Ministers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).

⁹⁴ J. Vincent Buck, *City Planners: The Dilemma of Professionals in a Political Milieu* (unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1972).

⁹⁵ Philip R. Lochner, Jr., *Learning to be a Lawyer: Homogenization and Differentiation into Public and Private Sector Professional Roles* (unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1971).

⁹⁶ Ruth Ann Becker, *Potential Groups: An Exploration of the Conditions and Processes of Group Formation among Doctors and Lawyers* (Ph.D. dissertation in process, Stanford University).

⁹⁷ Robert O'Connor, *Scientists in Politics: A Study in Political Participation* (Ph.D. dissertation in process, Stanford University).

⁹⁸ Edie Goldenberg, *Politics and the Press: A Study of the Access of Welfare Groups to the Boston Metropolitan Press* (Ph.D. dissertation in process, Stanford University).

⁹⁹ Ellen B. Levine, *Role Conflicts among Black Businessmen* (Ph.D. dissertation in process, Stanford University).

¹⁰⁰ See Glendon Schubert, *The Public Interest* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), p. 11: "Most of the literature characteristically tends either to define the public

⁸⁹ Marshall, *Class, Citizenship*, p. 165, has argued that the professions "have not always struck a true balance between loyalty to the client and loyalty to the community, and they have sometimes treated loyalty to the profession as an end rather than as a means to the fulfillment of other loyalties. They are often accused of neglecting the public welfare."

⁹⁰ Parsons, "The Professions," p. 36: "Perhaps even it is not mainly a difference of typical motives at all, but one of the different situations in which much the same commonly human motives operate. Perhaps the acquisitiveness of modern business is institutional rather than motivational."

⁹¹ Gilb, *Hidden Hierarchies*, David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, second ed., 1971), pp. 93-8, 168-9, 249-50, 452-3.

⁹² These investigations were made possible in part by a training grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, in part by support for dissertation research from the National Science Foundation, and in part by fellowship support from the Social Science Research Council, the Danforth Foundation, and the Mabelle McLeod Lewis Research Fund.

cepted formal definition, contextual treatment seems most appropriate.

The context in which most professionals worked was long pervaded, and to a large extent still is pervaded, by the ethos of social and economic individualism. This ethos set limits to the services which professionals sought to render and were expected to render. In effect, service in the public interest was defined in terms of those who could afford professional services. This meant that the professions largely served the interests of the affluent society rather than the interests of what Michael Harrington has called "the other America."¹⁰¹ The professions were satisfied that they were serving the public interest if their services met "effective demand," that is, the demand of those who could purchase their services.

The definition of professional service in the public interest is changing, from an essentially economic to a social-moral content. The new definition refers to "unmet needs" rather than to effective demand. It is an open question whether the new definition will help the professions overcome the crisis in their relationship with society. On the one hand, if the professions succeed, by their own practices and the policies they are able to influence, in broadening the range and improving the quality of the services they provide for society, their claim to autonomy is strengthened rather than weakened. This is perhaps something that the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association have yet to learn.

On the other hand, the notion of unmet needs is sufficiently ambiguous to create new troubles. The substitution of unmet needs for effective demand gives the impression that one is somehow dealing with a self-evident, readily usable standard for judging professional performance. In fact, just the opposite is the case. Effective demand is an economic market phenomenon that, within its defined parameters, can be measured; unmet need is a moral criterion that is by no means easy to operationalize. In general, unmet needs become visible only when those whose needs are not met rise to the occasion, as happened in the 'sixties. Insofar, however, as the professions accept unmet needs as a criterion by which to judge the adequacy of human services, they also seem to admit that

clients have a right to participate in the making of policies that had previously been their own professional mandate.¹⁰²

Protest and Response

In fact, what clients articulate are not unmet needs but unmet wants. Client participation in decisions appropriately within the province of the professions violates the constitutional basis of the professional-client relationship. This basis cannot be democratic if professional service is to have any meaning. As T. H. Marshall has pointed out, "authority passes to the professional, who must give [the client] what he needs, rather than what he wants. The client, unlike the customer, is not always right."¹⁰³ If the protest movement of recent years is not to be a mere "revolution for the hell of it," its influence on the delivery of human services depends, as Michael Lipsky has persuasively shown, on increasing the bargaining ability of powerless groups in the arena of politics by building viable organizations and harnessing stable political resources. Protest as such is symptomatic of unmet needs, but it can only articulate demands.¹⁰⁴ It therefore does not absolve the professions from their responsibility to determine needs. Whatever other functions are served by protest, demands for community control and client participation in *professional* decision making are probably more a distraction than a remedy.¹⁰⁵ Community power as a panacea for solving the problems of professional service is at best ironic, for local sovereignty—whether in the name of the feudal prince or the common people—has always been a shibboleth of conservatism and reaction. As Wilbert Moore remarks, "decentralization does not end oligarchy; it only dissipates and therefore in a sense extends it."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² See Herbert Kaufman, "Administrative Decentralization and Political Power," *Public Administration Review*, 29 (January-February, 1969), 3-14.

¹⁰³ Marshall, *Class, Citizenship*, p. 164.

¹⁰⁴ See Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," *American Political Science Review*, 62 (December, 1968), 1144-58; James Q. Wilson, "The Strategy of Protest: Problems of Negro Civic Action," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 3 (September, 1961), 291-303.

¹⁰⁵ See Bertram M. Beck, "Community Control: A Distraction, Not an Answer," *Social Work*, 14 (October, 1969), 14-20. For an opposite point of view, see Marilyn Gittell, "Professionalism and Public Participation in Educational Policy Making: New York City, A Case Study," *Public Administration Review*, 27 (September, 1967), 237-51. See also Henry M. Levin, ed., *Community Control of Schools* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1970).

¹⁰⁶ Moore, p. 169. See Theodore J. Lowi, *The Politics of Disorder* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 80: "Decentralization through delegation of power

interest as a universal, in terms so broad that it encompasses almost any type of specific decision, or else to particularize the concept, by identifying it with the most specific and discrete of policy norms and actions, to the extent that it has no general significance."

¹⁰¹ Michael Harrington, *The Other America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962).

In the perspective of professionalism, the protest movement attacks something endemic in professional service. Hughes has pointed out that "in many occupations, the workers or practitioners (to use both a lower and a higher status term) deal routinely with what are emergencies to the people who receive their services."¹⁰⁷ If this is true of normal situations, it is even truer when service must be rendered to mass publics under bureaucratic conditions in times of crisis. The client's feeling of being neglected is not something easily dealt with. Although consultative forms of interaction between spokesmen for professional services and organized clienteles may be conducive to mutual understanding of this dilemma, it would be utopian under modern organizational conditions to expect an easy solution of the routine-versus-emergency problem.

Very much the same can be said of another problem to which Hughes has called attention—the problem of mistakes and failure. Sensitivity to the possibility of mistakes and failure is common to both the social worker in a local welfare agency and the economist on the President's Council of Economic Advisers. Mistakes harm both the professional and his client; the absence of clearcut criteria of success or failure makes the problem all the more perplexing. Clients tend to confuse the successful conclusion of the service with good professional work. For this reason professionals insist on peer judgment of their performance. The medical quack, the shyster lawyer, and the grandstanding professor will please their customers but not their colleagues. To protect themselves against mistakes, the professions place great emphasis on routine, ritual, etiquette, and approved ways of doing things. Referral to and consultation among colleagues serve the same function of minimizing risk. In this connection, the division of labor is not just technical but also psychological.

The volatility and sometimes violence of what has been called "the revolt of the client" are for some professionals traumatic experiences. Their consequences are difficult to foresee because it is impossible to separate out long-term secular changes in the professions from changes in response to immediate social pressures. For a time it appeared that the pro-

merely meant conversion from government control to a far more irresponsible, enigmatic, unpredictable group control."

¹⁰⁷ Hughes, "License and Mandate," p. 54. As Hughes continues, the professional's "very competence comes from having dealt with a thousand cases of what the client likes to consider his unique trouble."

test movement, as two sociologists concluded in 1969, "attacks the basic legitimacy of the occupational and institutional claims to power of the professional," on a number of grounds: "1) the expertise of the practitioners is inadequate, 2) their claims to altruism are unfounded, 3) the organizational delivery system supporting their authority is defective and insufficient, and 4) this system is too efficient and, exceeds the appropriate bounds of its power."¹⁰⁸ Although this funeral oration was probably premature, the paradox of the last two points calls attention to at least one important problematic aspect of the skill revolution's impact on the provision of professional services in modern technological society.

Self-criticism within the professions has long been directed toward the growing fragmentation of services due to specialization and sub-specialization.¹⁰⁹ The fragmentation of service is seen as a source of client discontent because it seems to depersonalize and standardize the professional-client relationship, making the client feel that he is merely an assembly of parts rather than a whole person with interrelated problems requiring an integrative solution. At least some professionals have therefore called for holistic treatment of the client that would restore his dignity as a whole person.¹¹⁰

Precisely the opposite argument has also been made. The protest movement is seen as opposed to restoring the client as a whole person through institutional co-ordinating mechanisms. "The client seems to be rejecting what he considers institutionalized meddling under the cover of professional concern," write Haug and Sussman; and they continue:

Outreach programs from the client perspective have become out-grab. Students want to organize their own courses and call in the professional as a consultant. The "whole man" approach in medicine infringes on areas of social relations where clients consider themselves competent; patients want to turn to the doctor when in trouble, but not be

¹⁰⁸ Marie R. Haug and Marvin B. Sussman, "Professional Autonomy and the Revolt of the Client," *Social Problems*, 17 (Fall, 1969), at p. 156.

¹⁰⁹ Alexander M. Carr-Saunders, "Metropolitan Conditions and Traditional Professional Relationships," in Robert M. Fisher, ed., *The Metropolis in Modern Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1955), p. 283, writes: "As a consequence of the trend toward specialization, the professional man no longer takes a comprehensive interest in his client. He feels that he has no general responsibility for those who come under his care, and the personal relationship between practitioner and client is weakened."

¹¹⁰ See Helen Merrell Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity* (New York: Science Editions, 1965).

bothered otherwise. This suggests that the client is demanding the right to define the problem, and then call upon the professional only as a specialist in a narrow domain.¹¹¹

Though their evidence is flimsy, Haug and Sussman present a rather ingenious theory about the consequences of the client revolt as they describe it:

. . . since the major thrust of the client revolt has been against the institutional concomitants of professionalism, including the tendency of the professional to extend his authority beyond the limits of his legitimated special expertise, one might predict a narrowing of professional authority to the most limited and esoteric elements of his knowledge base. This is unlikely to mean, despite client-revolt rhetoric, that the professional will fully lose the core of his autonomy, the right to define the nature of the client's problem. Even if the client exercised his right to pick and choose the time and place of his use of the professional's expertise, once the client enters the interaction, the expert's knowledge of cause-effect will permit him to diagnose and respectify the original complaint or need into his terms.¹¹²

These analysts conclude, therefore, that the tension between professional and society can lead to deprofessionalization, but that "what the client demands—the professional as a limited consultant—may be less a curse than a blessing in disguise."¹¹³

There is something comforting in this theory. On the one hand, it does not contradict the skill revolution hypothesis of progressive specialization; on the other hand, it anticipates changes in the professional-client relationship which, on close inspection, seem to be radical without really being so. The theory may well be true.

Despite antiprofessional tendencies in the protest movement, a new balance in organized professional-client relations seems to be emerging. On the one hand, the protest movement comes to realize that it needs professional assistance. As Lipsky points out,

the need for skilled professionals is not restricted to lawyers. . . . Protest groups may need architects and city planners to present a viable alternative to urban renewal proposals. They may need consultant assistance to present testimony concerning the inadequacy of governmental programs. They may need grantsmen to compete for federal and private philanthropic funds. . . .¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Haug and Sussman, "Professional Autonomy," pp. 157-8.

¹¹² Haug and Sussman, p. 159.

¹¹³ Haug and Sussman, p. 160.

¹¹⁴ Michael Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics: Rent Strikes, Housing and the Power of the Poor* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1970), p. 168.

On the other hand, new developments within the professions in response to changing social values appear as reassertions of professional authority. Representation of client interests and their satisfaction through new professional roles rather than through direct client participation is the most noteworthy of these developments.¹¹⁵

The new "advocacy role" is available at both the level of individual service and societal policy making. In this role, the professional does not just respond to client demands and, by responding, serve society; rather, his task is to anticipate needs, initiate services, and improve society.

There are some real difficulties with the advocacy role. In the enthusiasm accompanying its discovery, it was easy enough to mistake advocacy as a *professional response* to presumably unmet social needs, with activism as a *political response*. Clearly and intentionally identifying advocacy with political action, a professor of social work has defined the advocate as "the professional who identifies with the victims of social problems and who pursues modification in social conditions"; and he has argued that the advocate "will need to have the professional dedication to take the risk and be political."¹¹⁶ Needless to say, this interpretation has not gone unchallenged, and there is no indication that this is the meaning given it by most members of the legal profession where it originated in the first place.¹¹⁷

Paradoxically, its radical appearance notwithstanding, advocacy implies an essentially paternalistic attitude. Although he does not give it this interpretation, Edgar H. Schein, speaking of "role innovators," has this to say:

These members of the profession accept its central or pivotal norms but try to redefine where, how, and on whom the profession is to be practiced. A strong theme in this group has been the concern for the ultimate client, who is the actual receiver of professional services but who may have little or no voice in the design of those services—the consumer, the low-income tenant, the welfare recipient, the nonpaying charity case in the local hospital, the ghetto dweller. Thus, advocacy law and advocacy architecture are efforts by some lawyers and architects to provide services to clients who never saw

¹¹⁵ See Michael G. Michaelson, "Medical Students: Healers Become Activists," *Saturday Review* (August 16, 1969), pp. 41-3, 53-4; Robert J. Bazell, "Health Radicals: Crusade to Shift Medical Power to the People," *Science*, 173 (August 6, 1971), 506-9.

¹¹⁶ George A. Brager, "Advocacy and Political Behavior," *Social Work*, 13 (April, 1968), 5-15, at 15.

¹¹⁷ Richard Du Cann, *The Art of the Advocate* (London: Penguin Books, 1964).

themselves as clients, who did not realize that they were entitled to any voice in their own affairs, and who could not pay professional fees.¹¹⁸

The professional as advocate not only knows what is best for people but also has the advantage over political representatives of not being responsible to his clients as elected officials are responsible to their constituents. So the professional as advocate must fall back on the collective mandate given his profession by society. But in taking the generalized mandate theory seriously, advocate professionals should answer some serious questions. What will happen if things go wrong? To whom will the advocate professional be accountable? His clients, his peers, his employers, or only his own conscience? What would accountability imply? Would it imply making restitution? Risking censure or suspension of license? Dismissal from the job? Most of these questions have yet to be answered.

Advocacy as a professional response to unmet social needs and not as a substitute, in professional guise, for social action, has come to be accepted in the planning profession. This profession has understandably long been of interest to political science, for two reasons—first, because its clientele is never an individual person, and second, because its activities are clearly and intimately implicated in the public interest.¹¹⁹ The plight of people displaced by urban renewal projects became a source of protest, but protest alone would never have brought about a solution in the public interest.¹²⁰ What makes possible a broadening of the meaning of public interest is the intervention of advocacy planners who bring the interests of the deprived groups into the planning process by giving them expert advice. The relationship between the expert-advocate, individual or firm, and the client organization has taken a variety of forms. Blecher, in an analysis of six demonstration programs, found that when the relationship followed the classical model of a strictly formal contract between professional and client, relations of the client group with public authorities were less conflictual than when the client organization tried to influence

directly the technical aspects of the planning process.¹²¹

The most significant contribution of the advocacy role, or what the lawyers interestingly call "public interest work," is perhaps not its immediate payoffs to clients in need, but its bringing the profession's idealized model of public service somewhat closer to reality than it has been in the past. Nevertheless, the present extent and future promises of the advocacy role should not be over-estimated. As a very thorough recent study of the legal profession concludes,

The level of public interest work by those parts of the private bar that we observed was low; the delivered efforts of private firms represent only a small part of the available energies of those firms. For the bar as a whole the response appears to be even smaller; indeed it appears to be infinitesimal. Certainly one cannot say that the bar as a whole has fashioned a public interest response unless some of the institutional definitions of professional responsibility are being affected by its efforts.¹²²

Because it is dependent on government or foundation support which may be withdrawn, or because clients themselves may reject an advocate's help, the role is difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, as a new form of professional conduct, and if it is not misused, professional advocacy is quite in line with the realities of technological society. However, it should not be considered an alternative to either conventional or unconventional politics. Although in articulating and advocating client needs the professional puts them on a firmer knowledge base than would otherwise be the case, interest-group formation and pressure politics will continue to be primary ways to influence policy-making and administration.

To predict the outcome of the contemporary ferment in the relationship between the professions and society is imprudent. There is only a thin line between politicization that leads to deprofessionalization of human services, on the one hand, and responsible involvement in those public issues that are the legitimate concern of the professions, on the other hand. Political awareness will make the professions perhaps more responsive to societal needs; but professionals must bring to the treatment of public issues professionally pertinent criteria of substance and conduct that warrant their being respected for their knowledge and skills rather than for the particular ideological predilec-

¹¹⁸ Schein, p. 51.

¹¹⁹ See Martin Meyerson and Edward C. Banfield, *Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955); Alan Altshuler, *The City Planning Process: A Political Analysis* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1965); Francine F. Rabinovitz, *City Politics and Planning* (New York: Atherton Press, 1969).

¹²⁰ This was recognized in an early study by Peter H. Rossi and Robert A. Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1961).

¹²¹ See Earl M. Blecher, *Advocacy Planning for Urban Development: With Analysis of Six Demonstration Programs* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971).

¹²² Marks, *The Lawyer, the Public*, p. 250.

tions that may be the fashion of the moment. The winds of politics are moody and have a way of changing faster than professional responses to these winds.

The Consultative Commonwealth

Rooted in the social and technological changes occasioned by the modern skill revolution, the consultative commonwealth does not denote a revolutionary state. On the contrary, the construct assumes that as a result of the prominence of old and new professions in policy making and the delivery of human services, consultative modes of interaction will be a pervasive feature of governance in the future society. Consultation is the most characteristic aspect of the relationships among professional skill specialists and between them and their clients. Consultation will not be the dominant process but will complement, supplement, and implement other governmental processes like democratic participation, bureaucratic organization, pluralistic bargaining, or oligarchic decision making.

It is because professionalization and deprofessionalization are mutually entailed that professionalization will not usher in the bureaucratic state of rulership through professional expertise, and deprofessionalization will not bring in the democratic state of governance through client participation. There will be both more bureaucratization and more democratization, but the skill revolution will inject professional ways of doing things into the emerging commonwealth. Although they are necessary, neither bureaucratic nor democratic techniques are sufficient to cope with the extraordinarily complex social and technological problems of the future. Consultation will be a necessary but also not sufficient condition of the future commonwealth.

In the real world of politics, consultation is contaminated by other social processes so that it can never occur in pure form. The consultative commonwealth is therefore not a political system in which men of knowledge or skill specialists have uncontested power to constitute a new ruling class. Rather, it is a system of government in which professional norms and modes of conduct are acknowledged components of individual and collective choice making, at the level both of policy and of administration. The construct assumes that insofar as familiar bureaucratic-hierarchical and participative-representational patterns continue, they will be permeated by consultative patterns. This is so because in the technological society, the

ways of consultation are, on balance, well suited to the formulation and delivery of professionally based services. For consultation infuses professional expertise as well as client perspective into the policy process and the delivery of services.

Consultation as a form of interaction does not assume equality among all participants. It takes for granted that the participants are unequal precisely because the professional whose advice or service is sought is superior to the client in his area of competence. Were it otherwise, the whole notion of expertise and skill specialization would be meaningless. The inequality taken for granted is of course based on an authority of competence and not of position. The client may be superior or equal to the consultant in social status or organizational position, but for the purposes of consultation he is dependent on the consultant. But a political milieu reduces the status advantage that the professional normally has in his client relationships. Professionals cannot simply depend on their authority but may have to persuade their clients, especially if the clients are highly placed executive or legislative policy makers. Policy makers as clients do not stand in awe of professionals.

There are also limits to professional dominance at the humble end of government where the low-level bureaucratic professional encounters his clients. One of the paradoxes of professional practice is that the professional's reputation partly depends on his being evaluated, whether he likes it or not, by clients—that is, precisely by those persons least qualified technically to judge professional performance. The more that human services are extended to larger classes of people and become professionalized, the less are clients willing to be passive recipients of service, and the greater is their demand for high performance.¹²³ The professional's need for at least some client approval has always been a source of client control.¹²⁴

It is in the nature of pluralistic processes to multiply channels of consultation, thereby introducing competition into the advisory function. As expert encounters expert, alternative solutions become political compromises that safeguard the commonwealth against the pro-

¹²³ Gilb, *Hidden Hierarchies*, p. 89.

¹²⁴ Client control, however, may be frustrated by what Clark Kerr calls "institutional markets" in which the boundaries of service are not set by the participants in the consultative relationship but by institutional rules. See Clark Kerr, "The Balkanization of Labor Markets," in *Labor Mobility and Economic Opportunity*, ed. E. Wight Bakke et al. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1954), p. 93.

fessional or personal biases of skill specialists.¹²⁵ What Rourke says of bureaucrats is equally applicable to professionals in political milieu: "In the case of advice, the power of bureaucrats is indirect, resting as it does upon their ability to persuade political officials that a certain course of action should be taken. Bureaucrats have influence only if politicians accept their advice."¹²⁶

Constitutionally speaking, then, the consultative commonwealth is characterized by status ambiguity. In the classical professional-client model, the professional is in a superior and the client in a subordinate position. In the professional-colleague relationship, the actors appear to be in equal positions. And in the professional-organization relationship, the professional's position appears to be subordinate to that of the organizational supervisor. But in reality these constitutional relationships vary a good deal and may actually be reversed. Clients do have ways of controlling the professional; status jealousies among professionals interfere with mutual deference; and professionals in organizations have ways of gaining the upper hand. Especially in organizational settings in which the professional interacts simultaneously with clients, colleagues, and supervisors, ambiguities inherent in any one relationship will be confounded by the complexity of the total network in which all the actors are enmeshed.

The need to integrate specializations and subspecializations into a coherent professional service is best met through consultation. Neither market-type exchange mechanisms nor hierarchical modes are sufficient to coordinate diverse specialties. Status differences within and among the professions make nonconsultative ways of coordination problematical, for they ignore ambiguities in status relationships. On the one hand, the "superior" professional is expected to "direct" the work of subordinate personnel; but on the other hand, for some purposes the higher-skill specialist "depends" or "relies" on the lower-skill specialist, as physicians depend on nurses or university professors rely on librarians.¹²⁷

Traditional solutions to the coordination of specialized services have been, first, to have

professionals run their own affairs, as professors do in some universities; second, to turn coordination over to lay boards, as in primary or secondary education; and third, to create altogether new administrative professions, like the city manager or hospital administrator. All of these modes of coordination make implicit assumptions about status differentiation. By transcending formal social or bureaucratic status lines and organizational barriers, consultation facilitates the utilization of diverse knowledge and intelligence that otherwise would not be brought to bear on policy making or administration, including knowledge of what is politically feasible and attainable.

Consultation will not erase ambiguities in professional relationships because status differentiation is immanent in skill differentiation. Therefore, interprofessional bargaining and negotiations concerning jurisdictional matters will continue in the consultative commonwealth,¹²⁸ as will hierarchical forms of conflict resolution. This is likely to be so because, as Moore puts it, "authenticated professionals are scarcely more prone to rational and sensible compromises and reasonable innovations than others who occupy a privileged position."¹²⁹

The consultative commonwealth will be circumscribed by political and economic processes that may but need not involve consultation. Many human services will continue to be rendered by occupations whose professionalization is more a distant aspiration than an early prospect. To expect that in the foreseeable future the two largest and most powerful institutional sectors of society—government and business—will be fully professionalized would be to burden the construct of the consultative commonwealth beyond its heuristic capability.¹³⁰ Government, in particular, will be guided by the politics of elections, group processes and bureaucratic inertia. The continuing skill revolution will accentuate the professionalization of advice and services in government, which is something dif-

¹²⁵ Gilb, *Hidden Hierarchies*, pp. 162–64.

¹²⁶ Moore, *The Professions*, p. 73.

¹³⁰ "There are professional ethics for the priest, the soldier, the lawyer, the magistrate, and so on," Durkheim observed three quarters of a century ago, and then asked: "Why should there not be one for trade and industry?" Emile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958), pp. 30–39. No answer has yet been forthcoming, but see Bernard Barber, "Is American Business Becoming Professionalized?," in ed. Tiryakian, pp. 121–45. The English Socialist R. H. Tawney argued, in *The Acquisitive Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920), chapter VII, "Industry as a Profession," that nationalization of industry was a necessary condition of its professionalization.

¹²⁵ Multiple advocacy as a conscious decision-making strategy is recommended by Alexander L. George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in Making Foreign Policy," *American Political Science Review*, 66 (September, 1972), 751–785.

¹²⁶ Rourke, p. 45.

¹²⁷ See Donald C. Pelz, "Interaction and Attitudes between Scientists and the Auxiliary Staff," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 4 (December, 1959), 321–36 and 4 (March, 1960), 410–25.

ferent from the professionalization of government. Increased sensitivity of professionals to their own position in society and to the nature of their relationships with clients as diverse as slum dwellers and high policy makers will make for more rather than less politics in the consultative commonwealth,¹³¹ but technological developments and the delivery of human services become increasingly dependent on con-

¹³¹ Daniel Bell comes to the same conclusion, if by a different route: "It is more likely, however, that the post-industrial society will involve *more* politics than ever before for the very reason that choice becomes conscious and the decision-centers more visible." See his essay, "The Measurement of Knowledge and Technology," in Eleanor B. Sheldon and Wilbert E. Moore, eds., *Indicators of Social Change: Concepts and Measurements* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), p. 238.

sultation as the linkage mechanism between democracy and bureaucracy.¹³²

¹³² On contemporary institutional trends, see Thomas E. Cronin and Sanford D. Greenberg, eds., *The Presidential Advisory System* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Committee on the Utilization of Young Scientists and Engineers in Advisory Services to Government, Office of Scientific Personnel, National Research Council, *The Science Committee* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1972). 2 vols.; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Professionalization of Reform," *The Public Interest*, 1 (Fall, 1965), 6-16; Advisory Committee on Government Programs in the Behavioral Sciences, National Research Council, *The Behavioral Sciences and the Federal Government* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1968); Special Commission on the Social Sciences of the National Science Board, *Knowledge into Action: Improving the Nation's Use of the Social Sciences* (Washington, D.C.: National Science Foundation, 1969).