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IMPLEMENTATION DYNAMICS AND DISCONTINUITIES WITHIN THE 'IMPERFECT' POLICY PROCESS

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A. Implementation and the Policy Process

A Definition of Implementation and Its Function in the Policy Process

If we examine implementation as a phase of the policy process, we would usually consider it to be that part which immediately follows the completion of the legislative phase. In the British context, once a Bill has been given the Royal Assent, it becomes an Act ready to be implemented. We might assume that in an ideal situation the Act will set out the changes it intends to bring about to the real world (i.e., its objectives), and also the means which will be adopted to produce these changes. By stating the objectives themselves, and the means by which they are to be obtained, the Act will attempt to give clear guidance to those who are charged with the responsibility of implementing its provisions. When the process of implementation has been monitored and judged to be completed, then a process of evaluation can commence which will enable government to assess the exact degree of success which has been achieved, and hence learn valuable lessons which may be incorporated in any further round of policy-making on this subject.

This basic model of a seemingly "perfect" policy process assumes with a naive optimism that the real world can be altered in a specific way. Within the model there is an implicit assumption that policy objectives are realistic (e.g., a policy objective which rested on the premise that the world is flat would not fit this model) and, also, that a chain of authority and control will be created (if it does not already exist) in order that the desired policy objective can be

brought about. If, however, the real world refuses to change in the manner prescribed by the policy objectives, or the means of achieving the objectives does not exist, then implementation will be regarded as a failure in this instance.

As a starting point, this simple model can be used in order to give us a working definition of implementation. Implementation is that stage of the policy process where the means of obtaining a given objective are activated, followed by the period when these means are put into practice by those charged with this responsibility. The process will continue until the policy objectives have been achieved (or maintained) and/or a fresh policy process is activated. This definition of implementation can be related to the stages of the policy process outlined by Lewis Gunn.(1) These are:

1. Problem-Search
2. Problem-Definition
3. Forecasting
4. Objective-Setting
5. Identifying and Comparing Relevant Options
6. Policy Implementation
7. Policy-Monitoring and Programme Evaluation.

The nature of Gunn's model emphasises that making, implementing and evaluating policy is an interlinking process. In fact, in identifying a stage of the policy process known as implementation, it is likely that there will be blurring at the edges, and even within

the process itself, for no stage of the policy process stands in isolation. Interconnections may include a number of policy options being tested at one time, the bureaucracy itself being the target of a policy objective, a time and personnel overlap in policy monitoring and evaluation, and also in policy implementation and impact.

These examples illustrate that in the real world the various parts of the policy process are interlinked and interdependent to an extent which would make it unrealistic to consider implementation as being divorced from the preceding and succeeding stages. We have seen that on a time-scale and organisationally there will usually be considerable overlap between the various elements of the process. Nevertheless, there can also be considerable discontinuities. If a policy possesses conflicting objectives, or is out of touch with reality, then this will present enormous implementation problems. Similarly, policy evaluators will have difficulty in performing their job if implementers are either unwilling to co-operate or unable to understand the evaluator's questions and give misleading information. Finally, if as a result of these difficulties, or possibly the evaluator's shortcomings, the wrong conclusions are drawn about the quality of the policy, then the policy-makers will be liable to initiate a "faulty" policy-making process.

We can observe therefore that there is ample opportunity for failure within the policy process. In fact, within the "perfect" model, we can note that the mere presence of an evaluator indicates a

particular type of policy "failure". If we imagined a single line policy process, then it would cease when the policy had been implemented. Monitoring could take place in order to ensure satisfactory implementation, but the line would be discontinuous.(2) If the single line is required only to achieve a specific objective at a single moment in time, then it may suffice, but without evaluation feedback to the policy-makers, the line has no other purpose than its own limited function. Without any information as to how a policy had affected the real world, the policy-makers would be able only to base their judgement on instinct and their own values. This lack of continuity would apparently mean that the second policy process line was not "perfect". Once the link between each policy process line is broken, the process would appear to break down.

A more realistic view might be that in the course of time the policy-makers will change, either in terms of personnel or in attitude and approach. Thus when they receive information from an evaluator or the implementer himself, another policy line may be initiated (if the policy objectives continue to be met policy-makers could decide that no further action is required, and wait until further feedback is obtained at a later date). In this model the evaluator analyses the policy at a particular moment in time, and the policy-maker may act on this information. Alternatively, the policy-makers may have changed their views to such an extent (e.g., as a result of a change in government) that the new policy is based on different values and conceptions of reality rather than a straightforward "learning" process. We should also note that even with an unchanged policy those

individuals or groups who either operate or receive the effects of the policy may have changed their behaviour after an evaluation has taken place. In this case the policy may no longer be appropriate.

If a policy remains unchanged amidst changes in the real world, then an emphasis will be placed on the work of the implementer. Rather than carry out a series of specific tasks set by the policy-maker, he may interpret his responsibilities in a way which is appropriate to the new set of circumstances. In this case the initial "straight line" becomes indistinct, and is replaced by a more significant series of interactions between implementing individuals and groups. Even when a new policy line is initiated it will only be a "straight line" if the implementers do not use their own experience to modify its nature. Implementers thus appear to be potentially powerful agents of policy change, either through reinterpreting an existing policy or by giving advice to government on the formation of a new policy. The implementer's power can be greater still if he is his own monitoring agent and evaluator. We should note, however, that governments may still find means of having the last word, and also that clients of the policy may also wish to participate in the policy-making process.

The Nature of Change

Hugh Heclo attempts to analyse the policy process by outlining a continuum of change, ranging from the static to the dynamic.(3) At the static end, we can isolate a particular moment in time, and

attempt to: "...find what goes with what."(4) Statics can be developed in order to discover how a process can maintain equilibrium over time, and also how external changes can affect the equilibrium. Dynamics begin where the occurrence of one stage is dependent on the occurrence of a particular preceding and succeeding stage. This analysis proceeds whereby the constant interplay between bureaucracy and its environment produces a kind of synthesis ("selective reprogramming") which creates the ultimate dynamic process of comprehensive reprogramming. The latter indicates general changes in attitude and approach brought about by everyday interactions.

The static end of the continuum can be equated with the contact between implementation and policy impact (i.e., which policy objectives are suitable to achieve a particular impact at a particular time). The development of statics could be equated with the maintenance of a steady state relationship between implementer and client, together with the influence of external factors. An examination of dynamic change would proceed through analysing how a change in one element of the process led to a sequence of changes in the other elements, and would continue through an examination of results produced by the constant interplay between the elements in the process. Finally, comprehensive programming can be equated with the general changes emanating from and influencing the constant interplay.

The concept of comprehensive reprogramming is particularly important to our analysis for two reasons. Firstly, it suggests that an accumulation of everyday interactions causes each policy element to

reinterpret its position, and that an accumulation and interaction of these reinterpretations will lead to a new form of the system. Secondly, it indicates that interaction itself has a synthesizing quality, i.e., general change will occur because, through interaction, each element in the process accepts the fact that it has occurred. In turn, the importance placed on the value of interaction itself as a synthesizer, suggests that the trend of political activity normally tends towards some form of consensus.

A practical dilemma, confronting both the policy-maker and implementer, is to judge if conflict within the system should be accepted at any particular moment in order to bring about a general consensus in the long-term. In examining political activity, it can often be difficult to place a particular policy objective within a general consensus of policy objectives. Consensus with regard to one objective can lead to conflict over another objective. If we examine the policy process over a wide area and a long period of time, we can perhaps identify a very general consensus of values, (e.g., the general acceptance of Keynesian principles in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s) but within that consensus we are likely to find internal conflict which in time will produce a further general consensus. The policy process may also contain a time overlap, in which yesterday's consensus plays an important part in shaping that of tomorrow.

We have seen that our concept of the "perfect" policy line is in fact not perfect in the sense that a straight line can convey its true nature. It is a complex system of overlaps, interactions,

interdependencies and discontinuities over time which, although apparently leading towards consensus, is likely at any one time to contain the seeds of conflict.

Within the process we also have seen that although policy-making can be of considerable importance, on a time-scale it often represents only a small period in comparison with implementation. To some extent the position can be confused through the difficulty of identifying when monitoring and evaluation end, and policy-making begins. To the extent that evaluation can contain discussion of future options it could be regarded as a form of policy-making, and a policy idea might be discussed over a long period of time. While these processes are continuing, however, the previous policies are still being implemented, and will continue to be so until the next policy is officially introduced. Once it has commenced, interaction between implementer and clientele continues until it is officially altered or changed. As the amount of time which governments can give to change in one particular policy area is limited, it is likely that implementation will continue for a comparatively long period of time. We have already seen that, if only to keep track of the policy objective and the changing behaviour of his clients, the implementer is likely to use his own discretion and initiative. The importance of implementation in the policy process, and the behaviour of the implementer, brings us to consider the nature of the implementation process.

B. The Limits of Administration.

The "Perfect" Implementation Model.

In our "straight line" model we regarded implementation as the means by which a policy objective is to be achieved. Superficially, it might appear that a policy which set out both its objectives and the means of achieving them would be likely to achieve satisfactory implementation, but there could of course be many other obstacles. The implementer might not understand his instructions, or deliberately disobey. The client could be recalcitrant, and go out of his way to resist the implementer. Pressures of time might mean that implementation is rushed, and the objective not achieved. It might nevertheless be hoped that, if only theoretically, conditions of "perfect implementation" could be envisaged.

Christopher Hood defines 'perfect administration' as being: "...a condition in which 'external' elements of resource availability and political acceptability combine with 'administration' to produce perfect policy implementation."(5) Based on the "total surveillance" society devised by J.B. Rule, Hood outlines the five major conditions which he considers to be necessary if administration proper is to have no limiting effect on policy outcomes. The five conditions are:

1. A unitary administrative system, like a huge army with a single line of authority. Any conflict of authority might potentially weaken administrative control, and all information should be collated at a single point, in order to avoid compartmentalism.

2. The norms or rules enforced by the system have to be uniform. Objectives must be kept uniform if the unitary administrative system is to be fully effective.

3. Perfect obedience or perfect control. If perfect obedience cannot be obtained, perfect control will ensure that recalcitrance is nullified.

4. Perfect information and communication. This includes perfect co-ordination.

5. The absence of time pressure. Time must be allowed for administrative resources to be brought to bear.

The Conceptual Limits of "Perfect Implementation"

These five conditions offer a valuable insight into the nature of administrative control, but are they the conditions necessary to bring about "perfect implementation"? At the core of the five conditions is the assumption that "total surveillance" is necessary if perfect implementation is to be achieved. The image is similar to that of the single line policy process, where the implementer is given explicit details of his task and carries it out with total obedience, but our model of the dynamic policy process suggests that more is required of the implementer than pure obedience. Even if it is assumed that better implementation will be achieved if the implementer is not allowed some discretion, can the fulfilment of Hood's five conditions

be regarded as "perfect implementation"?

There is the further difficulty of identifying "perfect implementation" as the successful completion of an internal bureaucratic process, and/or the successful achievement of the original policy objective. If the implementer behaves like an automoton, and carries out the wishes of his controller, even if he sees that the policy objectives are not being achieved, can this be regarded as "perfect implementation"? In the "total surveillance" model we must therefore assume that "perfect implementation" refers to both the means of achieving the objective and the achievement of the objective itself. It could nevertheless also be argued that "perfect implementation" is the achievement of objectives, regardless of the means of achieving them. In a situation where the implementer has more "grass roots" knowledge than his superior, (e.g., where the implementer interacts with his clients) then the "total surveillance" model will break down, for in this case recalcitrance could be a definite asset to the achievement of "perfect implementation".

Hood states that when the five conditions are satisfied, administration will have no limiting effect on policy outcomes. We must therefore assume that a controller has perfect knowledge not only of the implementer or implementers, but also of the clients as well, for without this total knowledge he will be unable to control policy outcomes.

If we examine the five conditions in turn, we can perhaps

identify some of the conceptual limits of "perfect administration".

1. For the pyramid system to be the most effective, it would appear that we must assume a purely downward movement of information. The single authority at the peak of the pyramid will have perfect knowledge of the entire system, which he will programme completely before the process commences. In this way, the system can be self-administering, without any feedback to the peak of the pyramid being required (this system is reminiscent of the "single line" policy process, where a single linear downward movement is sufficient) and either perfect control or perfect obedience must be assumed (but as we shall see shortly, these conditions can never be taken for granted). If the single peak authority has complete knowledge of the programme, but commences it by only instructing each element with regard to its initial task, then when that task if completed, feedback and new instructions will be required in order that the second task may commence. In this situation a single peak authority is apparently not the most effective structure, for, given a second peak authority of equal capacity and knowledge, the task will be completed twice as quickly. It might be argued that an infinite number of peak authorities of equal capacity and knowledge is still in fact one authority, but this implies fulfilment of the fourth condition of perfect co-ordination, which we will examine shortly.

2. Although we can conceive of a single uniform objective in the sense of a policy outcome, the means of achieving that outcome requires that each sub-unit of the system will have an individual

objective at a particular time. At that moment, the sub-unit will see the world in terms of completing its part of the task. In a sense, to envisage the process purely in terms of the final objective is tautological, as if the policy-maker is saying: "to achieve the objective we must achieve the objective".

3. Perfect control is a state which it is difficult to envisage theoretically. Firstly, a subordinate might be immune to all threats, but secondly and more significantly, a control system requires some form of feedback. During this time, the subordinate can devise methods of recalcitrance and hence keep ahead of the control system. Although recalcitrance may be forestalled, the contemplation of disobedience implies that attention is turned away from the task in hand, and is in itself a depature from the 'perfect' system. In addition, the process of control requires strict surveillance, and as analysis of the first condition suggested, the unitary system does not provide this in its most efficient form.

Although the subordinate could behave with perfect obedience, his superior can never be sure that he is perfectly obedient unless he operates some form of monitoring system. Once again, this will require more than the unitary authority. Our analysis therefore suggests that perfect obedience and perfect control are in conflict with the concept of a unitary authority as one of the conditions necessary for 'perfect implementation'.

4. Our analysis of perfect co-ordination is based on the

implementation model of Andrew Dunsire, which we will be considering in detail later in this paper. For perfect co-ordination, we must assume that all instructions are perfectly understood. We have seen, in our analysis of objectives, that each sub-unit will have its own task. If we assume a common language amongst and between all the sub-units, then this will be a lowest common denominator, and will not satisfy the needs of each specialised sub-unit. If we allow each unit to develop its own specialised language as a means of describing aspects of its work, then in order to achieve co-ordination between units, some form of interpretation at the margin will be required. Interpretation is not a finite process. In attempting to define a particular specialised activity to those not involved in it, there will always be some form of cognitive gap, based on each individual's unique personal stock of knowledge and experience.(6) In this sense, perfect co-ordination cannot be achieved, and even if the infinite number of peak authorities in our first condition is regarded as one, interpretative difficulties will occur.

5. Some form of time pressure is inherent in the implementation process. If we state an objective, then there must be an assumption that at some date in the future the objective will be achieved, otherwise there would be no point in having an objective at all. In addition, implementation will usually require a sequence of activities to be co-ordinated. In order for this sequence to take place, it will need to be programmed over a certain period of time.

Thus it appears that when we take the "perfect implementation"

model to its theoretical limits, there are internal weaknesses within the system. It represents a particular style of implementation based on a chosen set of values. Hood himself points out the weakness of this system in stating that: "One difficulty which has been identified by many writers is that the word 'dysfunctionality' implies a prior judgement about what organizations ought to be doing, whereas in practice, people in organizations have multiple and conflicting objectives, and the objectives of the 'bosses' are open to challenge.(7) A method of implementation based on total surveillance is likely to prove itself too naive and simple to be effective in the real world. It is based on a judgement which regards uniformity and control as being the primary means of effective policy implementation.

The nature of our policy process model suggests that where external conditions are changing, the implementer will be required to use his discretion if the policy is to be implemented at all. Ironically, cumbersome control devices within the bureaucratic system would usually be inappropriate in the case where implementers wish to maintain control over their objectives. This is a dilemma of control referred to by Hood, who gives the following example: "...police officers who are given no opportunity to 'get their hands dirty' will be unable to obtain intelligence from the criminal 'underworld', but allowing police officers to pursue secret intelligence activities of their own, inevitably introduces opportunities for corruption."(8) This classic dilemma indicates that an implementation method employed at one level of the process can produce its opposite at another level, and vice versa. It is not just a matter of examining differing styles

of implementation between implementation processes, but also styles of implementation within one process.

It is undoubtedly the case that, even without absolute control systems, complex administrative processes take place each day and policies are implemented with at least relative success. In examining Andrew Dunsire's implementation model(9), we can analyse an alternative exploration of how the implementation process operates in practice.

C. "The Execution Process".

The Aggregative Model of Implementation.

We examined earlier the prominent part played by implementation within the policy process, at least on a time-scale, and also the discretion which will usually be required of an implementer if he is to maintain contact with his clients. In the previous section we attempted to indicate the inherent limitations of the "perfect implementation" model, and also discussed the possibility that control might not in fact be the central factor in achieving successful implementation.

In essence, where Hood is discussing what can go wrong within the implementation process, Dunsire examines how things can go right within that same process. Dunsire's emphasis is on continuing administrative processes, where over a long period of time an organization will build up specialised knowledge, and apply that

knowledge in performing a series of functions. Perhaps the key element in the model is the hypothesis that on the whole implementation is an aggregative rather than a developmental process. Dunsire considers that, if we study an organization, we will see a series of 'offices'. Within each 'office', we will find: "...a person or persons endowed with the necessary skills, equipment, materials and authorisation."(10)

Initially, the 'office' can be seen as a single unit, in which a particular range of activity takes place. The aggregative model then states that: "An intention is executed, an order completed, a plan activated (a decision implemented, a product or service produced, an application dealt with, a demand met, a stimulus responded to, etc) by linking together a chain, train, combination or converging network of such offices or work stations, assembling a sufficient number of appropriate work operations in a requisite sequence for the cumulated final output desired."(11) The implementation process is thus assembled by combining a number of individual 'offices' rather than developed from an original blue-print containing the whole process in embryo.

Dunsire employs the example of a particular case study (the almost uncontested closure of a branch railway line in Yorkshire) to examine the validity of this hypothesis. He concludes that the aggregative model is most applicable at the higher and lower ends of the process, but less so in the middle. At the higher end, a Cabinet decision on public expenditure levels will involve an examination of

the National economy as a whole, with the future of the railway system one element within that total. The Cabinet is an 'office' with the task of making decisions on the economy as a whole, and railway finance is but a relatively small part of that whole. At the lower end, a ballast loader will not consider that the function of his work is to form part of a particular implementation process. He will perform the task within the context of his 'office' of ballast loading. In the middle, we may find civil servants or railway board officers whose main task is to develop a particular policy. They are not so independent of the process as the ballast loader, and must to a large extent base their behaviour of what takes place at preceding and succeeding stages of the process.(12) Dunsire concludes: "To generalise: the idea that individuals in the descending ranks of a hierarchy of authority are implementing a ministerial decision or carrying out a policy of his (or any one else's) is an abstract one, one that derives from the interest of the observer or the enquirer, and is not inherent in, or even manifest in, the internal structure of the Ministry."(13)

Problems of Communication

The significance of the aggregative model leads Dunsire on to distinguish between the position of an office on a generality/specificity scale, and the degree of discretion to be found within the office. On a generality/specificity scale, the Cabinet and senior civil servants would be placed at the generality end, while the ballast loader would appear at the specificity end. We could also say

that a Minister concerned with problems on a National scale will possess a higher degree of discretion than the ballast loader. In another sense, however, it could be argued that a ballast loader could enjoy more discretion as to how he actually performs his job than a Minister hemmed in by all manner of external constraints.(14)

Arising from this examination of the aggregative model and discretion within an 'office', Dunsire identifies particular 'orders of comprehension'. These are 'clusters of activities', with each cluster having a different character from the others in the process. Each cluster will have its own individual language, in order to communicate information about the nature of activity within that cluster. As we outlined when examining the inherent limits of 'perfect implementation', a cognitive gap will exist between clusters and even within the cluster itself. Translation will take place on the margins, but over a large number of 'orders of comprehension', a large cognitive gap will appear. Dunsire illustrates this gap by employing a 'Babel House' model, where messages issued at one end of the building would be unintelligible at the other end until they had been taken through a process of interpretation and translation by a series of units.

Dunsire's model suggests that 'orders of comprehension' and cognitive gaps are features of the process which create a natural discontinuity. The model also indicates that recalcitrance is not necessarily (as Hood suggests it might be)(15) the raison d'etre of administration, for even if conditions of 'perfect obedience' existed,

discontinuity would remain. It might also be mistaken to regard the nature of this discontinuity as an administrative limit. The degree of discretion and expert knowledge within an 'office' could be employed to advantage within the system.

The Strengths and Limitations of Everyday Interaction.

If we look again at 'comprehensive reprogramming' in the context of the aggregative model, we can see that certain qualifications need to be stated about the importance of everyday interaction as an agent of change. Within an 'order of comprehension' e.g. the relationship between an implementer and his client, this everyday interaction can obviously be influential in bringing about change to the original policy. If efficient and 'open' channels of communication exist between the implementers and the policy-makers, and the policy-makers are receptive to what is happening at the operational level, then the nature of everyday interaction can be influential in bringing about official policy change.

At the same time it is also quite possible that the implementer and policy-maker will lose contact with each other, not only through a time lag or recalcitrance, but also because of a cognitive gap. In the aggregative model, 'orders of comprehension' can be so strong and so discrete, that communication problems can be almost insuperable, e.g. at the centre, policy-makers may be so involved with electoral competition and adversarial politics that they pay little attention to the implementers, while the implementers become so wrapped up in performing their own task they fail to perceive, or cannot understand,

what is going on elsewhere. Allied to this latter state of affairs is the genuine difficulty in communicating to others the exact nature of one's own physical and mental state i.e. the policy-makers and implementers may speak different 'languages'.

Because of these gaps, everyday interaction may be of only limited importance in studying the dynamics of change. Messages of some type will probably penetrate the whole process, but they are more likely to be spasmodic and 'lumpy', rather than continuous and exact. The nature of the aggregative model thus raises important questions about how the policy process is likely to work in practice. In the conclusion to this paper we will look at its implications for both policy-making and implementation, but for the moment we will continue to examine further elements in the dynamics of both stability and change.

We indicated earlier that the relationship between everyday interaction, producing consensus, conflict and ultimately general change is of considerable importance in analysing the implementation process. When an Act is implemented the nature of the various interests and the relationship between them (be they implementers or clients) can have profound effects in influencing the 'atmosphere' which surrounds the whole policy process including succeeding implementation processes. Even if we accept the validity of the aggregative implementation model, we cannot ignore the manner in which self-interest can influence the implementation process. Also, we need to examine how organizational or inter-organizational dynamics

can bring about change (we will nevertheless describe later how indirect control can in some cases be more effective than direct control, either as a means of maintaining stability or as an agent of change). In these two respects, the work of Anthony Downs offers useful guidance.

D. "Inside Bureaucracy"

The Nature of Self-Interest

The hypotheses put forward by Anthony Downs(16) stress the motivational aspects or organizational behaviour. If we over-simplify somewhat, it could be said that while Dunsire emphasizes the co-operative nature of the implementation process, Downs emphasizes its competitive nature. Nevertheless, Dunsire makes a considerable number of references to Downs, and to some extent the two works do complement each other, for both are concerned with the nature of communication and control within an organization. Downs sets out his three centrel hypotheses are being:

1. Bureaucratic officials seek to attain their goals rationally.
2. Officials have a complex set of goals, but all will be influenced by a certain degree of self-interest.
3. An organization's social functions (its interactions with the outside world) will strongly influence its internal structure, and vice versa.(17)

The first hypothesis might be regarded as a dependent variable of the second, for where goals conflict, there will need to be some degree of compromise between them. This might be particularly true where official interests conflict with self-interest. In this case,

if an official seeks maximum rationality for his official goal, he might be sacrificing his own interest, and vice versa.

A further complication is the degree to which official interests can be disentangled from self-interest. This difficulty is similar in kind to that of considering uniform objectives as a condition of "perfect implementation". We argued that a division of labour required an individual to have a particular objective at a particular time, even when the ultimate objective of the organization is held in common. That particular objective of the individual might be regarded as either an official or personal objective. In Dunsire's terms, the objective could be defined as an individual exercising his discretion within an 'office'. In Downs' terms, the objective could be regarded (at least partly) as reflecting the individual character and personal ambitions of the individual. For analytical purposes, when an official is seen to be carrying out his allotted task, we can assume that he is operating in an official capacity. It is only when the official task comes into conflict with strictly personal objectives that the motivational aspects come into consideration. Each official will of course bring his own personal approach to a job, but where his efforts can be perceived as furthering the overall objectives of the organization (or an inter-organizational implementation process), the question of self-interest is of less analytical importance. There is a further problem in that even where motivational behaviour can be identified, in the long-run this apparent self-interest may benefit an organization more than conformist activity. In these cases short-run self-interest serves

long-term official interest.

As an illustration of how the separation between official and self-interest may work in practice, we can examine Downs' categories of individual character. Downs classifies officials by five "ideal types" - (similar terms might be applied to organizations) climbers, zealots, conservers, advocates and statesmen. Although a few officials might be classified under one type exclusively, Downs suggests that the natural behaviour of an individual official will tend towards one of these types, although experience within the organization can cause him to switch types. Thus, a climber who realizes that he can go no higher is likely to become a conserver, while a natural zealot at the top of an organization will have to behave as a statesman when questions concerning the "National interest" are to be considered.

In these cases, it would appear that individual behaviour is being shaped by organizational characteristics. The apparently "natural" climber becomes a "natural" conserver, while the enthusiastic zealot becomes the objective statesman. If this behaviour is congruent with the needs of the organization, then the element of self-interest which may be involved is not significant. If, however, the climber becomes a conserver when the organization requires him to remain a climber, or the zealot causes the organization to fail because he wishes to promote a new image as a statesman, then the self-interest of the individual becomes significant.

We should perhaps also note that the short-term gains made by self-interest, might be offset by the damage to the individual which organizational failure can bring. It might even be argued that while an individual remains a member of an organization, official interest and self-interest will invariably coincide in the long-term. We must nevertheless also avoid the trap of regarding the performance of official interest as being totally congruent with perfect obedience. In a dynamic implementation process, the instinct of the individual that radical change is needed may be more beneficial for the interests of the policy than merely furthering the interests of an organization which has outlived its useful purpose. This problem of behavioural classification makes an unequivical identification of self-interest a task of great difficulty.

Downs himself appears uncertain as to whether personal or official goals are of primary importance as the causal elements of individual behaviour. In a hierarchy of goals, Downs regards the personal goals as having a more profound effect on an individual's behaviour than the bureau-oriented goals. Nevertheless, he amplifies this hypothesis by stating that: "If society has created the proper institutional arrangements, their (the officials) motives will lead them to act in what they believe to be the public interest, even though these motives, like everyone else's, are partly rooted in their own self-interest. Therefore, whether or not the public interest will in fact be served depends upon how efficiently social institutions are designed to achieve that purpose. Society cannot insure that it will be served merely be assigning someone to serve it." (18) This statement, although somewhat enigmatic, appears to

support the hypothesis that "institutional arrangements" will guide private motives in the direction of the public interest (despite the previously outlined hierarchy of goals).

If, however, self-interest and official interest conflict, then the organization must find ways of imposing its will on the individual. We have already argued that "perfect control" is impossible, and so the organization is incapable of totally banishing self-interest from individual behaviour. In this case, the organization must endeavour, by means of coercive control or exchange, to ensure that official interests and self-interest coincide in the work of the individual, or alternatively that the individual (despite Downs' hierarchy of goals) can come to identify his interest with that of the organization.

One of the insights we have gained from Dunsire is that of the aggregative implementation model, whereby a natural cognitive gap will exist between 'offices'. Dunsire is critical of Downs for his failure to distinguish between cognitive and motivational elements in his analysis. In analysing communication within an organization, Downs describes changes in information during its transmission as distortion, (19) and concludes that the particular objectives of individuals within an organization will cause authority leakage.(20) Following Dunsire, we can argue that when an individual is perceived to be "doing his job", (although we have seen that the definition of what exactly this constitutes can be a contentious question), even if his behaviour contains a degree of self-interest, then it is more

suitable to regard that behaviour as forming a part of the cognitive process. Analytically, it can more often than not be almost impossible to indisputably identify the behaviour of an individual as representing the performance of official interest or the defence of self-interest. Even then, the identification of self-interest becomes less important when it is placed in the context of an evolving interaction process. In this sense the concept of self-interest is of less analytical importance than the observation of an official's actual activity and its effect on implementation and policy impact.

Further Characteristics of the Implementation Process

Despite Downs' failure to distinguish between cognitive and motivational elements in the implementation process, he adds to Dunsire's analysis in three particular ways. Firstly, and arising from the motivational elements, there is the question of control. Given that officials do not always behave in the manner intended by their superiors, some kind of control system will usually be enforced within an organization (or sometimes between organizations). The emphasis which Downs places on the competitive nature of elements within an organization is particularly illustrated by his Law of Counter Control, which states that: "the greater the effort made by a sovereign or top-level official to control the behaviour of subordinate officials, the greater the efforts made by those subordinates to evade or counteract such control."(21) This Law is closely linked to the concepts of distortion and authority leakage, and suggests the imperfect nature of any control system. Although the law is obviously too sweeping in its generalization, some type of

monitoring system is usually necessary as a control device (it may also act as a means of feedback, performing a service as part of the cognitive process).

Given the high cost of setting up elaborate control systems, it might be considered more suitable to engender a process of identification, but Downs considers that some degree of goal diversity (i.e., individual discretion) is required if the organization is to respond satisfactorily to environmental change. His Law of Countervailing Goal Pressures states that: "The need for variety and innovation creates a strain towards greater goal diversity in every organization, but the need for control and co-ordination creates a strain toward greater goal consensus."(22) This Law emphasizes the manner in which change takes place during an implementation process, for the strain towards variety and innovation (sometimes apparently manifested in self-interest) will take place both when an individual exercises his discretion within the organization, and also when implementers come into contact with their clients. The strain towards goal consensus represents the general recognition that to make the process work at all, a higher degree of co-operation is required. This activity does not necessarily represent a distortion of the policy process; it is in fact an integral part of it. In this sense there is a conflict between the Law of Counter control and the Law of Countervailing Goal Pressures, for the former implies that authority leakage will damage the organization, while the latter suggests that goal diversity is an organizational strength. Downs does not give an answer to this conflict, yet it is probably the most common control

dilemma.

Obvious distortion can take place if implementers misrepresent the reality of what they are doing to the policy-makers. We can illustrate this difference by examining the nature of an organizational ideology. In the cognitive sense, an ideology is a form of feedback, whereby an organization can explain to the outside world what it is doing in terms of information which can be easily assimilated by policy-makers. In the purely self-interested sense, however, an ideology can be used to exaggerate the importance and quality of the work which is being undertaken. Although this behaviour may have short-run benefits, in the long-run it may distort the whole process and lead to the organization spending more time on creating a false image than on doing its official job. In this case, official and self-interest clearly come into conflict, although eventually even self-interest will be damaged if the organization collapses under the strain of maintaining this misrepresentation. The dilemma for the policy-maker is that he needs to ensure that the implementer is doing his job, but that if he imposes too strict a degree of control, the essential flexibility of the implementer will be lost. (This is the dilemma referred to by Hood with regard to the work of a police force).

A consideration of long-run dynamics brings us to the second way in which Downs adds to Dunsire's analysis. The most obvious example given by Downs of this long-run dynamic quality is his outline of the rigidity cycle, whereby an organization changes in character as it grows older.(23) The larger an organization becomes, and the higher

the degree of control which is exercised over its members, the more rigid it becomes. When a task is set requiring a high degree of innovation, a new organization may be set up, but this organization will in turn find its energy being dissipated. Organizational change is mirrored in the behaviour of individuals, whereby climbers become conservers etc. The concept of the rigidity cycle suggests that eventually nearly all policy initiatives will run out of steam, and will need recharging periodically.

We stated earlier that one of the principal considerations in examining an implementation process is to understand how change comes about, and the rigidity cycle can be an important factor in considering this problem. We should nevertheless note that an organisation can exist for many years, and while experiencing considerable fluctuations in its fortunes, can maintain a high degree of success in achieving its goals (in a successful organisation the goals might change over time). It might even be the case that an organisation could commence in a rigid state, and become more innovative over time (once again Downs' "Laws" appear to be more useful for the questions they raise concerning the dynamics of change, rather than the likelihood of their general applicability).

A key to an organisation remaining innovative could be its ability to remain flexible in responding to its environment (e.g., an implementer maintaining contact with his clients). The final way in which Downs adds to Dunsire concerns his third central hypothesis, that of an organisation's social functions strongly influencing its

internal structure and behaviour, and vice versa. Thus Downs' Law of Free Goods states that: "Requests for free services always rise to meet the capacity of the producing agency."(24) and the Law of Inter-organisational Conflict states that: "Every large organisation is in partial conflict with every other social agent it deals with."(25) Paradoxically, this inter-organisational conflict, which may appear dysfunctional for the implementation process, can lead to innovation and progress. It is the paradox considered earlier, and which appears to be a central feature of the implementation process, whereby everyday interaction contains the seeds of both consensus and conflict. Because implementation occupies such a large part of the policy process time-scale, it can apparently influence or even come to dominate the whole process, epitomised in the manner by which a general "atmosphere" of common values and perceptions builds up and infiltrates the political world. Counteracting this force is the tendency for the cognitive gaps caused by 'orders of comprehension' to enclose information and values in pockets, thus causing discontinuities within the policy process.

E. Group Activity and the Policy Process Pressman and Wildavsky and the Aggregative Model

If an inherent tension and potential for conflict exists within and between organisations (and both Dunsire and Downs suggest that this is true), then actually setting up an implementation process is liable to present considerable difficulties. Apart from any motivational aspects, the aggregative model of implementation suggests that when someone considers that he is "just doing his job", he may

not even understand that he has been designated to play an integral part in implementing a policy-maker's "grand design". By employing the example of a particularly disastrous implementation process, Pressman and Wildavsky offer an insight into the nature of these inter-organisational tensions.(26) Their study also illustrates that a process of identification can be difficult to achieve when there is little or no pressure on the organisations to achieve a consensus.

Pressman and Wildavsky take the case of a naive and unfruitful exercise in employment creation by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in the United States, and use it to illustrate how even relatively non-controversial and seemingly straightforward programmes can encounter massive implementation problems. The EDA chose Oakland in California to be its guinea pig, and quickly committed 23,000,000 dollars in the form of grants and loans to various projects in the city.

In the event, one of the major projects ran into trouble because it had not been initiated by the EDA (in the aggregative sense, the EDA was switching-in to a project which already existed, but lacked the control to impose its goals on other organisations). In another project, disputes arose over the control of finance. Pressman and Wildavsky's principal analytical point thus concerns the high number of agreements which need to be made during an implementation process.

Given the apparently high probability of project failure, why is it that any project is ever completed? In relation to programmes that

have succeeded, Pressman and Wildavsky comment that: "It is easy to forget (perhaps because we never knew) about their initial difficulties. The years of trial and error that led to the present state of operation are lost from view... No genius is required to make programmes operative if we don't care how long they take, how much money they require, how often the objectives are altered or the means for obtaining them are changed."(27)

Pressman and Wildavsky suggest that programmes survive because they adapt themselves to their environment over a long period of time. We could add that the implementation process will itself play a part in shaping the whole policy environment (e.g., the failure of such projects as those undertaken at Oakland can lead to a general consensus that this type of activity has an unacceptably high marginal cost), but perhaps the main point is that when (within the context of the aggregative model) a number of people or organisations are "doing their job", change is never likely to be easily or inexpensively brought about. As we noted earlier, within almost any implementation process, there is a natural tendency towards both consensus and conflict. In the Oakland project, the EDA and the other interests involved all needed each other to attain certain objectives, but the bonds which drew them together were not firm enough to prevent conflict over objectives within the overall objective.

In most multi-organisational implementation processes, the lack of any hierarchic structure will minimise the chances of implementation by means of coercion. The process could be based on

exchange followed by some kind of identification, although in some cases interaction might itself lead to identification. The exchange could be one of material benefits, but could also be one of values. In this case, communication itself can be a powerful agent in bringing about a consensus.

The Problem of Policy

The failure of such over-ambitious programmes as the one attempted in Oakland raises serious doubts over the ability of well-intentioned planners to devise policies which can be implemented satisfactorily. Wildavsky himself has sought to discover how the policy analyst can learn from such an experience: "Much of the scholarship of the Seventies, my own included, has been an effort to discover what went wrong and to learn how things might be made to work better, or whether government should take some actions at all."(28) On the whole, Wildavsky concludes that social interaction is likely to be a more reliable and valuable policy dynamic than the opposing image of what he terms (drawing from Lindblom) intellectual cogitation. Social interaction occurs where people pursue their own interests and decisions are made: "...without anyone necessarily controlling the sequences of individual actions or intending an outcome."(29) In contrast, cogitation: "...orders social relations through mental processes as if they were taking place in one mind."(30) Wildavsky considers that cogitation can act as a corrective to a process of interaction which produces selfishness and chaos, but that interaction should on nearly all occasions take precedence over cogitation.

Arising from this conclusion comes a related view that: "Problems are not so much solved as superseded."(31) Thus a policy will generate its own problems to which a succeeding policy will offer a solution, but the new policy will itself cause problems requiring a further policy change, and so on. In this model, policy implementation can become something of a "cuckoo in the nest" which pushes out other activity and itself assumes a position of predominance in the policy area: "...the environment in each major policy sector is more internal than external, it reacts more to internal needs than to external events. That is, each sector creates the environment to which, in turn, it best responds."(32)

In order to control its environment, Wildavsky considers that each policy sector will attempt to maximise its size. Ironically, this increasing size will cause big solutions leading to big problems which will have an impact on neighbouring policy sectors. Wildavsky sees sectorization as a major policy trend during the 1960s and 1970s, in which government has become a federation of sectors. This arrangement is the key to a paradox in which central government appears to be acquiring more power, while at the same time the centre itself is seen to be disintergrating. Wildavsky perceives that sectorization is a decentralization of power, but that the central authority of each sector will wish to maintain maximum control over the activities within its policy area. As bureaucracy encounters difficulties in controlling its clientele, then objectives will be orientated towards inputs and instruments rather than people (a similar conclusion to that of Downs). The dilemma for a growing

policy sector is that control over its environment will become increasingly difficult, for the various individuals and groups within the sector are so diverse that uniformity is impractical.

Monolithic policy sectors threaten the quality of the policy process, but Wildavsky softens the image by emphasizing the degree to which each participant in the process should constantly bear in mind the need for correction of error. Correct solutions are not the prerogative of any one individual, but by interaction and consequent exchange the process can move along in the best available manner. Wildavsky is obviously concerned that such a means of ordering affairs will result in interest overwhelming intellect, but considers that this is preferable to absolute control by a Great Planner. The policy analyst should give aid to interaction and thereby fulfil the function of: "...speaking truth to power."(33) It is nevertheless interaction which produces change, the criterion for which is: "...altering the pattern of relationships between participants which leads to outcomes that are different."(34)

Values and the Policy-Maker

Wildavsky's emphasis on interaction highlights its power as an agent of change (usually of an incremental type), but his analysis also suggests the associated implicit assumption that implementation is likely to be of a higher quality when there is a strong bottom-up element present within the process. In other words, better policies will result when those at the centre have a good understanding of the

problems involved in delivering the policy to the clientele. Wildavsky discusses the implementation process in terms of correction of error rather than Downs' image of distortion. In essence, where Downs would see the implementer distorting the planner's intentions through self-interest or lack of knowledge, Wildavsky has the view that it is the planner's false hopes and dreams which require correction by those given the onerous task of implementing these policies. Correction of error implies that each implementer is adjusting a false view of reality held by his superiors, but in the terms of Dunsire the error may be no more than a cognitive gap. If policy is being changed during implementation, then it may not be correction of error but reinterpretation which is taking place.

Wildavsky's somewhat jaundiced view of the value of the policy-maker probably reflects his own disillusionment with the radical social programmes introduced in the United States during the 1960s, but we should note that the Minister and the ballast loader are required at various times to both cogitate and interact. Nevertheless it is the Minister who is in the better position to cogitate on the general state of the railway system, and his thoughts on this subject are likely to be of more political importance than those of the ballast loader. This top-down image of the policy process is based on the Minister's official position, his particular type of expertise, and his control over resources. The policy-maker's power to control the policy values is something of an antidote to the importance placed on interaction at the operational level as an agent of change, for at times interaction may be dependent on

cogitation i.e., a change in the pattern of relationships may bring about a change in outcomes, but the change in the pattern may be brought about by new policies promulgated by the policy-maker.

Interaction during implementation may not necessarily be the principal dynamic of policy change, for as Rhodes points out discontinuities in the behaviour of officials can sometimes only be explained by major (and perhaps autonomous) changes in government policy: "...the political and organizational models tend to ignore the discontinuities for the routine and to this extent at least they can be considered descriptively inadequate."(35) Wildavsky's view could be considered part of a cycle described by Kaufman in which the weaknesses of a policy centrally controlled will lead to greater decentralization followed by centralization once more when the disadvantages of decentralization are discovered. Thus: "Decentralization will soon be followed by disparities in practice among the numerous small units, brought on by differences in human and financial resources, that will engender demands for central intervention to restore equality and balance and concerted action..." (36) In this cycle, implementation is transformed from a complex decentralized network of relationships into a more straight line process, only to once again fragment with the passage of time. The dynamics of this process do not entail correction of error so much as responses to endemic implementation phenomena (although the policy-maker could resist pressure to adopt a more interventionist approach).

In this case the policy-maker will assume greater importance when

a centralized policy is being devised, for his decisions will have a direct effect over the manner in which a policy is implemented. In contrast, a decentralized policy will mean that greater discretion is allowed at the local level. Our analysis suggests total control from the centre will not lead to "perfect implementation" but it could also be said that a policy initiative entailing a change in general values is likely to have more effect when it comes from the top e.g. if a Minister decides that a smaller railway network is required in the national interest then his decision is likely to have more impact in the real world than if a ballast loader comes to the same conclusion. Although there may be a multitude of cognitive and motivational obstacles obstructing a centrally initiated and controlled implementation process, the power of that original initiative can still carry more force than policy initiatives instigated lower down the chain of authority. In this sense, central government is often the chief repository of values underpinning a particular policy, i.e., an implementation process totally controlled from the centre may be impossible, but the ability of the centre to control the nature of the policy process and the behaviour of implementers is potentially considerable. Even a policy which allows for a high degree of discretion at the operational level may imply values which will have a significant effect on the manner of implementation.

Governments can hold certain values for a variety of reasons. In some cases it might be that the Party in power has certain views on how the world should operate, e.g. a Labour Government would wish to see private enterprise take charge of that same industry. In other

cases general political circumstances may force a government into a particular position e.g., electoral considerations or the need to retain a majoritry in Parliament.

An analysis of the relationship between groups and government can be an extremely complex affair, and is epitomized by the long-standing discussion on the true meaning of corporatism and pluralism. This unresolved debate nevertheless provides an important means of examing the relative power of groups and their consequent impact on government and the policy process. For our purposes, we will employ the definitions of corporatism and pluralism set out by Schmitter. These give a good indication of how corporatism is associated with a structured relationship between groups and government in which some kind of exchange process is vital, while pluralism is generally identified with a more informal relationship in which government may at the same time have potentially both more and less power than in a corporatist relationship.

Schmitter defines corporatism as: "...a system of interest representation inb which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the State and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports."(37) In contrast, he defines pluralism as being: "...a system of interest

representation in which the constituent units are organized into an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive, non-hierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to type or scope of interest) categories not specially licensed, subsidized, created or otherwise controlled by the State and not exercising a monopoly of representational activity within their respective categories."(38) Thus within a pluralistic relationship government may make a decision with or without consulting a particular group, but at the same time the fragmented nature of the group structure and the lack of government control over implementation reduces State power.

The existence of corporatism has important implications for policy implementation, as it implies a top-down process in which groups and governments at the centre will together seek to impose a policy on implementers. Policy-making in a pluralistic system can also be top-down where consultation is minimized, but more usually the concept of pluralism is identified with many groups contributing to the policy-making debate. Thus in a pluralistic system we might expect the policy process to be more of the bottom-up type, with implementers being allowed a higher degree of discretion than might be found in a corporative system.

Kaufman's analysis suggests that the attitudes of groups themselves are dependent on the natural cycle of the policy process. This conclusion could be equated with Wildavsky's view that policy is its own cause. Kaufman states that: "Discontent on the part of various groups is thus the dynamic force that motivates the quest for

new forms."(39) Although this could often be the case, change can also come about when the government itself, or even a single official, has strong views on a particular policy. In their study of the origins of the 1973 Water Act, Jordan, Richardson and Kimber lay particular emphasis on the part played by the Under Secretary responsible for the policy area. This official favoured reorganization of the water authorities on the basis of efficiency and rationality rather than politics and participation. The authors consider that the new organizational structure which resulted from the 1973 Act owed a great deal to the views of this one individual.(40)

This observation on the role of the individual highlights the point that the policy process is capable of producing radical as well as incremental change. The potential for change may be latent, only to burst through when a forceful individual (possibly a zealot or advocate in Downs' terms) comes upon the scene and pushes through a radical measure. From the point of view of interaction, formerly disparate groups can form a powerful alliance to initiate change, or powerful interests may collectively adopt a previously dormant policy idea. We should note also that a seemingly incremental policy change may become radical in nature during implementation, and vice versa. Major policy change may take place at various levels of the process, sometimes unofficially and with little indication of its occurrence.

Corporatism, Pluralism and the Policy Cycle

If a policy is corporatist in nature, the chief interests will

take an active part in policy-making, and undertake to seek compliance in implementation from their members. In this case the leaders of a group can take on some of the officiality of government. Lundquist sees the decision-maker's attempts to keep in touch with the implementer in terms of steering: "The steering consciousness of the decison-maker presumes that he has goals for his activity and that the steered implementation will result in outcomes. The difference between goals and outcomes can be said to be a measure of the rationality of the decision, and the difference between decision and implementation a measure of the reliability of the steering."(41) Lundquist adds that the feedback process will enable the decision-maker to: "...get information about the rationality of his decision and the reliability of the steering. This activity, which follows the implementation process, is called review."(42)

Lundquist adopts Simon's concept of bounded rationality in order to assume that in general a gap will appear between goals and outcomes. We have seen earlier in this paper that review might well take place during the implementation process and that steering and review may be applied alternately before a policy outcome is known, but Lundquist's analysis does indicate the problems of implementing a corporatist policy. If the leaders of a group assure government that they can guarantee implementation of a particular policy, then a large gap between goal and outcome can place the group in a vulnerable position in its future relationship with government. In order to prevent this gap, the group leaders may well seek to ensure that the policy is centrally administered in the belief that

the goal-outcome gap may be unacceptably wide if a high degree of discretion is allowed at the local level. There is thus likely to be a strong link between corporatist policy-making and a centrally administered policy in cases where compliance cannot be guaranteed. If as a result of a top-down policy implementation process the level of feedback and review is low, then the centre may become out of touch with the outside world. In addition, at the operational level implementers may be unwilling or unable to execute the original policy. Ironically, the very policy which results from corporatism at the centre may result in fragmentation between interests and alientation between government and groups when it is discovered that the policy lacks the flexibility to be workable.

Wildavsky considers that policy is its own cause, and from the above example we could also conclude that policy style can carry within itself the seeds of a different approach. As a reaction against corporatism a government may decide to develop a looser relationship with the interests, or consult a wider range of groups. Alternatively, government can decide to "go it alone" in finding a policy solution, or else present a superficial appearance of wide consultation when in reality the decisions have already been made.

At the operational level there is often more emphasis on performance of a task. Consultation processes can take place, but non-operational interests may find difficulty in gaining power. The Aggregative implementation model and the concept of 'orders of comprehsnsion' both stress the limitations of central control and the

need for individual discretion to be exercised if a task is to be performed satisfactorily. Gustafsson and Richardson note that co-ordination of policies at the local level has often proved more successful than at the national level,(43) and it could be argued that this success for decentralization is at least partly explained by the differing priorities at the two levels (Gustafsson and Richardson also consider that responsibility for problems is likely to bounce up and down between local and national levels, although it could be said that on the whole the impetus for the bounce will come from the top, and that national political circumstances are more likely to determine its velocity rather than events at the local level).

In performing his task the local official as implementer is likely to give priority to obtaining co-operation from those whose help he needs most. If he is to obtain order from his environment he will wish to deal with the minimum number of groups and individuals necessary in order to 'get the job done'. This priority gives him a higher incentive than the central policy-maker (or even the local politician) to exclude from his considerations 'fringe' groups, although he may also be more likely to consult groups from another sector whose help he particularly needs (we should note that at both central and local levels there may be a tension between a pluralist-minded Minister or councillor who wishes for particular political reasons to consult as many interests as possible, and his corporatist-minded officials ever mindful of the need to implement a manageable policy).

Pressman and Wildavsky's study illustrated the local problems when a new agency attempts to disrupt the established order. The EDA wished to bring together many local groups which formerly had known very few inter-connections, and lacked the power to compel compliance. The basic weaknesses of such a vague and ill-defined programme are highlighted by Peter Drucker's analysis of "the sins of public administration." These include having over-lofty objectives, a lack of priorities, overstaffing, dogmatism, an inability to learn, and an adherence to programmes which are no longer of use.(44) From the point of view of the Oakland project, Drucker's key statement is perhaps: "...work is always specific, always mundane, always focused. Yet without work there is non-performance."(45) This observation ties in closely with the aggregative implementation model and the image of the implementer "doing his job." In addition, Drucker's recommendation that the job should be done with the fewest number of people can be equated with the corporatist tendencies of implementers at the operational level.

Gustafsson and Richardson consider that: "...the most difficult task in modern democratic societies is to combine a high level of rationality (in the sense of designing policies which succeed in the objective of solving "real" problems) with high levels of group, and citizen participation."(46) This observation reflects a concern that too many groups within a policy sector will prevent any significant activity from taking place. Group theory emphasizes the importance to the policy process of organizations other than government, even to the extent that the groups may take on some of the functions of

government, and that in reality government represents just one more interest. Corporatism implies that government is prepared to sacrifice a part of its sovereignty in return for co-operation from powerful interests, while even pluralism suggests a need for government to achieve a working relationship with the most important groups as an essential prerequisite of policy-making and implementation. In order to achieve some sort of order, it is understandable that government should normally favour policy sectorization. Richardson and Jordan see the distinctions between groups and government in many countries becoming more blurred over time, with the result that: "...we see policies being made (and administered) between a myriad of interconnecting, interpenetrating organizations. It is the relationships involved in committees, the policy community of departments and groups, the practices of co-option and the consensual style, that perhaps better account for policy outcomes than do examinations of party stances, of manifestoes or of parliamentary influence."(47)

The policy community suggests an image of continual interaction between groups and government departments, and Richardson and Jordan employ the key terms of negotiated environment and accommodation to describe how orderly change is brought about. By means of negotiated order, and within a negotiated environment, government arranges a stable pattern of relationships with the groups, while accommodation allows for agreement even when the basis for consensus is minimal.(48) Although a government seeks stability within the policy community, the relative importance of the groups over time is likely to change, while

new groups may attempt to join the community. Gustafsson and Richardson point out that in many Countries an increasing number of groups have sought and gained admittance to policy communities, with the result that overcrowding has taken place. It is this overcrowding which restricts the manoeuvrability of policy-makers and causes stagnation within the policy process.(49)

This analysis suggests that beyond a certain point, interaction becomes dysfunctional, and that certain channels of communication should be cut, i.e., certain groups should be excluded from the community. In reality overcrowding may not be such a serious problem as it appears, for despite the size of the community only a few of the groups may possess real power. It is significant to note that these powerful groups are likely to be the ones most concerned with implementation, for without their co-operation the policy cannot function. It is thus not only important for a group to gain admittance to the policy community, it should also seek to become an integral part of the projected implementation process. If a group becomes indispensable to government in the administration of a policy, then its power is indeed real, i.e., it has a good chance of being included in corporatist policy-making.

A group can nevertheless also gain power by enlisting wide popular support for its policies. If a government fears that it may suffer electorally by excluding a group whose values have a wide following, then it is likely to incorporate some of the group's values into a policy. In this case, a non-operational group's values can

infiltrate government and hence a policy community. The boundaries of the community can be extremely blurred where transference of ideas and values is concerned, for the network of relationships may spread over a wider area than the groups immediately involved with policy in that sector.

F. The Nature of the Implementation Process

In this paper we have put forward a number of hypotheses concerning the nature of policy implementation, and the relationship between implementation and the policy process as a whole. These include:

1. The capacity, under certain conditions, for both linearities and discontinuities within the policy process.
2. The importance of the implementation process within the policy model, at least organizationally and on a time-scale.
3. Models of "perfect implementation" are unrealistic and even conceptually impractical.
4. Control need not be the chief motivating force behind an administrative system.
5. The aggregative model appears to be the most likely explanation of how an implementation process usually works in practice.
6. Self-interest (of an official or organization) is only of limited analytical importance, for it is difficult to identify definitively, and in any case must be placed in the context of interaction.
7. An organization is likely to be best able to avoid the trap of the rigidity cycle if it can remain flexible in response to its

environment.

8. Within an implementation process (particularly near the operational level), there is usually a natural tendency towards consensus, but the consensus will contain the seeds of conflict and future change.

9. Everyday interaction and change are interrelated and interdependent within 'orders of comprehension', but cognitive gaps and motivational forces can severely limit their correlation in the policy process as a whole.

10. Within the implementation process, an exchange of material benefits and/or values will often lead to some kind of identification between the parties involved. In some cases, communication and interaction may of themselves lead to identification.

11. It is possible for policy values to be adopted by government as the result of a bottom-up process, but policy discontinuities caused by autonomous change at the top are likely to be particularly powerful agents of policy change.

12. Radical policy change can be brought about by a powerful individual, as well as being activated by a change in the pattern of interaction.

13. External change can affect any stage of a policy process, and can also act as an agent of discontinuity within that process (e.g. by affecting the relationship between an implementer and his client, events in the outside world can distance them from the perceptions and objectives of the policy-makers).

14. Governments are likely to try and maintain control over their environment by encouraging the growth of sectorization and policy communities within these sectors.

15. Both policy-makers and implementers are likely to discourage trends towards pluralism at their level, although a non-operational policy-maker may be more susceptible to pressures from a variety of interests than the implementer at the operational level.

G. Linearities and Discontinuities in the Policy Process

Arising from these conclusions, we can construct a model which summarises those elements which create either linearities or discontinuities within policy-making and policy-implementing processes. The dynamics of a policy process are inevitably complex, and the "straight line" model which we outlined earlier rarely exists in the real world. Perhaps the most obvious, and also most important, feature of implementation is the interaction between the activity of the policy-makers and the day-to-day work of the implementers. It is principally this relationship that we are concerned with in this paper and forms the basis of the analysis which follows.

Policy-Making

Top-Down Linearities

The chief means by which government is likely to seek to achieve greater continuity in the policy-making process is by incorporating the principal interests involved. Linked to this could be the existence of sectorization, with policy communities and interests enjoying a clientelistic relationship with government. It can of

course also be the case that in a pluralistic system certain elite groups may enjoy a close relationship with government, but group competition and the lack of official control can make policy-making an uncertain business. Corporatist policy-making may allow government strict control, or it may be a looser arrangement where the government requires the co-operation of the interests in order to achieve successful implementation (what Schmitter calls societal corporatism).(50)

Even within a corporatist system government cannot maintain contact with all interested parties (e.g. the entire workforce of a nationalized industry or the complete membership of a pressure group). In this way, it is likely to be government and group leaders who are the true policy-makers. In addition within either a corporatist or pluralist system, the officiality of government places it in an imposing position to initiate policy change. At the same time, the particular situation of government, combined with its own perceptions, provides an important aspect of discontinuity.

Top Down Discontinuities

The behaviour of a democratic government is inevitably guided and constrained by the existence of adversarial politics and electoral competition. This can provide discontinuities in two interrelated ways. Firstly, government and opposition parties may give priority to defeating each other rather than maintaining contact with the real world. Thus the policies they devise may be deliberately designed to

counter the arguments of their opponents. Secondly, when a government changes, policy change, at least in some areas, is inevitable. Regardless of the extent to which the previous government and the principal interests may have been satisfied with the existing policy, the new government will see it as a duty (usually expressed in terms of a mandate) to bring about change. It is quite possible that the policy may be modified in discussions prior to implementation, but the government is likely to be reluctant to totally abandon a manifesto commitment. It is this type of discontinuity which is an antidote to the premise that everyday interaction in an implementation process is the primary agent of official policy change.(51) To the interests involved, some policies may almost appear to have come 'out of thin air' i.e. they reflect values adopted as a result of inter - and intra - party battles rather than being the result of consultations between government and groups.

Bottom-Up Linearities

In a pluralistic system (and in some cases a corporatist one) both group leaders and government may consult implementers and clients concerning their views about policy quality. This quality may include the values inherent in the policy, or the practical problems of execution. If the policy-makers act on the views expressed nearer the operational level, then it could be said that everyday interaction at that level has become the primary agent of policy change. As we have seen, the manner in which the information is transmitted, and the motives of the implementers, may not necessarily give policy-makers a

clear and undistorted picture of reality, but if advice is passed on and heeded by the centre then there is a linearity in the policy process.

In reality, this linearity might often take the form of implementers and clients reacting to policy proposals or policy options put forward by government. Thus the policy process linearity will be overlaid with the discontinuities caused by adversarial politics and electoral competition. At the same time, governments will usually be aware that they require the co-operation of key operational interests if the policy is to be implemented, (unless some means can be found to by-pass them), and will often be prepared to modify a policy in order to obtain compliance. It may be as reactors to policy, rather than innovators, that implementers will provide their input to policy-making, which in turn leads us on to a type of discontinuity.

Bottom-Up Discontinuities

Downs sets out a variety of organisational types, ranging from zealots to conservers, and we may use these in order to illustrate how organisational dynamics can affect policy-making. Thus a zealot or an advocate may put pressure on government for radical policy change. Government may accede to this pressure and maintain a linearity. Alternatively it may cause a discontinuity by refusing to be moved, or put forward a policy of its own. On the other hand, a conserver will be satisfied with the existing policy, and be determined to retain the

status quo. Unlike the zealot and advocate, his behaviour will be reactive rather than innovative. In many instances, in order to retain their status and policy space, organisations will be conservative in nature, and in this sense it is likely that they will be suspicious of change. It is also the case that change usually costs considerable effort e.g. in restructuring relationships and reallocating resources, and implementers are likely to be reluctant to make the required effort unless the benefits to be attained by change are obvious and considerable. In this way the rigidity cycle can act as a policy-making discontinuity, for government may find great difficulty in persuading key groups to accept policy change.

A further discontinuity may be caused by a cognitive gap. The expertise required of implementers to execute a policy can be considerable. The detailed and complex nature of the work can make it difficult to communicate the exact nature of the problems involved to those at the top. For their part, policy-makers may not fully understand what is being explained to them. Within an 'order of comprehension' complex activity may appear routine and straightforward to those involved, but to the outsider it may be difficult to fathom what is going on. Government may employ monitoring agents or evaluators to interpret behaviour for them, in which case problems may be lessened. At the same time these intermediaries may not necessarily make the 'right' observations, while the dynamic nature of the process can mean that the time lag involved between observation of policy execution and the initiation of a new policy has brought about changes which make the latter irrelevant or inappropriate. There is

obviously great scope for discontinuity in a bottom-up policy-making process, and as we hypothesised earlier, governments and group leaders may shy away from facing the problems involved, and instead turn to a more centralised and corporatist approach.

Implementation

Top-Down Linearities

When government puts a policy into action, it will naturally hope that it can be implemented, with the outcome being the achievement of the desired results. As we have described, the implementer will put his own stamp on the means of execution, but looking through the eyes of the policy-maker it is policy output and outcomes which will usually most concern him. Ideally, the policy-maker will hope that the implementers will have a high level of enthusiasm for the policy context, and that they may be imbued with the values of the policy. It is possible that the implementers will come to identify themselves with the policy as the result of a natural process of interaction. This is a phenomenon which might be more common than is popularly supposed, for over a period "comprehensive reprogramming" can change the values and perceptions of all interests. In addition, where it is generally agreed that force of circumstance is leading events in a certain direction, then all those involved with a policy (e.g. within a policy community) will collaborate in bringing about policy change. Identification can of course also be achieved effectively by means of coercion e.g. power of appointment and allocation of resources, or exchange e.g. an organisation receiving a higher level of resources in

return for compliance.

Power of appointment and allocation of resources are two of the principal means whereby a top-down force may be applied to policy implementation (they may be employed not only by policy-makers but also by implementers on their fellows). Although obviously effective in some cases, they can nevertheless be rather clumsy and wholesale in their nature, and still leave those at the operational level with a high degree of discretion. More direct and effective results can be obtained if those at the top can in some way by-pass obstructionist interests, and apply a direct force to either other implementers or clients. Examples of this might be government by-passing trade unions or a local authority to achieve its policy goals by appealing, respectively to workers or ratepayers.(52) A policy instrument of this type can be highly effective in suitable cases, although at times can have unpredictable results and be difficult to sustain over long periods.

A related, but more subtle instrument, which can achieve a high level of fine tuning, and be useful over a long period of time, is the insertion of an agent of change at or near the operational level. By acting as a regulator, and/or an arbitrator between the interests, the agent can become an integral part of an 'order of comprehension'. If he can win the trust and respect of the chief interests within its ambit, then he is in a very strong position to bring about change. Conversely, if the agent is taken out of that 'order of comprehension', then a state of instability can quickly ensue. A good

example of this type of indirect control is provided by the traffic commissioners, who from the early 1930s have been given the task by government of regulating the bus operators and the services they provide. The 1980 Transport Act removed the commissioners powers with regard to express services and excursions, and immediately created a high level of competition between the operators. Ironically, the operators themselves had been generally opposed to the government's proposals for policy change, but they discovered that a certain type of behaviour was imposed on them simply as a result of the commissioners being removed (in this sense it was another example of interests being by-passed). There are thus several means whereby top-down implementation linearities may be sustained, although there is also wide scope for discontinuity.

Top-Down Discontinuities

Despite the existence of instruments for policy implementation, we described earlier how there are internal weaknesses within an apparently faultless system of "perfect control". In reality control devices may be even counter-productive where discretion on the part of the implementer is needed if an objective is to be attained. We summarised this conclusion by warning that a relaxation of "perfect control" may indicate an alternative administrative style rather than an administrative limit. If this is the case, then discontinuities in the implementation process can occur naturally, and should not be seen only in terms of a leakage of authority.

From a top-down perspective, it may often be difficult to discern whether what is taking place at a later stage in the process is beneficial or detrimental to eventual policy output and outcomes. Even within an 'order of comprehension', the aggregative model illustrates how implementers may be unsure of what a new policy means, and how it can be adapted to existing practices. It is in the nature of the process that pockets of expertise, either in terms of technical knowledge or construction of complex relationships, will exclude outsiders, even those from a higher 'order of comprehension'.

The aggregative model highlights the cognitive limits to control, but there are of course a large number of more motivational tactics open to implementers. These can include "blinding them with science", over optimistic forecasting and budgeting, impersonation of intense activity, attempts to undermine rival interests, misrepresentation of progress and many more. This type of behaviour can obviously be extremely deleterious to the prospects of policy implementation, and it would be naive to assume that it does not exist in many policy processes. On the other hand, we should take care when identifying this type of behaviour not to assume that its effects must automatically be bad. In some cases, they may be the implementers way of rationalising what to them is a necesary expediency if the job is to be completed at all. Alternatively, apparent recalcitrance at one stage of the process may ultimately improve the quality of policy output and outcomes (illustrating the limitations of self-interest as an analytical tool). It should also be noted that it is cognitive limits which are the chief barriers to conceptualisation of the

'perfect control' model i.e. the central authority lacks 'perfect knowledge' of what is taking place in the process. When analysing an implementation process, the endemic discontinuities must always be taken into account, and the possibility of a "perfect implementation" model discounted.

Bottom-Up Linearities

Although it is possible that an implementer may ignore a policy initiative altogether, more usually he will seek to understand its meaning and its implications for his work. Thus in general terms he will absorb and then pass on information from 'offices' above, below and alongside his own. From his own point of view, the implementer will hope to make sense of the policy in terms of his particular responsibilities, and place the policy within the framework of his existing work. If the implementer is himself introduced into the system as a result of a policy initiative, then he may feel a particular sense of loyalty to that policy and to the policy-makers, but he will still be faced with the problem of how to deal with existing organisations and clients.

These practical problems for implementers bring us to a second linearity. Having (hopefully) understood what the policy means, the implementer will invariably need to form alliances with others in order that the task may be completed. Near the operational level, there is obvious pressure exerted on the implementer for performance of a task, and here the need to create and sustain working

relationships is paramount. In this manner, a pattern of relationships and working practices can become extremely strong, and in a bottom-up sense may come to influence those in other positions within a network or hierarchy i.e. they may adjust their behaviour in order to fit in with what appear to be efficient policy outputs and outcomes.

Nevertheless, despite the apparent potency of these bottom-up forces within the implementation process, there are also limits to their power as agents of "Comprehensive reprogramming".

Bottom-Up Discontinuities

Implementers at or near the operational level obviously have a particularly influential position in the policy process, for it is they who are in the closest contact with the clients, and are thus at the point where the quality of policy outcomes are measured. Within their own 'order of comprehension' these implementers may enjoy a considerable degree of discretion (although in some cases e.g. manufacturing industry, the nature of the work may facilitate the maintenance of relatively strict programming).

At the same time, it is the complexity of interaction within an 'order of comprehension' which can prevent a participant at the operational level conveying his understanding of events to someone at a higher (or different) level of the process. Even if he wishes to communicate, he will need to translate the instructions into terms

which make them operationally feasible.

This is a limit which can equally be applied to top-down forces, but unlike these the bottom-up forces do not have such instruments as the power of appointment and the allocation of resources, and are thus in somewhat of a weaker position.

From a motivational point of view, the implementer may also be fearful of reporting to those in a higher position that he is adopting unorthodox, even if effective, methods of implementation. Also on many occasions an implementer may be content with the status quo and not wish to communicate with another level unless some sort of crisis appears. A further example, again common to both top-down and bottom-up processes, could be that those at another level will turn a deaf ear to what is being said to them. Thus although interaction within an 'order of comprehension' can dominate a cross-section of the implementation process, its influence can be circumscribed by endemic limits to understanding, motivational forces, and the policy implementation instruments available to those involved in top-down processes.

FOOTNOTES

1. Lewis A. Gunn, Policy Analysis in Central Government, SSRC meeting on Central Government Research June 1976.

2. Rose views the discontinuous policy process as being one where objectives change, but it could also be the case that, although objectives remain the same, a discontinuity is introduced by policy-makers becoming out of touch with the real world. Ed. Richard Rose: The Dynamics of Public Policy, Sage Publications, 1976, p.19.

3. Hugh Heclo: "Policy Dynamics". Ibid. pp.237-265.

4. Ibid., p.20.

5. Christopher C. Hood: The Limits of Administration, John Wiley and Sons, 1976, p.6.

6. Andrew Dunsire: Implementation in a Bureaucracy, Martin Robertson, 1978, p.159.

7. Hood: op.cit., p.141.

8. Ibid., p.23.

9. Andrew Dunsire: The Execution Process, Vol.1 (Implementation in a Bureaucracy) and Vol.2 (Control in a Bureaucracy), Martin Robertson, 1978.

10. Ibid., Vol. 2, p.11.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., Vol. 1, pp.129-30.

13. Ibid., p.151.

14. Ibid., p.174.

15. Hood, op. cit., p. 192.

16. Anthony Downs: Inside Bureaucracy, Little, Brown and Company, 1967.

17. Ibid., p.2.

18. Ibid., p.87.

19. Ibid., p.116.

20. Ibid., p.134.

21. Ibid., p.147.

22. Ibid., p.224.

23. Ibid., pp.158-166.

24. Ibid., p.188.

25. Ibid., p.216.

26. J.L. Pressman and A.B. Wildavsky: Implementation, University of California Press, 1973.

27. Ibid., p.113 and p.116.

28. A. Wildavsky: The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis, Macmillan, 1974, p.4.

29. Ibid., p.11.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., p.83.

32. Ibid., p.68.

33. Ibid., p.126.

34. Ibid., p.265.

35. R.A.W. Rhodes: Review Article. Local Government Studies, July 1977, p.80.

36. H. Kaufman: Administrative Decentralisation and Political Power, Public Administration Review, Jan/Feb 1969, p.11.

37. P.C. Schmitter: Corporatism and Public Policy in Authoritarian Portugal, Sage, 1975, p.9.

38. Ibid.

39. Kaufman op.cit.,p.4.

40. A.G. Jordan, J.J. Richardson and R.H. Kimber:" The Origins of the Water Act 1973", Public Administration, Autumn 1977, pp.317-334.

41. L. Lundquist: The Control Process: Steering and Review in Large Organisations", Scandinavian Political Studies, 7, p.32.

42. Ibid.

43. G. Gustafsson and J.J. Richardson: "Concepts of Rationality and the Policy Process", European Journal of Political Research, 7, p.430.

44. P.F. Drucker: "The Deadly Sins in Public Administration", Public Administration Review, March/April 1980, pp.103-106.

45. Ibid., p.103.

46. Gustafsson and Richardson op.cit., p.434.

47. J.J. Richardson and A.G. Jordan: Governing Under Pressure, Martin Robertson, 1979, p.74.

48. Ibid., pp.101-105.

49. Gustafsson and Richardson, op.cit., p.432.

50. P.C. Schmitter: "Still the Century of Corporatism?" in Trends Toward Corporatist Intermediation, (P.C. Schmitter and G. Lehmbruch eds.), Sage 1979, p.20.

51. Rose acknowledges this discontinuity, while also holding the view that in Britain the need for electoral support will cause Parties to limit their ideological commitment. R. Rose: Do Parties Make a Difference?, Macmillan, 1980, p.143.

52. See A. Dunsire: "Central Control over Local Authorities: A Cybernetic Approach", Public Administration, 59 (1981), pp.173-188.