Table 3-3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of departments where title exists</th>
<th>Number of positions open for occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate administrator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of staff to the associate administrator</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Associate Administrator</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant administrator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of staff to the assistant administrator</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy assistant administrator</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate assistant administrator</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute increase</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage increase</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


a. This table includes all titles in the 14 federal departments that are listed at Executive Levels I, II, III, IV, and V of Title 5, United States Code, as well as titles that are variations of all titles at Executive Levels 1-V, including, for example, the secretaries of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, Administration and Federal Highway Administration at Executive Level II, and assorted commissioners, directors, administrators, inspectors, general, general counsels, chief information officers, and chief financial officers at Executive Level IV.

b. 1996 figures include the Social Security Administration, which was elevated to independent status in 1994, but was part of the Department of Health and Human Services until then. With Social Security excluded, the totals for 1996 would have fallen by 54 to 2,384, for a decrease of 24 positions or 1 percent from 1992.
Because titles are rather like kudzu, the best time to kill a new title is when it is only barely established. Of the six titles that disappeared between 1960 and 1992, four had existed in just one department, while the other two had existed in just two. Now would be the time to kill the new titles. Unfortunately, new titles have a remarkable survival rate. Of the six titles that were killed, five came back in the very next administration and survive to this day. Absent a sustained attack and tough weed control, most of the new Clinton titles will come back. That is the nature of administrative kudzu.

By itself, the new height will not lengthen the shadow of government. The new titles simply have not spread far enough to cast light. Nevertheless, the height does confirm the central incentives for thickening, whether driven by the president’s own demand for control or by agency preferences for institutional similarity. As those sixteen new titles start to spread, as they most certainly will given the hostility of liberation management toward meddling central oversight, the federal hierarchy will continue to go circular.

**Congressional Incentives**

Unlike the presidency, where casting shadows is a mostly counterintuitive expression of institutional self-interest, Congress has ample incentive to favor a government that looks smaller and delivers at least as much. Simply stated, head count constraints give individual members substantial electoral advantages back home, whether by providing protection against opponents who charge that members have been captured by the federal bureaucracy, creating significant opportunities for crediting nonfederal jobs with federal dollars, and generating a steady flow of the campaign funding needed for reelection. In short, shadow casting is a substantial source of incumbency advantage.

Before turning to the argument in more detail, however, it is important to note that the shadow of government fits perfectly with the incentives described by Moe’s theory of public bureaucracy. Unlike presidents, who must balance short-term pressures to produce against longer term incentives to balkanize, legislators have a very simple incentive to do what interest groups want by way of structural choice. Because of what Moe describes as “their almost paranoid concern for reelection,” and because “interest groups, unlike voters, are not easily fooled,” legislators are not given to “flights of autonomous action or statesmanship.” Harsh and unforgiving as Moe’s characterizations might be, his description fits well with the history of head counts described in the next chapter. Most of the early thaws in the head
contracts it lets? What better way to assure maximum feasible conflict than to impose head count constraints that might lead to unfunded mandates? The very things adversaries favor, meaning “fragmented authority, labyrinthine procedures, mechanisms of political intervention, and other structures that subvert the bureaucracy’s performance and open it up to attack,” inevitably create incentives for casting shadows as agencies struggle to fulfill their missions.79

Even if interest groups were agnostic about bureaucratic structure, which they most certainly are not, shadow casting creates enormous congressional benefits back home. For most members of Congress, as Thomas Mann argues, elections will always be Unsafe at Any Margin. The fear of defeat is so great that members do all they can to assure reelection. If that means creating an occasional shadow through pork barrel legislation, no problem.

That Congress cares about credit claiming back home is hardly in dispute. A host of political scientists have written about the phenomenon, none ever so persuasively as Richard Fenno in Home Style. Nor is there any doubt that pork barrel projects, and the shadows they create, generate credit-claiming opportunities. As Morris Fiorina writes, “The average constituent may have some trouble translating his congressman’s vote on some civil rights issue into a change in his personal welfare. But the workers hired and supplies purchased in connection with a big federal project provide benefits that are widely appreciated.”78

That is why, for example, all fifty governors, the American Automobile Association, environmental groups, the Chamber of Commerce, and even the American Planning Association (highways need planners, too) endorsed the $217 billion transportation bill passed by Congress in May 1998. Congress most certainly understood that the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA 21) would create jobs back home. Although never discussed as anything but good old fashioned pork, the shadow effects featured prominently in the House debate leading to final passage. It was a debate led by twelve-term House member E. G. “Bud” Shuster (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and arguably the most effective pork producer since Jamie Whitten (D-Miss.).

Shuster was unapologetic about the size of the measure, which increased federal transportation spending by nearly half, warning his colleagues not to believe “this baloney that we somehow break the budget, that we somehow create a deficit.” Not only would the bill save lives, cut the federal debt, improve productivity, and restore American competitiveness, it would create 42,500 jobs for every $1 billion spent. (Applying Schuster’s calculation,
which appears to be based more on hunch than science, to the $228 billion the federal government spent on contracts and grants in 1996 would produce nearly 9.7 million shadow jobs, or roughly 1.7 million more than generated through the methodology used in chapter two.)

Shuster also defended the $9 billion reserved for special demonstration projects handpicked by individual members of Congress. “Who knows better what is most important in their district than the Members of Congress from that district?” he asked those who questioned the 1,400 earmarks. “I would respectfully suggest there is a bit of arrogance in those who say that somehow they know better what is important in their congressional districts than Members know. Indeed, I would suggest that if Members do not know what is really important to people in their congressional district, they are not going to be here very long.” Shuster reserved special words for House colleagues who simultaneously attacked the projects even as they pushed for “multimillion dollar projects in their own congressional districts.” “How I envy the pious,” Shuster paraphrased James Michener’s The Hawaiians, “They can be such hypocrites and never even know it.”

The last-minute negotiations surrounding the bill proved his point. The Senate, which had long protested the pork, weighed in with 360 projects worth $23.7 billion just hours before the Memorial Day recess would begin. “The Senate castigates projects,” Shuster had predicted in March. “But when they come to conference at about 2 a.m. on the 21st day, they reach in their pocket and pull out a list.” The Senate did just that late on May 22, only hours before the final conference report was to come up for a vote. Packing in the new projects, the bill passed the Senate 88 to 5.

There is nothing new about transportation pork, of course. Congress has been taking home the projects for decades, usually through funding formulas that allow each member to claim a fair share of the credit for new highways and the jobs they create. What makes the past decade interesting perhaps is the growing use of earmarks to make the credit claiming easier. Both the number and amount of earmarks has been rising steadily, whether in transportation, higher education, veterans health care, or environmental protection. The number of transportation earmarks has gone up from just 10 projects and $362 million in 1982 to 152 projects and $1.1 billion in 1987, 538 projects and $6.2 billion in 1991, and 1,850 projects and $9.3 billion in 1998. Although higher education pork dipped briefly in the mid-1990s because of a determined campaign by California Democrat George Miller, it appears to be on its way back up, too.

No one talks about the shadow-casting effects of such legislation in explicit terms, of course, and no one would ever recommend that the highway construction jobs be nationalized. Even staunch critics of the federal downsizing such as Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) can find ample reason to support transportation earmarks. “Mr. Speaker, this is not pork,” Norton argued in support of the transportation package. “This is steak. If we want to continue to be a prime rib country, we better pass this bill quick.”

But the shadow-casting effects exist nonetheless. Assuming that all $217 billion goes directly into grants to state and local government, TEA 21 will create almost six million shadow jobs with its six years of funding.

Debt Acknowledged?

If Congress had any hope that such shadow casting might make contractor and grantee employees more forgiving, or at least less distrustful, toward government or politics, there is no evidence of the effect. To the contrary, the limited available evidence suggests that Americans who work in the nongovernmental shadow under contracts or grants are just as distrustful as the rest of the country. According to the Pew Research Center’s 1997 trust-in-government survey, 14 percent of Americans either worked for a nongovernmental employer that received government funds for its work or lived in a household with someone who did. Put that number together with the 28 percent of Pew respondents who either worked for federal, state, and local government or lived in a household with someone who did, and over four out of ten Americans have come to rely on the federal government for all or part of their wages. As table 3-4 shows, these beneficiaries were no more likely to trust government than were their nongovernmental peers.

To the contrary, compared to the Pew Research Center respondents who either worked for government or lived in a household with someone who did, those who worked for nongovernmental employers under contracts and grants were usually the most distrustful of all. They were significantly less likely than government employees and family members to trust the government in Washington to do what is right and were the most frustrated with the federal government overall. They also gave the federal government the worst overall rankings and had the least favorable opinion of elected federal officials. Not only were they consistently negative toward actual government performance, but they also were the most likely to say the poor performance was the government’s fault. Asked who they trusted more, civil servants or politicians, they were the most likely of any group to give the nod to politi-
Table 3-4. A Sampling of Opinion on Government among Americans
Who Work for, under, or on behalf of Government, 1997
Percentage of respondents who agree with statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does respondent or member of household work for government?</th>
<th>Yes: for private employer</th>
<th>Yes: self only at federal level</th>
<th>Yes: self at any level</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always or most of the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling about the federal government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basically content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government is doing only fair or poor job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government often does a better job than given credit for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people employed by federal government has decreased</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable opinion of elected federal officials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable opinion of federal departments and agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable opinion of government workers*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable opinion of public employees*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable opinion of state and local government officials*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust politicians or civil service employees to do right thing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil service employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table continues)

Federal government is bound to be inefficient no matter what
- 8 6 5 7

View that is closest to own
- 34 29 29 34
- 30 37 33 33
- 34 32 37 32

Have a great or good deal of confidence in American people
- 62 67 74 58

Prefer government to private sector as an employer
- 19 33 46 19

Want son or daughter to go into politics as a life's work
- 27 27 13 24

Recommend that young people start their careers in politics or government
- 36 51 53 45

Think government is a good place to work
- 69 76 79 70

Source: The Pew Research Center for The People & The Press, secondary analysis of data released in Deconstructing Distaste: How Americans View Government; N = 1,210 for those who do not work for government; N = 546 for those who worked for government or whose family member worked for government; N = 88 for those who worked for the federal government; N = 259 for those who work for a nongovernment employer who receives funding from the government under a contract or grant

* The question was asked of a split sample, rendering the federal employee subsample too small for meaningful interpretation.
cians. Finally, they were the least trusting toward the Congress, the source of so much of their support.

Notwithstanding their general distrust as citizens, federal employees were clearly more forgiving toward government than other respondents, which is to be expected. But even here, the Pew survey found that federal employees had plenty of bite toward their own employer. They were less trusting toward their civil service brethren than any other group in table 3-4, and they had surprisingly unfavorable opinions of federal departments and agencies. They were highly critical of government performance on all but ensuring safe food and medicines, and they were almost as negative about government inefficiency as other respondents. Nevertheless, federal employees were the most positive toward government as an employer, the most likely to recommend that young people start their careers in politics or government, and the most likely to believe that government is a good place to work. Government employees think as citizens when asked about trust in government, but they think as employees when asked about their jobs.

A Debt Repaid?
The shadow work force may not be particularly grateful for their federal support, at least as measured by trust in government, but contractors most certainly are. Looking back over the past decade, the top contractors have showered both lobbying attention and campaign contributions on Congress and the presidency. In the first half of 1997, for example, the top twenty-five federal contractors spent over $38 million on lobbying, with General Motors at $5.2 million in lobbying expenditures, United Technologies at $4.2 million, General Electric at $4.1 million, Northrop Grumman at $3.6 million, and Boeing at $2.9 million. Although it is impossible to know how much or little was spent lobbying Congress for specific products such as new fighter jets or new computer systems, the more general purpose of the lobbying was to create a generally favorable climate toward the individual corporations involved, which in turn might create a specifically favorable climate toward their products and services.

The top twenty-five contractors also provided significant amounts of campaign support to candidates for federal office. Although there is no evidence that such campaign financing purchases specific votes on legislation, there can be little doubt that the dollars helped remind incumbent members of Congress that contractors care about their reelection. As table 3-5 shows, the top twenty-five contractors contributed just over $10 million in 1992 and $15 million in 1996. AT&T led the group on campaign contributions at almost $4 million, followed by Lockheed Martin at $2.5 million, General Electric at $1.8 million, Northrop–Grumman at $1.5 million, and Boeing at $1.3 million.45

As the contribution figures show, contractors clearly favor incumbents. Congress may have changed majority parties in 1994, but incumbents got exactly 86 percent of top twenty-five contributions immediately before and after the congressional elections. The major difference between 1992 and 1996 is the rising tide of soft campaign contributions. Because soft money contributions are unregulated, contributions can rise well beyond the meager limits imposed on political action committees and individual contributions by the Federal Election Campaign Act. That means that contributors can make themselves even more visible. That the top contractors would drift toward more soft money is merely a reminder that campaign cash is a po-
tent tool for thanking incumbents for what they may have done in the past and for creating a favorable climate in the future.

**Party Incentives**

Americans clearly believe the two political parties have very different positions on the structure of government. Republicans have long been given the benefit of the doubt regarding government management, for example. Americans not only believe Republicans would do a better job attacking fraud, waste, and abuse, while increasing bureaucratic efficiency, but they also believe that Republicans have a better understanding of just what might make government run more like a business.

Republicans have also historically enjoyed the public's confidence in their ability to manage the federal government well. In August 1995, for example, 49 percent of the public said Republicans would do a better job managing the government, compared to just 30 percent for the Democrats and 22 percent who said neither party would do well. By August 1997 the gap had narrowed to just 6 percent—39 percent for the Republicans and 33 percent for the Democrats, with 16 percent choosing neither. The gap closed not because of reinventing government, for the Democrats gained only 3 percent over the two years, but because of increasing doubts about Republican competence in the wake of the back-to-back government shutdowns in late 1995.

As for reforming the government, Americans divide almost equally in their rating of which party would do a better job in actually making government work better. In a March 1998 Pew Research Center survey, for example, 37 percent of respondents said the Republican Party would do a better job, 35 percent said the Democrats, 8 percent said both would do equally well, and 10 percent said neither would do well.

Presidential elections rarely turn on debates about bureaucratic reform, of course. Looking back over the years, the size and structure of government have never come close to making the list of most important problems about which citizens care. Jobs, inflation, international crisis, war, scandal, schools, children, the elderly, health care, the environment, and a host of other issues are infinitely more interesting to most voters than government operations.

Nevertheless, campaigns do help explain why both parties might favor shadow government. In theory, Democrats should seek to advertise the benefits of activist government, while Republicans should keep the focus on inefficiency and the need for solid business sense. Given their support from organized labor, it would be surprising if Democrats talked much about the need for contracting out. And given their support from big and small business alike, it would be equally surprising if Republicans promised to create new departments and agencies, increase government pay, or improve life in the career civil service.

Until just recently, however, there has been almost no systematic evidence to support either hypothesis. Lacking solid data to the contrary, most public administration and management scholars have concluded that bureaucrat bashing is on the rise in both parties. "Countless politicians run for office (including the highest posts in the land) on platforms that blame society's problems on the 'bureaucrats' and their burdensome rules, lack of entrepreneurship, wasteful extravagance, social experimentation, intervention in business, and whatever else nettles," writes Charles Goodsell in *The Case for Bureaucracy*. "Candidates promise that when elected they will sternly deal with the bureaucratic enemy. When, after the election, neither the bureaucrats nor the problems disappear, voters conclude that the survival of the former has caused the perpetuation of the latter."

Goodsell is quite right in emphasizing the political benefits of bureaucrat bashing. Incumbents and challengers have long seen the value in running against government. In reality, however, the actual rhetoric from the 1960, 1980, 1992, and 1996 presidential campaigns suggests a more nuanced message. Looking at the inventory of every campaign advertisement, speech, and debate in each campaign, all of which have been collected and coded by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication, the conversation about government appears to have changed radically twice: first in 1980 and again in 1992. As table 3-6 shows, whereas Republicans owned the antigovernment issue in 1980, Democrats were able to shift the conversation to much safer ground by 1992, even to the point of making bureaucracy almost lovable again.

The patterns revealed in the table will almost certainly deepen as more of the Annenberg data come on line. Carter talked at length about leaner, meaner government in 1976, for example, promising grand reorganizations and deep cutbacks, creating an easy target for Reagan's 1980 war on waste counterattack. For now, readers must be satisfied with the available data, which clearly illustrate the ways in which campaign promises can create pressures for shadow casting.

Toward that end, the 1960 campaign should be taken as a baseline against which to measure the 1980, 1992, and 1996 contests. The government simply was not a major focus of conversation. Together, Kennedy and Nixon
uttered the words listed in table 3-6 only twenty times in the 230 speeches, advertisements, and presidential debates recorded in the Annenberg archive.

Kennedy was the more active of the two candidates, using the word bureaucracy six times. He was hardly a bureaucracy lover, however. Two of his mentions came in a stump speech defending himself against traditional Republican attacks. "I do not believe in a super state. I see no magic to tax dollars which are sent to Washington and then returned [to the states]. I abhor the waste and incompetence of large-scale Federal bureaucracies in this administration, as well as in others," Kennedy told supporters in New York City on September 14, 1960. "But I do believe in a government which acts, which exercises its full powers and its full responsibilities. Government is an art and a previous obligation; and when it has a job to do, I believe it should do it."

Ironically, given his later efforts to politicize the bureaucracy, Nixon actually made the more spirited defense of federal bureaucrats, albeit in a broad attack on big government. "Now why am I so concerned about [local] control of education?" he asked an audience in Dallas on September 12, 1960. "It isn't that I have a great suspicion of Federal bureaucrats. They're very honest, very loyal, hundreds of thousands of them. I've worked with them; I'm one of them as a matter of fact. The point is this: the greatest guarantee of freedom is diversity of control, local control." By distinguishing between bureaucrats and their bureaucracy, Nixon laid the rhetorical basis for Clinton's 1992 rescue of activist government. Whatever the reason, Nixon felt obligated to defend the people of government, even as he excoriated their antiquated management systems. It was a pattern to be repeated in 1970 when he explained his decision to create a new Office of Management and Budget.67

By 1980 the campaign climate had clearly changed. Reagan went on the attack against the incumbent president, devoting an entire stump speech to his view of government as a bastion of fraud, waste, and abuse. He had started the campaign in September by promising billions in savings from a sustained effort to end "waste, extravagance, abuse and outright fraud" in federal agencies and programs, and ended it on November 3, 1980, with a broad appeal to Americans who "feel burdened, stifled, and sometimes even oppressed by government that has grown too large, too bureaucratic, too wasteful, too unreasonable, too uncaring about people and their problems."

In between he kept the Carter administration on the defensive. Speaking before a Columbia, South Carolina, crowd on October 10, 1980, Reagan returned again and again to the savings to be gained by controlling the waste
inherent in bureaucracy. “Early in this campaign, I challenged this administration to acknowledge the enormity of the problem of waste and fraud in the federal government. I asked them to account for their three-and-a-half-year failure to cope with this unrelenting national scandal. The Carter administration has ignored that challenge.” Ridiculing Carter for having promised to abolish and consolidate hundreds of departments and programs, Reagan focused on contractor fraud at the General Services Administration, which he characterized as a fight between a heroic administrator and an entrenched, corrupt bureaucracy. Although Reagan mostly talked about the failings of big bureaucracy, his two personalizations were tough. One came in a speech, the other in an advertisement promising a freeze on federal hiring and the elimination of “any program that serves the bureaucrats and not the needs of the people.”

It is not at all clear why the Carter administration did not rise in its own defense. After all, it led the effort to reform the civil service and could have easily taken credit for the 1978 Ethics in Government and Inspector General Acts. It was most certainly not a lack of opportunity. Despite the Iranian hostage crisis, the Democratic presidential campaign generated twice as many speeches and advertisements as the Republican campaign did.

But even when the Carter campaign did rise in response to Reagan, the answer was tepid at best. Speaking at the annual convention of the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), a collection of government employee unions, he welcomed endorsement by the CSEA, “because I know that this country has the best and most productive public employees—federal, state, and local—of any nation on Earth. I’ve worked at every level of government for the past quarter-century. I know from personal experience the dedication that you bring to your careers, public service. Most people know that public employees keep our Nation safe, our roads in good condition, our schools open, our water and air clean, our work places healthy and safe, our elderly and our sick cared for, our laws enforced, and perform countless other necessary services day and night. And I’m glad to give thanks where it’s due.” Absent from that speech, or any other speech or advertisement for that matter, was an answer to the Reagan charges. Carter’s only advertisement that mentioned bureaucracy was a classic biographical piece in which he complained about bureaucracy as a segue into a backyard conversation with a small group of ordinary Americans.

It was up to Bill Clinton to redefine the bureaucracy in 1992. It is not at all surprising that he would seek to neutralize fraud, waste, and abuse as an issue or to offer a new vision of lean and mean government. He had every incentive to reposition the party. What is perhaps more surprising is how easily he put the Bush campaign on the defensive. By early September Bush was forced to state his own position as the true candidate of small government. “I’m the one that stands for freedom and democracy,” he told a September 15 rally in Marysville, Ohio, “freedom through strength, freedom from big government, freedom from the arrogance of the bureaucrat, and freedom from the long arm of the tax man. I stand for these things because they are the way we can build a safer and more secure America so that you can fulfill your dreams.”

Unlike Reagan, who almost never personalized his attacks on bureaucracy, Bush featured the arrogant bureaucrat in speech after speech. Delivering a new stump speech before a group of private-sector employees earlier in September, Bush characterized the election as a choice between “a big government that thinks it knows best and a smaller government that believes you know better.” Clinton was the candidate of bureaucrats, not the people. “Governor Clinton wants to give Government more power. And I want to give you, the American people, more power. Governor Clinton wants to make the bureaucrat’s life easy, to provide one-size-fits-all service in schools and in day care. I want you to be able to choose your schools and choose your day care so that we make your lives easier.” Alongside criticizing Clinton for wafting on the issues—“He’s been spotted in more places than Elvis”—Bush also made every effort to tie Clinton to his Democratic predecessors, arguing in late September that “we’ve heard that song before. Jimmy Carter sang it. Walter Mondale sang it. Michael Dukakis sang it. They’re going after the rich, but the middle class always gets up singing the blues. Big government gets the gold, and you get the shaft.”

Clinton easily blunted the attacks by distinguishing between bureaucrats and bureaucracy. The only time Clinton used the word “bureaucrats” was when he promised to fire them. “He won’t streamline the federal government and change the way it works,” Clinton said of Bush. “Nor will he cut a hundred thousand bureaucrats and put a hundred thousand new police officers on the streets of American cities. But I will.” Clinton focused instead on big bureaucracy, embracing the war on waste, while crafting an alternative vision of an activist government shorn of bureaucratic excess. His most important statement on the issue came in a September 25 stump speech delivered at the University of Connecticut. He started by acknowledging his party’s history. “I know that the Democratic Party in Washington has been in the past too identified with tax-and-spend, big government, bureaucratic solutions... But I have worked hard to be a different kind of
Democrat and to give the American people a different kind of Democratic Party. . . . My fellow Americans, contrary to the rhetoric of my opponent, the issue is not more or less government, the question is what kind of government. I want a government that works to spur growth, create jobs, increase incomes; a streamlined government that still plays a central role, because in every advanced country in the world, whether governed by conservatives or liberals, there is an aggressive role for a government working to promote private sector economic growth."

Bush had no answer. Much as he pounded away on the traditional fraud, waste, and abuse theme, his attack was clearly limited by his own incumbency. He could blame Congress for wasteful programs, which he did, ask for the line item veto as a way to eliminate pork barrel projects, which he also did, even promise to wring out the waste and excess in the health-care system, which he did. But he could not make the fraud, waste, and abuse label stick to the Democrats. Clinton had already admitted that the old Democrats were the party of fraud, waste, and abuse, clearly dampening the charge against New Democrats like him.

Remarkably, Dole could not make the fraud, waste, and abuse issue stick to Clinton four years later. It was most certainly not for a lack of trying, however. Dole mentioned government waste thirty-one times during the campaign, featuring waste in one of his most visible attack advertisements:

CLINTON: But I don't think that qualifies me as a closet liberal.
ANNOUNCER: That's not what the facts say, Mr. Clinton. The real Bill Clinton! A real spend-and-tax liberal.

Dole also took on fraud, waste, and abuse on the stump, increasing the volume later in the campaign as he searched for some way to reduce Clinton's substantial lead. In Selma, California, for example, he promised to fund his tax cut by harnessing the three horsemen again: "There's enough waste in the government to give you the tax cut, enough waste, enough fraud, enough abuse, enough people flying around the world. Hazel O'Leary [Clinton's Energy Secretary] only lands for refueling. She's gone all the time. Why can't you take a vacation?"

Dole's attacks were easily deflected by the downsizing of government. Having promised a leaner government in 1992, Clinton never missed an opportunity to tell voters that he had delivered. The reference rarely varied from the following paragraph, which he first delivered in St. Louis on September 10.

Our friends in the Republican Party often attack government, but I found they hadn't done much reforming in the last several years. So we did. The government is now smaller by about 250,000 than it was the day I took office. It will be down by about 270,000 by the end of this year. The last time it was this size was when John Kennedy was president. As a percentage of our workforce, your federal government is now the same size it was in 1933 when Franklin Roosevelt took the oath of office before the New Deal.

Much as Dole argued that Clinton had been "doing everything in his power to make sure the government stays big and gets bigger," Clinton had the numbers on his side. Much as Dole attacked the arrogant bureaucrats in Washington, Clinton answered with the numbers. "Yes, the government cannot solve all your problems with a big bureaucracy," he told a crowd in Albuquerque on October 13. "That government is gone. It was our administration—not our friends in the other party—that cut the size of the federal government to its lowest since John Kennedy was president."

On and on it went. The bad bureaucrats were gone with the downsizing, the bad bureaucracy was gone with the reinventing. What remained was closer to the people, more customer friendly, slimmer, tougher, faster, smoother, more flexible, and filled with dedicated public servants. Speaking to young people in Atlanta in late October, Clinton referred to "how bad big old federal government was, but it's our administration working with our allies in Congress [that] has cut the size of the federal government, the number of regulations, the number of government programs, and we have privatized more government operations than the last two Republican administrations did in 12 years combined. That's the truth." By embracing the war on waste in 1992, he was able to blunt Republican attacks on his own administration in 1996. Clinton had made bureaucracy lovable again by attacking it, disparaging it, and, ultimately, cutting it. It is impossible to know whether he would have been as successful in restoring government during poor economic times. But by delivering a government that most certainly looked smaller and delivered more, Clinton blunted the traditional antigovernment attack. Future Democratic candidates will likely follow his
lead, even if that means conflict with their own supporters in the government employee unions.

The question is how future Republican candidates might recapture the issue. One option is to continue the war on waste campaign, only with better data and a more systematic focus. It would be a mistake, however, to blame the ineffectiveness of the issue simply on Dole. The war on waste issue did not work because the incumbent administration embraced it, as Vice President Gore will most certainly do if he gets a chance to run for the presidency in his own right. One suspects, therefore, that Republicans will up the ante. If Democrats can cut government back to the Roosevelt years, do not be surprised if Republicans promise to take it back to the Harding days. It would be relatively simple to cut government another 300,000 jobs without closing a single agency. Having gone to school on the shadow making under Reagan, Bush, and Clinton, the next Republican administration could easily push the lost jobs outward and downward. Democrats would be hard pressed to meet such a call without a backlash from organized labor.

Civil Service Incentives

There is one last player in the political economy of shadows: the civil servants who survive the downsizing. Although one can feel sympathy for the relatively small number of employees who lost their jobs through reductions in force, the managers who have lost their titles, and, most significantly, the civil servants who had to pick up the slack from the mostly random cuts, there is some evidence that the federal employees left behind after the downsizing are doing better than they could have expected. If not quite ready to endorse shadow making, they have at least some reason to keep quiet.

That civil servants have incentives to care about structure is obvious. As Moe argues, career officers have a variety of tools for insulating themselves against the vagaries of political uncertainty, not the least of which is the coming and going of political appointees: "They can promote further professionalization and more extensive reliance on civil service. They can formalize and judicialize their decision procedures. They can base decisions on technical expertise, operational experience, and precedent, thus making it 'objective' and agency-centered." Comfortable as big numbers might be, Moe suggests that the civil service may actually be strengthened as its numbers fall. The fewer the managers, the greater the power of the managers who remain; the fewer the technical experts, the greater the power of those who control the expertise. Just as a contractor's bargaining leverage is increased when there are fewer bidders, which explains the flurry of defense mergers over the past ten years, a civil servant's bargaining strength is increased as more work is moved out of house, provided, of course, that civil servant can provide the needed expertise.

All Above Average

The limited available evidence confirms at least one part of the pattern: the civil servants who survived the Workforce Restructuring Act are both more satisfied and better paid. Consider two sources of data on the issue.

The first comes from the Merit Systems Protection Board, which has conducted five massive surveys of federal workers over the past fifteen years. The most recent survey involved a sample of 9,710 federal employees and revealed deep concerns regarding downsizing and reinventing. Among supervisors, for example, nearly three out of five reported that there had been a noticeable reduction in the number of supervisor positions in their agencies, with parallel increases in both the number of subordinates and the workload among those who survived. Among all of the respondents, supervisors and nonsupervisors, nearly half said their jobs had changed since 1993, most of whom thought the change had been negative. Although four out of five said that the work performed by their unit both gave the public a worthwhile return on their taxes and could not be performed as effectively by a private sector company, only one-fifth agreed that the Gore reinventing effort had made a positive impact on improving customer service to the public, exactly half the number who disagreed.

Among respondents who worked in agencies that had made reinventing an important priority, the numbers were significantly higher. But even in such organizations, the number of respondents who said reinventing had made a positive impact in bringing change to government managed to creep up to only 35 percent. Overall, 75 percent said downsizing had not helped their agencies achieve their missions more effectively, while just over half said downsizing had seriously eroded the institutional memory or knowledge in their organization. Even when the Workforce Restructuring Act targets expire, the downsizing may still exert some force. Roughly 40 percent of the survey respondents said that worries about a future wave of reductions in force and budget cutbacks were reducing their productivity.

None of these responses is particularly shocking, given the intensity of the reinventing pressure. But perhaps what is more interesting, given the theory of public bureaucracy, is the surprisingly high numbers of respon-
dents who nonetheless declared themselves satisfied with both their jobs and their pay. Despite all the negativity described above, 70 percent said they were satisfied with their jobs, a number that remained virtually unchanged from the 1989 and 1992 surveys. And despite all the fears of the future, exactly half were satisfied with their pay, a number that had climbed from 28 percent in 1989 and 42 percent in 1992. Even more important for the long-term health of the career service, the gap between the perceived quality of employees who left and those who took their place was closing rapidly. In 1989, for example, 56 percent of supervisors rated the quality of the leavers as average or above average, while only 36 percent rated the quality of new hires the same. By 1996 the gap between leavers and new hires had closed to just 8 percent, 53 percent to 45 percent.

Before confirming Moe's notion that smaller numbers of civil servants would have greater power and, therefore, higher satisfaction, it is important to note the methodological difficulties in drawing a link between downsizing and happiness. It is entirely possible that the less-satisfied employees simply left government. After all, the downsizing campaign was driven mostly by attrition and voluntary separation. In theory, those who left would be the ones most dissatisfied with government. Their departure would leave the more satisfied behind. Moreover, there is every indication that satisfaction would be lower at the bottom of organizations, where pay is lower and stress may be greater. Sawing off the bottom, as the downsizing most certainly did, would inevitably leave more satisfied employees behind. It would also leave government with more highly paid employees.

Nevertheless, there is at least some evidence of a link between downsizing and happiness in the annual performance appraisal process. As table 3-7 shows, the federal performance ratings have made startling gains since 1990, the last year for which data is easily accessible from the Office of Personnel Data files. The trends are up across the board, whether for the most senior managers and supervisors or for blue-collar employees. The supervisors who do the ratings have made their findings clear: all federal employees are now above average. Indeed, federal employees are not only well above average, they are close to becoming outstanding.

The higher the position, the better the ratings. At the very top of the General Schedule in 1996, 56 percent of the 130,000 managers and supervisors won outstanding grades, an increase of 25 points in just seven years. At the next highest category, nearly half of the 135,000 General Schedule 13-15 nonmanagers and nonsupervisors wound up in the outstanding category, an increase of 21 points over the period. Although the trend was the same further down the hierarchy, the 1.1 million General Schedule 1-12 and 240,000 Federal Wage System employees (blue collar) both ended up at the same place, 39 percent rated outstanding, with wage system employees moving up a bit faster over the seven years. Interestingly, the gap between senior managers and frontline employees increased during the period, rising from 11 percentage points in the outstanding category in 1990 to 17 points in 1996. Frontline employees just could not keep up with their higher level peers.

The ratings obviously measure more than actual performance, if they measure performance at all. Indeed, the performance ratings may be the perfect barometer of downsizing stress. Under the rules governing the reductions in force that took place early in the Clinton administration, civil servants received seniority credits based on their annual performance rates. Because seniority gives employees bumping rights when a reduction in force takes place, the easiest way for a manager to protect his or her staff is to overrate prized employees. Thus much as one can criticize random downsizing for its lack of precision, one can also criticize targeted downsizing for its unintended effects on the performance appraisal system. Although the vast majority of federal employees are doing good work, even the most tireless booster would have trouble defending a five-point rating system in which the average score is already above the fourth mark and rising fast. If the current trend holds, and OPM remains either unwilling or unable to stem the inflation, all federal employees will be outstanding in the year 2020.
Ultimately, it would be impossible to interpret either the Merit System Protection Board survey or the performance ratings as proof positive that civil servants somehow favor shadow casting, if only because the ratings increase began well before candidate Clinton promised a cut in federal personnel. Moreover, those who got the higher ratings and pay most certainly paid a price. Nevertheless, the data do suggest that downsizing and budget cuts do provide some rewards to ease the pain. Civil servants may rightly worry about the effect of downsizing on the institutional memory and knowledge base of government, but they also reap at least some benefits as a result. The incentives most certainly condition what might be a more intensely negative reaction.

Union Incentives

In theory, no group should be more self-interested in opposing the shadow of government than federal employee unions. After all, each job that leaves the federal government for a contractor, grantee, or state and local entity is a job lost from potential membership.

Interestingly, however, the federal employee unions have been historically less actively opposed to the shadow of government than self-interest might predict. But for occasional exceptions such as the American Postal Workers Union spring 1998 “Save Our Service” campaign against further contracting out of mail sorting, the federal unions have generally accepted the downsizing pressure. Indeed, the House legislative report on the Workforce Restructuring Act even went so far as to describe union support for downsizing as “widespread.”

That support came from two sources. First, the federal unions clearly believed that most of the proposed cuts involved middle-level managers, an assumption that proved false, as the next chapter will show. Nevertheless, as John Sturdivant of the National Association of Government Employees explained in November 1993, as the Workforce Restructuring Act moved forward, “The understanding is this 252,000 reduction is going to be mostly managers because those are the folks that would be reduced under the National Performance Review . . . .” Moreover, as Sturdivant continued, “as employees we have two choices: either to sit there and watch it happen and have no say about it and experience detrimental impact on the employees that we represent . . . or come to the table and have some say about it in a way that our knowledge and our experience ultimately will result [in improvements]—because we are the ones who will be asked to do more work with less people.”

Second and more important, union support for downsizing was clearly linked to establishment of a new National Partnership Council that gave the unions a greater opportunity to shape federal work force policy. Although Sturdivant could not recall whether the quid pro quo was ever explicitly discussed, he did recall two face-to-face meetings with the vice president and a tough conversation about the need to protect union workers from the cuts. “We told them that up front, that we want to change the way we do business; we want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem, but we certainly are not going to change the way you do business if it means the people that we represent are going to be out on the streets.”

It is not clear, however, that the federal unions could have stopped the downsizing had they wanted to. They had the first Democratic president in twelve years, ample congressional support for downsizing, and enormous pressure to join the reinventing campaign. They also had at least some promise of protection and a new forum for influencing the course of future reform.

The federal unions did not give away their rights to oppose occasional efforts to expand privatization and contracting out—rights that they most certainly exercised in weakening a 1998 effort to force departments and agencies to provide a list of activities that are not inherently governmental functions. They may be able to stop further erosion of the full-time-equivalent federal work force, but they will never reverse the trend. With or without their cooperation, the federal work force is simply not going to grow, not with the promises made for leaner government. Democrats have made bureaucracy lovable again perhaps, but they have done so at an extraordinary long-term cost. Short of some cataclysmic event—a war or great natural disaster—federal employment will stay down. The shadow of government will surely vary over time as budgets and missions shorten and contracts, grants, and mandates lengthen. But that it will exist should not be in doubt. The question is no longer whether the shadow will exist in the future, but what is happening now that the public service no longer begins and ends inside government.

Conclusion

It is one thing for Congress and the president, Democrats and Republicans, even civil servants to prefer an illusion of smallness, and quite another to make the illusion real. After all, few members of Congress understand the mechanics of public personnel, and fewer still have the patience for legislative hearings and bill drafting. As Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) once complained to her Civil Service Committee colleagues, “the civil ser-
vice is a very difficult concept for most people to know about, and once you get beyond this committee, if you did a test on the House floor about the difference between RIFs and freezes and buyouts and everything, their eyes glaze over, and they stare at you like a deer staring in the headlights.794

The question for the next chapter, therefore, is how Congresses and presidents were able to create the illusion of smallness described earlier in this book. Simply asked, what are the tools of smallness and how have they shaped the true size of government? The answers can be found 165 miles to the south of David Pryor’s home town of Ouachita, Arkansas, in another small town named Cascilla, Mississippi, where future United States Representative Jamie L. Whitten was born in 1910. If Pryor was unrelenting in his effort to measure the true size of government, Whitten was equally dedicated to making sure the federal civil service never got big. Given a mostly free hand by colleagues who left the specialization to him, and using head count ceilings and freezes to accomplish his goal, Whitten not only assured that Pryor would never get the answer he so desired, but that the federal government would be condemned to an often random process for deciding which jobs would stay in house and which would join the shadow.795

Chapter Four

The Tools for Staying Small

The illusion of smallness would have occurred with or without Representative Jamie L. Whitten, Democrat of Mississippi. Congress had already pressed early head count constraints. But very different tools would have been used for keeping government small had Whitten stayed in Cascilla instead of running for Congress in 1940.

Although Whitten came to fame for many reasons during his record-setting fifty-three years in the House, it was his so-called Whitten Amendment of 1951 that did more than any other single act to create the head count pressure that continues to exist today. Simply described, the amendment placed a ceiling on total federal civilian employment, while freezing the creation of new permanent positions. As he later explained, “I had no ax to grind, and have none now, except to do what I can for orderly government. Sometimes I think politically it would be much wiser to get a staff and keep count of Federal employees and release it to the press complaining about the total number now and then. Had I followed that course, I might have gotten an award of merit…”796

Whitten chose a more direct approach later in 1951, however. His brief amendment to the 1951 Supplemental Appropriation Act merely asked the Civil Service Commission to make full use of its authority to make temporary appointments “in order to prevent increases in the number of permanent personnel.” It was mostly an exhortation that would have had virtually no effect but for a freeze on new appointments that was contained in the