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Public v. Private Organizations

Oscar Romero

Illinois Wesleyan University, oromero@iwu.edu

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Public v. Private Organizations

Abstract

People always hear on the news politicians arguing with each other on the effectiveness of government. They both agree that government agencies can do a lot better than what they are doing right now, but disagree on how to resolve it. The left argues for providing more funding to these public agencies to have better performance; however, that will require an increase in taxes which most Americans do not want. The right argues for privatizing these public agencies so that there is no bureaucratic involvement in the procedure, as well as this, will determine which agencies succeed and which ones fail in the open market. I would have agreed more on the left's opinion simply because this will eliminate the agency's focus on profit over people; however, I realized that private administration is a more effective and better way to approach many services. The priorities that "private" emphasizes, while not perfect, are more efficient and effective than those that exist when these services remain with the public sector.

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Under section 365 of the Employment and Placement for the United States Postal Service (USPS), if a supervisor wants to remove a bad employee, he or she would have to follow 365.32 Separation – Disqualification procedure. This requires the supervisor to give legitimate reasons to take action and establish a probationary period where the supervisor monitors the employee, with the employee's knowledge of the probation period. Then the supervisor sends a recommendation to the office with the power to fire employees. Finally, that office must deliver the written notice to the employee explaining his/her coming unemployment and the date of termination. Altogether, this procedure may take the supervisor between a couple of months to a few years to try to get rid of a bad employee. The easiest and most common way to get rid of a

bad postal service worker is through following 365.22 Separation – Transfer, where the supervisor will notify the employee that he or she will be working for another agency. Unfortunately, this does not get rid of the bad employee but instead passes that employee to another supervisor, harming the operations of the entire public organization.

In the private sector, not only are supervisors capable of firing bad workers, but they are also in more control of the workplace to make decisions, whether risky or not. In the public sector, if they try to do anything other than the SOPs they were given or fulfill the goals of the administration, the administration of the organization will step in to fix up the “mess” and will potentially fire the supervisor.

This leads to another issue of public administration: political appointments. The possibility that the head of an administration can push forward policies that favors the president causes concerns for the effectiveness of the entire organization, such as in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Administrator Scott Pruitt pushed to cut the agency’s budget by 23% and eliminate over 3,000 positions (20%) of the EPA’s entire workforce in order to fulfill President Trump’s campaign promises of cutting the federal government’s budget. Unfortunately, this massive cut on the agency’s budget leads to the ineffectiveness of carrying out their duty due to the smaller workforce and less money to invest in research and aid to people and organizations across the country.

However, I do have to comment on the agency’s sheer effectiveness of the Postal Service when it comes to delivering mail. A letter from anywhere in the mainland United States will arrive the next day at my mailbox at precisely 1 pm.

When my aunt from California deposits her letter at a collection box, a postal carrier removes all of the mail from the box and takes it to a mail processing plant. The Postal workers feed the letter through a machine that rapidly separates mail by shape and puts them right side up. The machine then applies a postmark with the date and place where the letter was sorted and cancellation lines. Then the address on the letter is scanned by an optical character reader and placed in a tray to be moved for barcode application. After the barcode sprays on the letter, it sends it into a bin on the machine to be sent to the next processing plant by plane. At the plant, the letter is fed through another barcode sorter to deliver to a specific carrier – it also arranges the carrier’s letters into the order of delivery. Finally, the carrier will drive up to my street, safely park, and leave the letter from my aunt in my mailbox. All of this finished within two days. To top it all off, the USPS is a self-sustaining organization that does not require any additional funding from the government. So the capability of an organization to accomplish such a daunting task at a fast rate and cost the person 49¢ to use their service is very impressive. This is probably due to the employees and managers continuously and consistently following SOPs that work, which is something a private organization would struggle with since they will give their employees more discretion than the public employees.

Nevertheless, public administration does not work for all agencies. In the case of the USPS, it does function pretty well; however, other agencies, such as the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), cannot rely on SOPs due to the procedures’ ineffectiveness. Since 2012, ICE has had 1,480 American citizens in custody because they mistook them as an illegal immigrant. Federal policies require ICE agents to “carefully and expeditiously” investigate any claim of U.S. citizenship; unfortunately, ICE officers typically

either ignored or scoffed at the claims, even when the family member brought forth the documentation of citizenship to the ICE officers. These kinds of agencies try to prove that they are useful in their hunt for illegal immigrants by providing the number of arrests they have done. However, they took this out of proportions to where they begin to arrest innocent people for data. A privately-run organization would have gone over all adverse claims towards the organization and correct their errors swiftly, instead of a bureaucratic system getting in the way of bettering the organization.

Everything of one thing is always wrong; no country in the world has pure capitalism nor pure communism. However, most prosperous nations have a mixed economic society, such as the United States. Good agencies can exist with both private and public elements of administration; they need to be mostly private for better control of the agency.

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