

## Patronage and its Impact on Policy Making Process and Administration of Government Agencies in the U.S.

Nasser S. Al-Kahtani

### Abstract

Patronage is an element of civilian and military politics. It is an old phenomenon which can be traced back to the colonial period. During that time, public employees were drawn from the privileged classes and from those who had wealth and influence. Although patronage has lost its luster, the spoils system is alive and well in the U.S. today. At the same time, the current trends in the political system of U.S. clearly threaten an increase in patronage and a return to the political problems of the 1800s. Does control of patronage significantly increase a political party's chances of winning elections? This paper examines how patronage has been used and understood in policy making process and administration of government agencies in the U.S. The paper proceeds as follows. The first section provides a conceptual exposition of patronage. The second section reviews the historical development of patronage in the U.S. In the third section, four major forms of patronage widely used in U.S. have been discussed at length. The fourth empirical part of the paper explores the impact of patronage on policy making process and administration of government agencies. In the fifth section, concluding observations have been given.

**Keywords:** Federal; Political; Democratic; Dismissal; Institution; Regulation.

### Introduction

The awarding of government jobs, appointments, and other considerations on the basis of political ties or favors is known as patronage – that is, a patron or official sponsor arranged it. For many Americans “patronage” is an outdated term that conjures up image of Andrew Jackson, Tammany hall and machine politics.[1] Through the readings of the concept of patronage, it can be noticed that the American society has often been characterized by concepts that strongly support the element of personalism, such as, patron-client relationships, influence and connection, favoritism, etc. The use of these concepts is supported by both the political and the social

systems which indicate that this is the way American society functions. In many respects the politics of the U.S. confirm this picture. The political system formerly was characterized as personalized competition among political leaders at both the national and local levels and by the use of coercion, money and patronage to win election. Nowadays, new developments in technology and the economy as well as growing social differentiation have changed this pattern of politics in the U.S. However, patronage is still the primary tool or weapon that political leaders use to win elections and to ensure that their policies will be carried out. Patronage always has been considered essential for politicians and executives at all levels in government to increase their power and to control the bureaucracy.

Patronage is not restricted to job appointments; there are many kinds of patronages that can be used by executives to achieve their goals. According to Shafritz (1988), “patronage is the power of elected/appointed officials to make partisan appointments to office or to confer contracts, honors or other benefits on their political

---

**Author's Affiliation:** \*Dean, College of Business Administration, Al-Kharj Salman Bin Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**Reprint's request:** Dr. Nasser S. Al-Kahtani, Dean, College of Business Administration, Al-Kharj Salman Bin Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

E-mail: na.khan.cm@gmail.com

(Received on 30.09.2013, accepted on 30.10.2013)

supporters".[2] Sorauf (1960) provided an interesting definition of patronage stating that, "patronage is best thought of as an incentive system- a political currency with which to purchase political activity and political responses".[3] Besides, Tolchin (1971:6) defined patronage as "the allocation of the discretionary favor of government in exchange for political support".[4]

Based on the above, patronage includes a vast range of favors awarded by government officials whose increased spending has brought increased opportunities to political supporters e.g. political supporters receive construction contracts, banking and insurance funds and special treatment by the agencies of the government. In addition, patronage helps bring to local areas dams, post office buildings and similar programmes that make elected officials look good to their constituents. Through these favors, political leaders win the loyalty of those beneath them, make themselves look good in the eyes of their constituents and more importantly strengthen their political futures.

#### *Historical perspective*

Patronage is an old phenomenon which can be traced back to the Colonial period. During that period, public employees were drawn from the privileged classes and from those who had wealth and influence wealth and influence. In this context, the servants and African slaves did what is now called public works. From 1789 to 1829, federal positions were filled with what Mosher (1982:80) called "gentlemen' Public employees were gentlemen from upper levels of society and generally persons favorable to the Federalist cause.[5] Fitness of character was used as the criterion to select people of good family background, education, honor and loyalty to the new government. Lower-level clerk positions were filled by persons with an upper-middle-class background who were rotated in and out of government with each election.

During this period, there was neither a clear legislation dealing with appointments,

examinations, promotions, nor any other aspects of a personnel system except the pay system for clerks and officers. The federal service was made up of stable, long tenured officials who were usually elitist in character and exceptionally free of corruption. Generally, the career system was strictly based on custom and on the deference that one gentleman owed to another.[2]

During the 1828 election, Andrew Jackson articulated the philosophy of patronage in public administration and called for and supported patronage for three reasons: first public jobs were quite simple that everyone could do and therefore they should belong to the common people; second, long tenure in office made officials less responsive to the public; and third, patronage would enhance the accountability and responsiveness of government. He argued that patronage would make the bureaucracy more responsive to the people by making the bureaucracy responsive to the party in power.[6]

Jackson rejected government by gentlemen and instead recruited less privileged Democratic Party loyalists. He also rejected the fact that one social class, the aristocracy had monopolized public office for so long. During this time, common people had the opportunity to participate and hold public positions in government. However, Jackson's reform was not extended to the top level of government; the social position of bureaucrats under his administration was not much different from that of presidents who came before him (Straussman: 1990:171).[7]

Ironically, Jackson won the presidency by accusing his predecessor President Adams, of excessive usage of patronage practices during his administration (Tolchin: 1971: 323).[4] He called for a reform which required the correction of those abuses that had brought the patronage of the federal government into conflict with the freedom of election and the correction of those factors that had disturbed the appointment procedures which had placed the power in incompetent hands. Jackson argued that the selection should include two

important ingredients – merit and political loyalty. A few months after his election, he provided a more extended rationale for rotation in office and patronage appointments which included virtual elimination of the merit consideration (Mosher: 1982:65).[5]

Some authors in public administration date the patronage from the period of Jackson's election to the passage of the Pendleton Act. They often associate the election of Jackson to the presidency with so-called spoils system which was later called patronage. The spoils system grew vigorously under Jackson's successors. The notion of rotation of office prevailed over the previous notion of stability in office. Presidents even began turning out of office appointees of earlier presidents of the same party. During that era, political machines prevailed in some places like Chicago and New York. These machines, according to Michael Johnson are party organizations whose members are motivated and rewarded by material incentives rather than by consideration of ideology. These incentives, such as money, jobs, contracts and favors are used to build the organisation in order to obtain votes to win and maintain control over public authority. During that period, the career system grew alongside the patronage system. Executives and politicians believed that it was necessary to have, in the important positions of middle management, employees who knew their business, laws and regulations and who could protect them against mistakes. Clearly, the career system was not based on who you were but, rather, what you did. The latter became an important factor to hold a good position in the government.

Despite all the arguments that Jackson started what is now called patronage, in actual fact, he removed very few officeholders. During his administration, it was estimated that only one-tenth to one-third of all federal officeholders were changed and out of 612 executive positions, only 252 were removed and replaced by patronage appointments. Actually, the percentage of employees that Jackson removed was nearly the same as that of Jefferson's removals following Adams's

father (Mosher: 1982: 65).

Although Jackson achieved historical notoriety for the spoils system, Abraham Lincoln practices it far more extensively. As President Lincoln followed the footsteps of his predecessors and was an unembarrassed supporter and shrewd user of the spoils system. After his victory in 1860, he removed 1195 out of 1520 presidential appointees to make room for his own supporters. These removals were considered the most sweeping use of patronage power up to that time (Tochins: 1971: 323). He also used patronage considerably to win the presidency for a second term.

Surprisingly, while the spoils system or patronage reached its peak under Lincoln, its deterioration can also be dated from his administration. After his reelection in 1864, Lincoln refused the doctrine of rotation proposed by Jackson. Some historians argued that this action can be considered one of the factors that paved the way to introduce and develop the career system in the United States. Many employees who had continued tenure during this period retained their positions through competence, merit and neutrality (Shafritz: 1986: 8).

In 1883, the Pendleton Act was as a reaction to a politically dominated, corrupt and inefficient spoils system that had been brought into the national government in 1820 by President Andrew Jackson. This Act was an early attempt to lay the foundation for a career in a civilian public service. It had two specific goals: first, the Act was trying to promote efficiency in government by emphasizing job-related qualities of applicants rather than their political affiliation and loyalty; second, it sought to protect the rights of public employees from political pressure (Kilinger and Nalbandian: 1985:32-33). The introduction of the Pendleton Act influenced and reduced the percentage of employment through patronage. It signaled a new change in the civil service in America which was to become increasingly significant in the decades to follow; however, it did not abolish the spoils system and start afresh, nor did it undertake to return to the

system of the Federalists. Instead, the Pendleton Act accepted the principles of egalitarianism and of equal opportunity in public service (Mosher: 1982:67).[5]

After the passage of the Act, public employment through patronage was still practiced. In January 1884, there were 131208 positions in the executive civil service and only 11 percent or about 13924 positions were covered by the Pendleton Act. In 1900, there were 208000 positions in the executive service and 94839 positions were subject to appointment by examination, but 113161 or about 54 percent were left open to patronage appointment. By 1932, the merit system gradually expanded to cover 80 percent of all federal employees. However, the positions subject to examination were largely for postal and customs clerks and some classes of professionals.[8]

The Pendleton Act and its emphasis on merit created a threat to presidents, mayors and other politicians. Presidents discovered that merit created bureaucrats were not responsive to presidential initiatives. Franklin Roosevelt reintroduced patronage by arguing that the tenured bureaucracy at that time was not sympathetic to the New Deal. Roosevelt created about 60 agencies that were staffed outside the civil service system. By 1936, Roosevelt had reduced the merit system coverage to 60 percent of all federal employees. [6]

The last touchstone in this review is the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. The most important aspect which relates to this essay is the creation of the Senior Executive Service (SES). The SES consists of more than 9,000 career and non-career executives whose grade and rank are given to them as individuals rather than to their position. The president has the authority to identify all SES positions that should be non-partisan and to appoint career executives to these positions.[9] The remaining SES positions can go to career or non-career appointees. The SES was created to address the issue of responsiveness of the civil servants to political direction. Now the president, through the SES, can increase his presidential

influence over administration and policy. In my judgment, the SES is a new version of patronage or the spoils system that has been in the US since its founding.

Recently, Hamilton reexamined patronage and judged it to have had either a position function in society or not the pejorative connotation that is associated with it.[10] In his review of a number of case studies, he concluded that the results of patronage are more complex than one would suspect given the negative connotation of the term. For example, he found in one case study of a local government agency that it functioned as a merit system to recruit capable people and provide them with civil service protection. In other studies he reviewed, the general conclusion was that there were too many voters and too few jobs to use patronage as a means to win votes.

Does control of patronage significantly increase a political party's probability of winning elections? Perhaps surprisingly, at least for the U.S. we do not know the answer to this question. Theoretically, it may be anything but "yes". Patronage jobs constitute a valuable resource for the party in power.[11] Thus the foregoing discussion clearly indicates patronage continues to survive because it is an essential element of democracy. Patronage will exist so long as there are political parties competing against each other whether we like it or not, patronage is a method that the government uses to achieve and implement policies and goals. However, excessive use of patronage is destructive to the party as well as the society as a whole.

#### *Form of patronage*

After having dealt with historical background of patronage, now an attempt is being made in this part of the paper to discuss about the several kinds of patronage widely used to influence the policy-making process and administration in the bureaucracy. Patronage is defined, as previously mentioned, as access to government jobs, contracts, judgeships, and social events. These aspects

of patronage have been discussed in particular in the following pages:

(1) *Patronage and Jobs*

Recruiting under the patronage system occurs at all levels. At the top level, patronage has been and still is used to appoint officials in policy or confidential positions. Looking back at the history of the American political system, one can conclude that appointments to executive positions are generally filled through patronage. In fact, in the past century, as previously discussed, public employment was not regulated by rules or legislation. The absence of civil service rules increasingly placed power in the hands of the privileged upper class to use its influence and affluence to appoint relatives, friends and supporters. Nowadays, appointments through patronage, especially at the top level, are widely practiced and supported by the legislature and Supreme Court. These two branches justify their position by arguing that political appointments at the level of department heads are considered devices for putting into effect the policy choices decided in elections.

For middle-level positions, political appointment is still practiced but to a limited degree. Appointment to these positions can be traced back to the administration of president Eisenhower in 1952. When his administration took office after twenty years of Democratic Party rule, he decided to put its own loyal people into key middle-management positions in order to be able to carry out its policies and achieve its goals. For this purpose, a list of positions called Schedule "C" was created to contain the names of individuals who might be appointed because of their commitment to the ideology of the president (McLinney and Howard: 1979: 286). Schedule "C" positions, according to Shafritz, are positions which involve a close personal relationship between the individual and the agency head or his/her officials. It contains important positions that must be filled by the party in power with individuals who completely support its political

aims and policies. The appointment to Schedule "C" jobs requires that departments and agencies recommended to Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that a position needs to be placed in Schedule "C" if they think the duties of this position are confidential. If OPM agrees with the agency's request, it will place the position in Schedule C. if not; OPM will reject the recommendation.[12]

Finally, political appointments to lower-level jobs have been resisted because of a history of abuse. In the past, political leaders often used patronage appointments to convert the recipients into life-long and devoted supporters of the appointing party. It is believed that gratitude for receiving the jobs will win the recipient's political support, as well as the support of a large number of his relatives. The recipient's ability to retain his job can be enhanced by keeping his party in power. Political analysts argued that a well-placed appointment would increase the party's support by six to eight votes. Of course, the same logic could be used with the appointment of representatives of special blocs of voters, such as ethnic or religious groups (Sorauf: 1960: 29).[3]

As a result of this logic, "political machines" or what Freedman called, "patronage armies" were created to cement party positions and ensure reelection (Freedman: 1988: 847).[13] Apparently, political machines existed in almost every major city in the U.S. In New York, for instance, these political machines controlled the city jobs, as well as the Talent Bank which was created in 1983 primarily for the purpose of bringing more blacks, Hispanics, and women into city government. Many of the jobs of the Bank, specially, those that paid well, had been given to candidates, mostly white males, whose applications signified that they had been recommended by well known political figures. Clearly, the Talent Bank had been far less concerned with affirmative action than with serving as an old-fashioned patronage network.[14]

From the above, one can conclude that patronage is still practiced at top level

management, but in general, has declined sharply at middle and lower-level positions during the past two decades. The decline in patronage was caused by several factors. The Court ruled that the government can no longer consider political affiliation when hiring or promoting or dismissing almost all its employees. Second, public attitudes are increasingly hostile to patronage and the political style it represents. Finally, the private sector created attractive alternatives to patronage positions (Sorauf: 1986:33). Actually, these factors along with many more did not completely eliminate patronage; instead they forced politicians to use another form of patronage, namely, patronage contracting to achieve their goals.

### *(2) Patronage contracting*

Patronage contracting usually refers to government contracting practices that are motivated by partisan political considerations. Political leaders use patronage contracting to reward their supporters and to encourage others to lend their support. This form of patronage is widely used, especially since the constraints that took place recently during the past two decades which impaired political leaders' used of patronage employment to reward their supporters. Politicians and executives usually prefer to use patronage contracting because it is invisible to public view, and it still has not been controlled by rules or regulations. Finally, it is most suitable due to the fact that contractors are among the largest group of campaign contributors at the local level to both major political parties (Tolchin: 1971:32).[4]

Apparently, patronage contracting is not a new approach to rewarding supporters. For instance, during the Johnson administration, a number of architectural and engineering firms that had made substantial contributions to the president received lucrative government contracts (Dagger: 1984: 541).[15] Recently, in Chicago, Mayor Harold Washington extensively used the City's contracts for patronage purposes. Shortly after taking office,

the mayor issued an executive order stating that at least 25 per cent of the City's business should be given to blacks, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans, and another 5 percent should go women. Moreover, the City required that commercial developers using City land or bond money set aside 25 - 30 percent of their contracts for minorities and women if they wanted to continue to do business with the City. It was argued that the mayor created this program to promote minority economic development, but undoubtedly it gave him a way to reward those who just happened to contribute to his campaign. Further, the City awarded lucrative legal work to black lawyers for the sale of municipal bonds, and other legal work went to favored law firms, rewarding them for their support of the mayor. Not only that, but Washington succeeded in finding jobs for his supporters (building his patronage army) outside the City by referring them to private companies doing business with or receiving loans from the City (Freedman:1988: 855-56).[13]

Another negative side of patronage is that it is usually used for punishing contractors and voters for exercising their rights, namely, voting for the opposing candidate. Patronage contracting is only one of many means by which political parties induce support. Some politicians, particularly mayors, may reward one section of the city that heavily supported them by improving that section at the expense of a less cooperative section, or by rewarding an interest group by pushing for legislation favorable to that group. In 1969, Mayor Lindsay of New York removed long-promised projects (such as schools, parks and playgrounds) from neighborhoods that had voted for his opponents, while rewarding neighborhoods that had supported him in his reelection. Actually, he redeemed his promises even when those neighborhoods did not fully succeed (Tolchin:1971:29-30).[4]

Undoubtedly, political leaders have an ultimate power that can be used to both punish opponents and reward supporters. They have the right, more precisely, they have the power to grant, as already mentioned, insurance

contracts for insuring city property to cooperative insurance companies, deposit city money in selected banks, often used to reward political supporters, without the necessity of returning large interest payments, and to grant land variances to supporters which enable them to enhance the value of their property by adding more apartments or more office space into an area.

Patronage is simply used by politicians as a form of financing the political parties which, ironically, represent the citizenry. Obviously, this method is neither the wiser nor the most efficient system for doing so: however, it is a well-established part of the interest-group mechanism of political decision making (Dagger: 1984: 557).[15] Ironically, while the Supreme Court has almost eliminated patronage employment, especially in middle and lower-level positions, patronage contracting is extensively practiced. In my judgment, both kinds are the same. Patronage contracting constrains contractors in exactly the same way patronage employment constrains employees. The party in power may require campaign contributions from contractors and sometimes may require the expenditure of time and energy in exactly the same way as it does from employees. In addition, both form of patronage violate the First Amendment, which grants free expression of ideas and beliefs. Patronage contacting, it seem, is more destructive to the society than patronage employment because of one important factor: it affects the life of a larger number of people as opposed to one individual. Obviously, the above discussion seems to lend support to the argument that patronage is an essential and inevitable feature of American politics. Civil service systems may take jobs out of the patronage system, but patronage reappears in other forms.

### *(3) Patronage and the judicial system*

Of all the jobs available to the party, judgeships are considered the most desirable and valuable profession to be used for patronage purposes. A judgeship is preferable

for several essential reasons: (a) it often means a lifetime appointment, particularly at the federal level, or a long period of appointment, up to 14 years, as in the case of New York State Supreme Court judges; (b) it is relatively free from continuous struggles and political wars required to maintain their power, and finally, (c) a judgeship is also attractive to politicians who seek them for their short working hours, long holidays, and exceptional retirement benefits. Besides, judgeships grant or pay higher salaries than any other professional corps of public officials (Tolchin: 1971: 140-41).[4] A judgeship is a dream that every lawyer wants to achieve. Young lawyers enthusiastically go to the clubhouse eager to serve the party in a wide variety of tasks for only a small number of rewards such as, referee ships and trusteeships, while they wait and remain active and loyal to the party, hoping they will achieve the ultimate reward for political services, namely, a judgeship. Clearly this explains the high ratio of lawyers involved in the political process (Tolchin: 1971: 137).[4]

Political leaders at all levels, local, state, and federal, have managed for a long time to retain the use of judgeships as a patronage tool for the party. Their control of judicial patronage profoundly exists in the process of electing and nominating a judge. At the local level, district leaders usually get together to discuss and select the Civil Court favored judges who will come from their area. At this level, there is usually agreement upon a list of nominees, reached through a process of bargaining and compromises among district leaders. If they do not agree upon a decision, the county chairman resolves the conflict. On the Supreme Court level, the party hierarchy runs judicial conventions to nominate the justices. At the convention the county leaders, like the district leaders, bargain and compromise with each other before they can decide to whom judgeships will go (Tolchin: 1971: 135-36).[4]

Generally speaking, judicial patronage is extensively used by political leaders to achieve a wide range of objectives. It is used to reward

their supporters who consistently remained active in serving the party. Moreover, judgeships are seen by the party as an appropriate approach that can be used to publicly reward dominant ethnic and racial groups through the recognition of one of its members like when President Johnson appointed Thurgood Marshall, the first black Supreme Court justice, in order to gain the support of black people. In 1991, President Bush did the same thing by nominating and appointing Judge Clarence Thomas to hold a seat that particularly has been held in the past by representatives of the same minority groups. Concentration around ethnicity for recruiting judges is widely practiced by presidents. One official working on judicial selection during the Kennedy administration said, "We were hunting like crazy for an Italian. In addition, judicial patronage provides the party with more court jobs that can be dispensed as party patronage. Court employees such as clerks, bailiffs, secretaries, and recorders are used as party patronage. Actually, the judges themselves have little impact regarding the appointment of their employees. In general, these jobs, like judgeships, are usually controlled and influenced by the party (Tolchin: 1971: 137-151).[4]

Finally, the party turns its nominating power into a tool for increasing its revenue. It relies on judicial revenue to finance its activities on the district level. Tolchins quoted a councilman who stated, "Money is the criterion for judicial nomination the question is how much goes into the pocket of district leaders and how much into the party. Judgeships, according to an official from the U.S. Department of Justice, go for a price only in New York and Chicago. In New York, the average judgeships in the late 1960s cost about \$80,000, and by now the price would have increased due to the inflation rate and other economic factors. On the other hand, the average judgeship in Chicago was only about \$7,500 plus the loyalty and support to the party. However this does not mean that there are no judges who arrived on the bench through the power of their outstanding reputation; instead this indicates how

politicians use the court to influence judicial decision making (Tolchin: 1971: 144-45).[4]

Based on the above, it is obvious the judicial system in the U.S. is controlled by patronage, because judges need the sponsorship of a party for nomination and selection. Usually, elected judges who owe their nomination and election to the party feel obligated to the party and to the party leaders who chose them and party workers who campaigned for them. They, the judges, see themselves as members of a political club, and, therefore, they should perform the tasks that their leaders have for them. They also consider the judicial appointment as a reward for their loyalty and devotion to the party, and they look forward to providing judicial services that are socially and financially rewarding. Consequently, the judges themselves, in return, dispense patronage from the bench in different forms, such as receiverships, referee ships, guardianships, and trusteeships.[16]

Apparently, judicial patronage does not mean only giving out judgeships as it is publicly known; instead, it is a payoff worth billions of dollars that judges give in a wide range of services to the party. In the area of surrogate patronage alone, the Tolchins quoted the Dean of Judicial Administration, Judge Daniel Gutman, stating that, "the cost to the public each year may reach billions of dollars, while one good civil servant in each city could do all the work." In addition to its political uses, court patronage can also be highly personal. The court records in New York, according to the Tolchins, showed that public officials, relatives and friends of judges, law partners of judges, and politically connected lawyers receive a large percentage of the court's legal work. Undoubtedly, judicial patronage constitutes a political payoff. It is useful because it is hidden from public view and protected from the difficulties that follow from public awareness; its value as political gifts is unquestionably priceless, and, most importantly, service for which the payment is rendered stands clearly within the boundary of the law (Tolchin: 1971: 150-52).[4]



From the above review, it is obvious that political leaders have managed to retain the use of judgeships for patronage purposes. Both politicians and judges keep close ties with each other which are reinforced by the large amount of court patronage that grateful judges issue to the party. What this means is that the judiciary system is not independent. Actually, some judges continue to be influenced, if not dominated, by the people to whom they owe their good fortune. As a result, the judicial decision makers can hardly be expected to turn against the political system that produced them.

#### *(4) Patronage and Social events*

The final form of patronage discussed in this essay is known as "nonmaterial patronage." The party uses this form of patronage to reward its loyal supporters. It is particularly appropriate for those who probably cannot afford to leave their own business and accept what, by their standards, are low-paying government jobs. Many contributors welcome what may be nonmaterial types of patronage, such as, an appointment to a nonpaying government advisory board, task force, or presidential commission that provides wide visibility and free publicity while only involving very little work. These favors usually introduce them to the right people in Washington and create an image which often materializes into substantial gains. Further, financial contributors may be rewarded or honored with other forms of patronage-an invitation to a White House dinner or tea, or a picture taken in the White House Garden with the president which can be used for a press release back home. This is a very good patronage reward to local politicians to be visually identified with important national figures. To accomplish this, the president frequently uses cabinet members or the vice-president to help him with these ceremonial patronage obligations to the party. Clearly, these patronage favors and all the public relations fanfare are used for strengthening and maintain the party system. The president also uses his prestige to help finance the party debt and raise money for the

future. His presence at an expensive party dinner (\$100 a plate and over) usually generates a large amount of money within the states to be used by the party which has initially supported the president and carried him into the White House. By so doing, the president has "killed two birds with one stone", first, rewarding the party for its support and, second, aiding the party in its financial efforts (Tolchin: 1971: 272).[4]

In addition to the above, access to social events is not merely restricted to political supporters, but also includes public officeholders as well. For instance, according to Time magazine twenty-seven members of Congress, with wives and children, in January 1989, left the cold of the Capitol for the sun of California at the expense of the tobacco industry. All the expenses were paid, plus most legislators got spending money for participating in panel discussions, and giving speeches to several special interest groups. Moreover, 18 senators and their wives were flown to Arizona to play in a charity tennis tournament with executives of several major companies. Also, another group of senators was enjoying skiing down the slopes in park City, Utah, at the expense of major Airline companies (Carlson, Margaret: 1989).[17] This form of patronage is widely used in the American political system and it clearly affects the life of the American people. However, the fundamental question remains, what is the price that the public will have to pay as a result of these favors?

#### *Patronage and its impact on the policy making process and administration of government agencies*

Patronage is a very controversial concept in terms of its impact on the policy-making process and the administration of government agencies. There are two conflicting arguments, each one calling for different values. Advocates of patronage argue that patronage enhances government accountability and responsibility to the electorate by closely identifying the party in power with the government. Also,

patronage is vital to the democratic process; because it encourages people to participate in the electoral process which, in turn, leads to stronger, more stable political parties. Unfortunately, this is true, but it is only achieved at the expense of suppressing other ideas at the same time. Patronage defenders further argue that without patronage rewards, few people would willingly involve themselves in local elections resulting in harm to the democratic process. Furthermore, this group contends that patronage improves government efficiency and effectiveness. To accomplish this, the president, governors and mayors need to bring with them more than a few assistants and policy makers. They also need loyal, committed followers to implement their policies up and down the bureaucracy. They maintain that politically motivated employees with an interest in the agency learn their jobs more quickly and perform their job more efficiently, because they are enthusiastic about carrying out policies they believe in (Dagger: 1984: 523-24).[15]

Finally, patronage is, according to this argument, an effective tool for obtaining funds at both the state and local level. Many smaller cities seek to eliminate loyalty to political parties in municipal elections in order to change the patronage system into one closer to the private sector where jobs are based on merit, usually fail to get funds from the state and federal government from which they have cut their political ties. Consequently, these cities will not be able to turn their programs into realities or even deliver services effectively without receiving more substantial assistance from the state and federal government which was endangered by their political neutrality (Tolchin: 1971: 35).[4]

The above discussion is fairly valid to some extent, but still it does not justify the extensive use of patronage by political leaders. It might be correct that there is a positive side of patronage which can be used constructively to improve the quality of life for everyone; however, the image that people have in their mind about patronage is sadly negative.

Patronage clearly has a great impact on one

of the major functions of a bureaucracy, namely, planning. Politicians usually affect their power or prevent them from freely distributing rewards to their constituents. Many argued that allowing lawyers and businessmen to dominate the national and state legislatures has weakened the planning process in government. These two professions, especially lawyers, are trained to deal with problems on a case-by-case basis which usually does not work in government. Due to their educational background, they rely heavily on improvised or irrational solutions and neglect the appropriate procedures or methods of long-range planning, particularly these days as government grows more and more complex (Tolchin: 1971: 310).[4]

Additionally, political leaders, especially members of Congress, control and influence public bureaucracy through the budgeting process. The budget is considered one of the most effective control mechanism used to influence bureaucracy. Members of Congress, through the committee structure, believe that the bureaucracy will aid their primary goal, and, therefore, they use their considerable resources, especially budgets and personnel powers, to force government agencies to comply with congressional demands (Straussman: 1990:52).[7] Moreover, the patronage employment influences the performance of public employees and, thereby, influences the administration of the bureaucracy. Granting political appointees the power to penalize career government executives, without justification and independent review, will undoubtedly decrease a valuable contribution of the career executives to the government. The power in the hands of political appointees obviously would give a clear message to many career executives that, if they do not want to be shipped out to any place in the country, they should not disagree with their superiors. Clearly, this could influence the career officials to use their official discretion in a way that would sever partisan and personal interests, rather than public interests.[18]

The other argument was proposed by a movement known as the reformers. This movement called for a separation of the roles of politicians from public managers or administrations. The main motive for the adoption of this approach emerged from the reformers' dissatisfaction with appointments to public service through political patronage at all levels of government. It was believed that corruption, inefficiency and the emergence of a new class of politicians, "spoilsmen" were results of the practice of political patronage. The solution, according to this approach, was to remove politics from the civil service employee's function. The way to accomplish this goal was by running the government in the same way as business is carried out. As a result, appointments should be made on the basis of merit rather than a political basis. Moreover, the reforms called for another important concept known as "representative bureaucracy" as a reaction to the excessive use of patronage employment in government.[19]

The reformers argued that the patronage system, especially patronage employment, does not reflect the socioeconomic characteristics of the population. So, as a result, they called for more representation in government employment, as well as, more participation in the affairs of public organizations that control and affect their lives. It was believed that the increase in employment of blacks and minorities in public organizations and particularly into the middle and upper professional and policy-making positions (a) would lead not only to more democratic decision making, but also to better decisions, because it would expand the number of and diversity of the view brought to bear on policy making, (b) would improve bureaucratic operations and output by emphasizing that decisions and services were more responsive to the needs of the people, and finally and most importantly, (c) would promote a more efficient use of the country's human resources and increase legitimacy of governmental bureaucracies, and, therefore, enhance and improve quality and justice for everyone.[20]

From the above discussion, one can note that

public organizations are struggling in their effects to achieve several incompatible values, namely, merit, political accountability, and representativeness. The main problem here is that the maximization of one value requires arrangements of that will affect the achievements of the others. Obviously, this is a very complicated problem that requires a great deal of effort and sacrifices from both politicians and public administrations.

### Conclusioning observations

In fine, it can be safely deduced that patronage is an element of civilian and military politics. Since the world descended into the age of ideologies it has been less easy to discern, but a key task of government remains the ability to reward supporters, preferably at the expense of opponents, but at all times to increase the number of persons beholden to it. This is patronage, and it does not matter whether the source of legitimacy is God, birth, limited franchise, or universal right democratic elections; any government that fails to nurture its power base will not last. Lest the first be considered a blasphemous flippancy, for much of world history sacrifices to placate the gods and the interpretation of divine will through omens accompanied all important human undertakings, and for most of that time there were few activities as important as war.

The political patronage — on a low-level and when not entangled in financial means — is not inherently unseemly. In the United States, the U.S. Constitution provides the president with the power to appoint individuals to government positions. He also may appoint personal advisers without congressional approval. Not surprisingly, these individuals tend to be supporters of the president. Similarly, at the state and local levels, governors and mayors retain appointments powers. Some scholars have argued that patronage may be used for laudable purposes, such as the "recognition" of minority communities through the appointment of their members to a high profile positions. Patronage

must be used for four general purposes: create or strengthen a political organization; achieve democratic or egalitarian goals; bridge political divisions and create coalitions; and to alter the existing patronage system.[21]

Patronage has deep roots in every branch of the American political system. It is inevitable, because of the existence of the two-party system, pressure groups, the human condition, and the financial exigencies of campaigning. Patronage can be used for good or for evil, for progress or for regression. It is used to bring people loyal to their elected leader or party into the government. These politically appointed officials usually serve at the pleasure of the elected leader and occupy confidential positions. Patronage is still the primary tool or weapon that political leaders use to win elections and to assure themselves that their policies will be carried out. It also has been often considered an essential method by which politicians and executives at all levels in government increase their power and control the bureaucracy. Patronage is not restricted to job appointment; it also includes a vast range of favors which politicians use to reward supporters for their contribution to their election.

In addition, patronage affects the nature of national legislation by preventing legislators from deciding on issues solely on the basis of conscience and reason. Obviously, patronage is essential and inevitable; however, government would be much more effective if patronage could be employed only to advance programs that promote the national interest and aid the rational planning of states and cities.

## References

1. Feeney Mary K and Kingsley Gordon. The Rebirth of Patronage. *Public Integrity Spring*. 2008; 10(2): 165-176.
2. Shafritz Jay. The Dorsey Dictionary of American Government and Policies. Chicago: The Dorsey Press; 1988, 399.
3. Sorauf Frank. The Silent Revolution in Patronage. *Public Administration*. 1960; 20: 28, 29, 33.
4. Tolchin, Susan and Martin. To the Victor; Political Patronage from the Clubhouse to the White House. New York: Random House; 1971, 6, 29, 30,35, 135, 136,137,140, 141, 144, 145, 150, 151, 152, 272, 310, 323.
5. Mosher, Frederick C Mosher. Democracy and the Public Service. New York: Oxford University Press; 1982, 65, 67, 80.
6. Meier Keneth J. Ode to Patronage: A Critical Analysis of two recent Supreme Court Decisions. *Public Administration Review*. 1981; 558.
7. Straussman, Jeffrey D. Public Administration, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: Longman; 1990, 52, 171.
8. Charles H Levine. Public Administration: Challenges, Choices and Consequences. Glenview, IL: Foresman and Company; 1990, 220.
9. Chandler Ralph C. The Public Administration Dictionary, Oxford. England: ABC CLIO; 1988, 308.
10. Hamilton David K. Patronage in Illinios: The Political Subjugation of Public Administration. *Review of Public Administration*. 2011; 30(2): 139-40.
11. James, M Synder JR. Patronage and Elections in U.S. States. *American Political Science Review*. 2011; 105(3): 567.13. Freedman Anne. Doing battle with the patronage Army, Politics, Courts and Personnel. *Public Administration Review*. 1988; 48: 847, 855, 856.
12. Shafritz Jay. The Facts on File Dictionary of Public Administration. *Facts on File Publications*. 1985; 484.
13. Freedman Anne. Doing battle with the patronage Army, Politics, Courts and Personnel. *Public Administration Review*. 1988; 48: 847, 855, 856.
14. Logan Andy. Around City Hall: Upstairs, Downstairs. *The New Yorker*. 1989; 80.
15. Dagger Thomas G. Political Patronage in Public Contracting, Law Series, 51. University of Chicago; 1984: 54, 524, 557.
16. Toinet, Marie France and Gleen, Ian. Clientelism and Corruption in the Open Society: The Case of US, by Critopher Clapham. New York: St. Martin Press; 1982, 207.
17. Carlson Margaret. Have we gone too far? *Time*.

- 1989; 18-19.
18. Rosen, Barnard. Merit and the President Plan for changing the Civil Service System. *Public Administration Review*. 1978; 22.
19. Rosenbloom, D. Public Administration: Understanding, Management, Politics and Law. New York: Random House; 1989, 15.
20. Rosenbloom, D and Samuel Krislov. Representative Bureaucracy and American Political System in Classics of Public Administration by Jay Shafritz and Albert Hyde, eds. Illinois: The Dorsey Press; 1981, 21.
21. Bearfield Domonic A. What Is Patronage? A Critical Reexamination. *Public Administration Review (Oxford, UK: Blackwell)*. 2009; 69(1): 64-76.
-