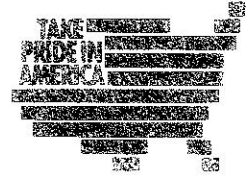


United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240



ADDRESS ONLY THE DIRECTOR,
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

December 20, 1990

In Reply Refer To:
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Memorandum

To: Director

Through: Assistant Director - External Affairs

From: Chief, Office of Legislative Services

Subject: The New Paradigm -- Implications for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to review Jim Pinkerton's February 8 speech to the World Future Society, entitled "The New Paradigm." Although the moniker assigned to this monkey is admittedly cumbersome and highbrow, I not only share your interest in the concept, I wholeheartedly embrace the following passages:

o . . . the bottom line [is] what works . . . freedom, decentralization, and a new look at ways to solve old problems.

We need this kind of pragmatism in the Service, to discard things that don't work and emphasize those that do. We should resist the pressure to solve problems in the old way, by creating more rules, hiring more people and spending more money, particularly in Washington. Every day, we need to look for new solutions, not only for old problems, but also for those just discovered.

That is what TQM is about -- striving for continuous improvement in our work processes and, thereby, our work products -- and it must be done in a decentralized fashion, by everyone, each handling those "monkeys" ("next moves" on problems) to which he or she is closest and best qualified to address.

o . . . we have all come to know what doesn't work . . . war against human nature . . .

Based upon our mission, the Service needs to be on guard against making this mistake -- acting as if "people" are the problem. It matters little that our government is supposed to be "of, by, and for the people" and that the Service is in fact part of the

government. What really matters is that Pinkerton is right: war against human nature is doomed to failure.

o . . . the biggest losers under the old system have been poor people.

The obvious implication of this statement for our programs is that elitist, Big Brother government efforts designed to protect the unspoiled playgrounds of the wealthy are contrary to the goal of the greatest good for the greatest number. Of course, it is not that simple, though, and I'll attempt later to analyze this point a bit in discussing the first of what Pinkerton argues are two emerging points of national consensus.

A less obvious analogy is that creatures that are not "warm and fuzzy" and ecosystems, like "swamps," that are not aesthetically pleasing have suffered disproportionately due to the centralization of power and authority. The analogy may not hold up completely under scrutiny. It is at least something to think about, however, particularly with regard to such issues as whether we should be spending so much on pork-barrel land acquisitions and visitor facilities that make the politicians look good in the short run, when we can't even afford to maintain our existing infrastructure now, much less when we turn our debts over to our grandkids in the future.

o The Great Society . . . has been . . . a continuing, if well-intentioned failure because it . . . was based on the false assumption that experts, wise bureaucrats in league with university professors and politicians, could somehow administer prosperity and equality from an office building somewhere. (emphasis added)

Did you ever hear a more apt description of the institutional attitude of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? We are a do-gooder, ivory tower, high-horse organization if there ever was one, and thank God for that. The problem is not that we have lofty ideals; it is that we need to translate them into goals, objectives, and tasks that take into account human nature and, thereby, maximize their chances of success.

In the language of TQM, we need to recognize who our "customers" are in each activity in which we engage, and they are not characterized by some ill-defined notion of the "public interest." They are actual, living, breathing, individual human beings, including, for example, the high roller developer who would wipe out a species and the backwoods hick who thinks he has a divine right to shoot a hundred ducks, as well as the farmer who would destroy wetland and the Corps of Engineers bureaucrat who would allow it to be destroyed. In short, our customers are the people with whom we work every day, including our subordinates and especially our superiors in the Executive Branch.

Of course, too, Members and staff of Congress are our customers as well, but if anything, we sometimes pay too much attention to them, as evidenced by the Keating 5 hearings, for example. There is no good case that what they did was right, only that everyone does it, and it is argued that they must -- because Federal bureaucrats are not as responsive as they should be to the needs of people. Obviously, two wrongs do not make a right; the way to correct the problem is for the bureaucrats to be responsive to people, not to give Members of Congress still more power.

More specifically speaking, under the Constitution, individual Members of Congress have no authority; only the body as a whole, acting collectively, is empowered to act. It is a symptom of the old paradigm, and of the corruption of the Constitution and the principles of democracy, that individual Members have become so powerful. In Pinkerton's terms, it is a system that doesn't "work" in the long run because it centralizes, rather than distributes power. Thus, for example, term limitations are consistent with the New Paradigm.

God help us if it takes us as long to learn the lesson as it has taken the Soviets. Hopefully, as has been rumored, the President will endorse term limitations in his budget and/or State of the Union messages. Taking into account the shifting demographics of the population -- the growing disparity between the haves and the have-nots, and the growth of the minority segments of the population -- it is no exaggeration to suggest that the fate of the Nation hangs in the balance, based upon how well political power is distributed.

Returning to the role of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to stretch an analogy just a bit, if we as an organization are "god," every human being is a "sinner" and, at the same time, is our "customer." And, if our mission is to save man from himself, it cannot be done by ignoring or attempting to thwart basic human nature. We must be responsive to the needs of people or the political system will force us to be, for in fact we are not God.

Not only will the success of our efforts be determined in large measure by the degree to which we take into account the human factors, but on an even more basic level, how we define our mission depends upon our recognition of the needs of mankind. How we define our mission sets the tone for the goals and objectives that the organization will strive to achieve. In that regard, as I have highlighted by underlining Pinkerton's words, his assumption is that promoting "prosperity" and "equality" are underlying goals of government.

Those are admirable goals, no doubt, but they are not necessarily complementary, as evidenced so clearly by the demise of communism and the failures of socialism. Moreover, with specific regard to the mission of our agency in particular, how many of our employees would acknowledge as a part of their job description the purpose of fostering "prosperity"? I submit that not many would, and that

is evidence of our failure to take into fully into account a basic element of human nature -- the survival instinct as transformed and reflected in aspirations not only to be warm, well fed, and comfortable, but also to progress, succeed, excel, and prosper.

- o . . . if we want to improve the lives of people, then we are going to have to go about solving [problems] in a different way. (emphasis added)

Again, not only is this more than an esoteric matter as far as the success of the Service is concerned, but it also relates very directly, for example, to the "vision statement" currently in the final stages of preparation. The mission statement in the last review draft this document omitted any reference to mankind and focused instead only on "fish and wildlife and natural systems." An earlier draft included reference to "the continuing enjoyment of people" -- so it is evident that someone has made a judgement that "people" do not deserve recognition in our mission statement.

The deletion of "people" from our draft mission statement is one form of the "war against human nature" of which Pinkerton speaks, and it represents old-paradigm thinking. Moreover, if Pinkerton is right, and I believe he is, such warfare is doomed to failure, at least in terms of success measured against potential. Accordingly, I would suggest the following mission statement for the Service:

It is the purpose of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect, conserve, and maintain fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of mankind.

Having established the premise of the new paradigm and the need for new thinking to solve problems, Pinkerton cites two areas of emerging national consensus:

- o First . . . virtually everyone wants an educated young generation, a roof over every head, and a clean environment.
- o Second, there are limits to the size of government.

He says, "now the argument shifts away from goals -- which we all agree upon -- to means. That is, how to do we do what we all agree needs to be done?" And "people of good will can seize this opportunity to significantly restructure the way government operates, to move away from monopolistic bureaucracies . . ."

What is taking place in the Service is right now is a microcosm of Pinkerton's point. There is really very little debate over the general outlines of our overall goals, only over the means by which best to achieve them, but it is on that score that we falter. Too often, the only answers we seem to be creative enough to conceive are to spend more tax dollars and create bigger bureaucracy. The success of any endeavor in the end is determined by logistics, however. Thus, the vision must take into account

the means realistically available, and the decisions about what will not be done are equally, if not more important than those as to what will be pursued.

If Saddam Hussein were to attempt to defend every mile of his borders, for example, how long would he hold Kuwait against an attack by the U.S. As Pinkerton says, there are indeed limits to the size of government, even in a nation so rich as ours, and just like Iraq, we must decide what ground not to try to defend, given the limitations on our resources.

On the other hand, everyone does indeed want a clean environment, and that is why the Service should not pat itself too hard on the back for our success in terms of funding from Congress, which is an example of what Pinkerton calls the measurement of inputs, rather than outputs. Indeed, it would be hard to fail completely to provide "leadership" with the weight of public opinion that backs and pushes us along. We ought instead to measure our success against objectives of what "might be" if we realistically take human nature into account in the pursuit of our mission.

Later in his speech, Pinkerton addresses the issue of measures of "input" versus "output," but the distinction also relates back to his point about the poor suffering disproportionately under the "old paradigm" of big, centralized governmental authority, which is very good at taking resources from the people but very poor at generating a productive return. When it comes to the environment, but also with respect to other values like the arts, education, and health, it is often difficult to determine costs and benefits to mankind in strictly economic terms -- particularly with regard to individual programs, projects, and expenditures.

In the short run, the costs to the poor, and especially the working poor, are very real when environmental concerns thwart development in the private sector and when public funds are spent on species other than Homo sapiens. In the long run, the costs of failure to conserve our environment become apparent, however. Thus, our challenge is to enhance the state of knowledge in understanding those costs so as to predict the benefits both of environmental expenditures and of nondevelopmental alternatives. Even as it has been too easy for politicians to put off the true and full cost of the fiscal deficit on future generations, so too will the cost of the environmental deficit come due.

In that sense, the Service has a role to play as "investment counselor" to make sure that society does not "overspend" our natural resources and that we are saving so as to be able to pay our "debts" to our environment when they come due. If there is one attribute that best distinguishes Homo sapiens from other species, it is the potential to plan to alter our own biological cycle. Whether we take advantage of that potential in a positive way, or whether we use it simply to accelerate our own demise, is the issue. And which subpopulations of our species, such as the

poor and politically disenfranchised, are affected in which ways is a subplot on that theme.

Even in the short run, however, some degree of consensus is possible on the overall level of inputs society is willing to devote to these endeavors. In fact, that is what the budget wars in Congress are all about and it is why "read my lips" was a potent campaign slogan. And, of course, the New Paradigm calls for action by individuals in their own, enlightened best interest, rather than bureaucratic regulation and spending by government.

Pinkerton indicates the New Paradigm has five main features:

- o First, governments are . . . subject to market forces . . .
- o Second, . . . increasing individual choice . . .
- o Third, . . . public policies which seek to empower people so they are able to make choices for themselves.
- o Fourth, . . . decentralization . . . pushing decision-making downward and outward, to the lowest feasible level.
- o Fifth, . . . emphasis on what works . . .

These principles can be applied to the activities of the Service in a number of ways.

User fees -- If a visitors facility cannot be supported by the revenues that it generates, the people are sending a clear market signal that it is not of sufficient priority to warrant the expenditure of their income. If that is the decision they make themselves, who are we (or Congress) to tell them that they must spend their money on such facilities, rather than things that they consider higher priorities? The same might be said for any activity in which the Service is involved.

There is no such thing as a free lunch. If the beneficiaries are not willing to pay, they should not expect the taxpayers to do so. Conceptually, the only exception would seem to be those instances when an initial investment by government can clearly be demonstrated to recover its cost and pay dividends over time, yet for justifiable reasons, the private sector cannot make the investment.

Research -- Knowledge is power, and giving people the information they need to make intelligent choices is of the essence. It is the opposite of old paradigm, under which all-knowing government made all decisions for the ignorant and helpless masses. The need for more, practical knowledge is the driving force behind the proposed National Institutes of Environment, and the potential role for the Service to play is virtually limitless.

Grants & cost-sharing -- Strictly speaking, the empowerment of people by giving them tax dollars should be limited to those who cannot sustain a decent standard of living without it, i.e., those below the poverty line; and even then, it should be directed toward helping them to become self-sufficient. In that sense, taxing working people so as to give their money to causes supported by higher income people is old paradigm thinking because it diminishes the (purchasing) power of the masses in favor of the centralized authority of a benevolent government. The implicit assumption is that Government knows better how taxpayers should spend their discretionary funds than they do.

On the other hand, in practical terms, to the extent that political forces may require the expenditure anyway, requiring individuals to put up at least a portion of the funding is the lesser of evils under the New Paradigm.

The Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs, the North American Wetlands Conservation program, private wetlands restoration assistance, Section 6 endangered species grants, and other means by which the Service funnels money to individuals and organizations might also be considered a form of empowerment. The extent to which these programs can be shown to conform to the New Paradigm is the degree to which it can be demonstrated that they stimulate investments that will pay dividends in the future of Homo sapiens, investments that would not otherwise be made without Federal support.

Such benefits are hard to quantify, but the New Paradigm calls for pragmatism and such cold, hard calculations of what "works" and what doesn't. Warm, fuzzy feelings are not good enough; they have certainly led us astray in the old paradigms.

Organizational structure -- Funding and manpower should be decentralized and placed as close to the problems as possible. Resources allocated to overhead and administration should be minimized. Based upon the potentials of modern communications and data processing, the need to share, organize, and manage information should not be confused with the desire for more people and money to perform these functions. Where workers are physically located is becoming increasingly irrelevant in the information age.

Automation -- Where the Service is remiss is in not providing the communications and automation tools needed for all Service employees to work together as a team to accomplish our tasks, regardless of our physical locations. The system itself should be structured to perform many of the routine compiling and reporting tasks currently performed by staff, so that our people can devote their time and attentions to things that computers cannot do. Anyone who does not recognize the burden of such requirements on our people has not been in the bureaucratic trenches lately. Automation is the best hope for empowerment of our employees, and

if we cannot do that for our own people, we cannot aspire to empower others to the degree that we might.

Consultations, planning & permit reviews -- We are empowering people to the extent that we offer sound advice through our endangered species consultations, habitat conservation planning, and our Section 404 permit reviews, for example. Our role is to provide the necessary scientific, biological information to allow developments to go forward without unduly impinging upon environmental requisites and values of importance to Homo sapiens.

Accomplishments -- Finally, to the extent that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is involved in activities that can be cited as examples of our recognition of the principles of the New Paradigm, they should be reflected in the accomplishments report that you have requested and which Public Affairs is compiling. Once it is finished, you may wish to transmit copies to Under Secretary Bracken and Jim Pinkerton under cover of a memo highlighting those accomplishments that best epitomize the New Paradigm.

If I can be of further assistance in that regard, please let me know, but in any event, thanks for empowering me to comment on the New Paradigm. I do believe that Pinkerton is on the right track, and I'd like help see that the Service is on it too.