

연구논문

What Makes Organizations Reorganize?: Some insights from the U.S.

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〈 요약 〉

우리는 유사 이래 정부조직의 개편을 항상 목도해 왔다. 이는 정부내외의 환경이 끊임없이 변하고 있고, 정부조직을 포함한 모든 조직은 내적 환경과 외적 환경의 변화에 항상 대응해야 하기 때문이다. 정부조직의 개혁과 개편은 다양한 원인에 의하여 이루어진다. 사회의 변화, 정치권의 이해는 물론, 다른 국가의 정부개편 또한 한 국가의 정부개편의 촉발요인이 된다. 더구나 정치, 경제, 사회, 문화의 빠른 동조화 현상이 발생하고 있는 현대에는 한 국가의 정부개혁 양상이 단지 그 해당 국가만의 문제만은 아니다. 이 논문에서는 이러한 시각을 바탕으로 미국 연방정부의 개편에 끼쳐 왔던 영향요소를 고찰하고, 향후의 변화 양상을 조망하였다. 이 과정에서 얻어진 교훈은 미국의 정부개혁 양상이 한국과 크게 다르지 않고, 미래에는 더구나 그렇지 않다는 것이다. 이 논문에서 검토되고 전망된 미국 정부 개편의 양상이 향후 한국의 정부개편에 작은 보탬이 되기를 기대한다.

[주제어: 정부개혁, 미국정부개편, 미래사회]

I. Introduction

No government has ever been able to maintain itself constantly. This is a common truth that everyone can admit. Every level of government continuously changes itself to appropriately confront the changing environments. From the time when American government was established until now, we can see numerous changes of the government. Motives of the changing governments are various. Economy,

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efficiency, effectiveness and so forth have been the proposed reasons for the changes of certain point of time. Especially, efficiency was the manifest reason of most official and comprehensive reorganization plan in this century (Arnold, 1986).

There are a variety of organization types within the American constitutional system. It consists of Executive Departments, the Executive Office of the President Agencies, commissions, government corporations, intergovernmental commissions, various advisory bodies, and regulatory commissions. These governmental organizations consist of organizational structure, and resources including personnel, money, and management processes (Salamon, 1981; Seidman, 1981). Thus, governmental reorganization means any changes of those components. From the founding stage of America, reorganization has focused mainly on the structural changes, including creation of new organizations, merger of existing organizations, and extinction of organizations. In these days, however, the main focus of the reorganization shifts to changes in management processes.

Szanton (1981) argued that "the federal government has undertaken an enormous range of large, numerous, interconnected, and partly contradictory responsibilities. The maintenance of minimum levels of coherency in federal action is therefore inherently difficult" (p.7). Reorganization has traditionally focused on structural changes. Its dominating principle is that related programs should be placed within the same institution. But as governmental responsibilities have become more complex, they have diffused to all agencies. For example, the energy policy affects not only the Department of Energy but also the Department of State, Commerce, Defense, and almost all other departments. Thus structural change is far too difficult to manage such multiple relations, and coordination is the only device that can serve. This article has attempted to review these changes in terms of the Federal Government, especially, the Executive Branch, and get some idea to cope with the future of the governmental reorganization.

II. Reflections on the Federal Reorganizations

Most of the modern governments have experienced a series of changes. Many new agencies have been added, merged, or transformed. Their responsibilities have been changed, and the relationships between agencies and their clients have changed as well (Seidman, 1981; Szanton, 1981). Such changes are sometimes piecemeal, sometimes more grandiose based on the situations. Major efforts of administrative reform in the United States are natural experiments in governance. They occur frequently enough to provide repeated experience with similar issues under different conditions. Over the years, there has been a gradual shift of reorganization initiative away from Congress, and toward the President. But congressional resistance to presidential initiative is persistent, and reorganization procedures remain far from routine (March and Olson, 1983).

1. Context of Reorganization

As the people need various and much services from the government, bureaucracy needs centralized authority to confront those needs. But the American government has been an antique system of dispersed authority. In addition, the traditional design of National Government was at odds with the requirement of the large scale, hierarchical bureaucratization. Thus, the disorganized elements of the growing administrative state had to be transformed into a bureaucratized administrative apparatus (Arnold, 1986). One of the most crucial points of the reorganization of Federal Government of the United States is inborn nature of the political system.

In the founding era, the Constitution gave only a limited authority to the President. The formal mandate of agencies, their organizations, their funding and subsequent discretion in spending, the specification of the number of positions, and the definition of the jurisdiction of those agencies, all rest upon congressional will (Arnold, 1986).

This separation of the power system was supported by extreme opposite point of view simultaneously. Frederick Cleveland and William F. Willoughby were the prominent scholars who support the predominance of the one side to another. Willoughby argued that the Constitution decisively placed administrative authority in Congress, whereas Cleveland asserted that the Constitution gave it to the President (Cleveland, 1920; Willoughby, 1927). That is, there are some differences between the two scholars. Whereas Cleveland argued for the concept of the chief executive as the primary source of administrative authority, Willoughby argued for the broad delegation to the chief executive as the basis for assembling a hierarchical, coherent, and presumably efficient administrative system within the Executive Branch. However, Willoughby claimed that the functional demands of modern administration required coherent administrative organization placed in the President. Lastly, Willoughby reached similar conclusions to Cleveland (Willoughby, 1927).

2. Tension in Reorganization

Many instances show that political struggles between political actors, such as the President, Congressional committees, and interest groups, cause Executive Branch reorganization, even though the President and the Congress are the main actors in the reorganization realm. It follows that the reorganization of the administrative branch is an important issue to reflect various values and interests in legislative processes (Moe, 1990).

Important differences among proponents of reorganization arise over the devices that should be used for securing economy, efficiency, the governmental machinery and procedures that are necessary to apply these devices. The significant differences of opinions that exist arise in a large measure out of varying conceptions as to the proper spheres of power and action between the President on the one hand and the Congress on the other (Meriam and Schmeckebier, 1939).

For well over a century, the structure and program responsibilities of the Federal

Executive Branch, including all of the departments and agencies, were determined by Congress. In the aftermath of World War I, however, with the rise of the new public administration profession and the growing sentiment for attaining efficiency and economy in government, came efforts to strengthen the President's management ability. Therefore, from then on, it was natural that there has been a continuous struggle between the President and the Congress.

Because of the struggle, what was proposed for major reorganization projects was regularly defeated or abandoned. The 1949 Reorganization Act empowered the President to make Executive Departments and grant him reorganization authority. Congress revoked part of this power in 1964, when it amended the act to prohibit a President from making or eliminating departments without its consent. Besides, in 2000, legislators tried to handle administration's structural problems with the Government for the 21st Century Act. The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee introduced the bill, which would have created a commission to report to the President and Congress on ways to restructure agencies (Laurent, 2001). These show a kind of tension and struggle between the two actors.

3. Purposes of Reorganization

Because of the dynamics of the administrative process in American government, organizational reform serves a host of different purposes. Various relationships between bureaucracy, the Congress, the constituents, and so forth, make the reorganization processes more complicate. Due to the complexity and diversity, there is no consensus on the purpose or objective of governmental reorganization (Mansfield, 1969; Seidman, 1970; Miles, 1977). Despite of the diversity, however, a manageable set of categories could be selected.

First of all, economy and efficiency are frequently emphasized administrative or political purpose of reorganization. Economy and efficiency in the National Government are almost universally accepted objectives of reorganization. Some

proponents of reorganization define economy as an actual reduction in expenditures. Others would accept more efficient service for a given expenditure as constituting economy in administration (Meriam and Schmeckebier, 1939).

The most plausible reason why economy and efficiency are the official purpose of reorganization is that they are concrete and easy to explain. The central focus of this purpose is on the input side of governmental activity. This notion focuses on the unnecessary burdens that duplicate government services in the forms of overlapping efforts. The results of the reform consist of a reduction in duplication of activities and the administrative costs borne by taxpayers (Salamon, 1981).

Another most frequently proposed purpose of the reorganization is definitely effectiveness. Effectiveness is far more abstract and controversial than economy and efficiency. Because of the inherent paradoxical nature of it, it follows that the only consensus about the concept of organizational effectiveness is that there is no consensus about it (Cameron 1986). However, it is clear that while economy and efficiency focus on the input side of government, effectiveness focuses on the output side of it. This objective takes the accounts of relations between the purpose and achievement of certain program. In this perspective, individual program operated efficiently can be proved ineffective.

By the Brownlow commission period, government reorganization was not a new idea. It had been a theme of Federal Government studies since the late nineteenth century. However, previous commission studies on this topic focused on cost savings through reorganization or on fairly low level workplace improvements in job efficiency through personnel reductions. From this point of view, the Brownlow commission is a watershed of government reorganization. In a sense, from the commission, government reorganization has been focusing on improving overall administrative effectiveness, rather than cost cutting (Stillman, 1998).

In addition, policy integration, such as the subordination of the military departments to the Department of Defense in 1947, can be assumed as a way for improving effectiveness. For example, one major purpose of the Department of

Defense is the maintenance of effective strategic forces. This purpose could be accomplished by the Navy's submarine, the Air force's bombers, and the Army's missiles, respectively. However, the power of unified agency is to integrate this redundancy and achieve the purpose effectively (Szanton, 1981).

4. Causes of Reorganization

In general, attempts of comprehensive administrative reorganization are symbols of politically meaningful action. Leaders, especially incoming leaders, are expected to act, and reorganizations provide an opportunity to symbolize the action (Mosher, 1967; Dahl, 1980). Announcing a reorganization plan per se symbolizes the possibility of effective leadership and the belief in that possibility might be more important than the execution of it. That is, the most important things appear to be statements of intent, an assurance of proper values, and a willingness to try it (Edelman, 1964). Especially, the Presidents used to make modest use of the reorganization authority they have fought to achieve, because the symbolic value of the authority is more critical to them than its execution (Peters, 1978). Thus, rhetoric of actors including President could be the first reason for the governmental reorganization.

Needs of the time is another critical cause of the reorganization. After the September 11 attacks, President Bush took his first step toward reorganizing government on September 20 of the year. The purpose of creation of the Department of Homeland Security, which coordinates the efforts of several agencies with responsibility for domestic security, was to prevent terrorism and respond to the possible future terrorist attacks. Because of the most compelling needs of today was security, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security was the response of government reorganization.

From the early stage of the reorganization, every era has had its own needs or philosophies. The representative needs are efficiency, economy, ethics, and effectiveness (see Table 1). Contemporary spirits of the times reflect on the needs of

reorganization, even if one particular need reflects on a specific period of time, of course, every other need also involves the reorganization. Passage of Pendleton Civil Service Act was a signal moment on the march of scientific management, but it also involved a war on waste, and streamlining as well.

Thirdly, technology is another significant reason for the reorganization. In the course of time a great technology has developed, accompanied by an enormous number of inventions which occasion social change. Social inventions may have been precipitated by mechanical invention. Also, some social inventions cause mechanical inventions vice versa (Ogburn, 1936).

Table 1. Characteristics of Reorganization

Needs	Efficiency	Economy	Ethics	Performance
Tools	Scientific Management	War on Waste	Watchful eyes	Streamlining
Institutional Champion	The Presidency	Congress	Congress and Courts	The Presidency
Defining Moments	Brownlow Committee, First Hoover Commission	Welfare Fraud Hearings	Vietnam War, Watergate	Gore National Performance Review
Defining Statute	1939 Reorganization Act	1976 Shrines' Hospital for Crippled Children, Conveyance, 1978 Inspector General Act	1946 Administrative Procedure Act	1993 Government Performance and Result Act
MostRecent Expression	1990 Financial Officers Act	1989 Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act	1989 Ethics Reform Act	

Source: Light, P.C. 1997. *The Tides of Reform: Making Government Work, 1945-1995*. New Haven: Yale University Press. pp. 21-37.

Government's rapid adoption of technology may be the key to rationalizing its structure, and to improving its performance. E-government is a government offering virtually all information, services transactions and interactions online and is focused on citizens, businesses and other governments. Thus, it will change the structure of government based on the clientele. Based on observation of the phenomena of modern times, social change also reveals that governmental institutions are often the third link in the fourth chain sequence such as industry and other social arena (Ogburn, 1936).

Fourthly, real politics speaks of reorganization in terms of a political struggle against contending interests. Organizational forms reflect victorious interests and establish a mechanism for future dominance. Thus, in a sense, the ideal of a neatly effective administrative structure might be an illusion. Because the design of an administrative structure is an important political issue, to be effective the reorganization process must reflect the heterogeneous milieu and the values, and interests in legislative processes (March and Olson, 1983). Hence, in the perspective of real political arena, reorganization is a way to accomplish political purposes. To block of unwelcome official, to protect an activity from congressional investigation, and so forth are made up of political reasons (Salamon, 1981).

Changes of other countries could be another factor which affects governmental reorganization as well. In March 1996, former Vice-President Gore announced a new initiative that would dramatically change the way Federal agencies provide service to the public. Gore's proposal is to establish many service delivery functions within the Federal Government as performance-based organizations. This model had two key elements: organizations would be freed from the laws, regulations and policies that usually constrain managers within government; and incentives would be given to improve performance (NPR, 1996).

This plan was modeled on a reform of the British public service begun by the government of Prime Minister Thatcher in 1988. In the past years, most of the British civil service has been reorganized into a set of Executive agency that were

given more flexibility in administration and expected to meet performance goal. Similar reforms have been made in all over the world including New Zealand and Canada (Roberts, 1997).

Even though the reorganization attempts were very comprehensive, the outcomes of the plan in the United States were not prominent. Until last point of time of the Clinton administration, only three agencies: the Education Department's Office of Student Financial Assistance; the FAA's air traffic control unit; the Commerce Department's Patent and Trademark Office, succeeded to transform its legal status from more than 12 candidates (GAO, 1997; Peckenpugh, 2001). The trial of reorganization could be influenced by other countries' precedent accomplishments. The National Performance Review was a typical exemplar of this category. In addition, this is one extension of the mimetic isomorphism in the field of organizations (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

5. Resistance to Reorganization

The bureaucracy has frequently been able to resist any reorganization initiatives proposed by either the President or the Congress. Furthermore, the bureaucracy often carries out its own policies which are exact opposite of the President directives. It can be possible because the bureaucracy has its own independent sources of political power.

The Administrative agencies and regulative commissions, like the Congress and the President, have constituencies that are relied upon for political support. For instance, the Department of Defense is associated with the military industry, the Labor Department is associated with the AFL-CIO, and the Food and Drug Administration is associated with the pharmaceutical companies. These outside political supports enable agencies to act independently and resist any reorganization attempts.

A number of Presidents on numerous occasions, for example, have to try to transfer the regulative functions of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to a

Cabinet department, such as the Department of Transportation, which is more capable of being controlled by the White House. However, the railroads' support for the ICC has retained its separate identity. Another example occurred in 1971 when Nixon proposed a major reorganization of the Executive Branch that would have meant a major shift of authority. The Department of Agriculture would have lost control over a variety of programs to a proposed Department of Natural Resources. However, the Department of Agriculture rallied its constituency behind it, and the reorganization plan languished in Congress (Woll and Jones, 1976)

Szanton (1981) clearly pointed out the resistance of bureaucracy, "Bureaucracies do not regard reorganization as stimulating and pleasant. To them it's a surgery. The patient's capacity to resist the procedure is impressive. Bureaucracies may stop a proposed reorganization by inducing interest group or congressional outcries, or by discovering legal or administrative barriers. And what they cannot stop they can delay" (p.3).

Ironically, the Congress actors protect its own committees, the Executive Branches protect their own agencies, Presidents protect their own pet projects, but all of them advocate the principles of simplification, reduction in government, and reorganization (March and Olson, 1983).

III. Prospects of the Future

1. Prospects of the Future Society

Most scholars anticipate that future society will be different from the society of past and present. How is it different and how much will it be different from now? One façade of society may be similar to the image we expect, but other aspects may not be. Governments have followed the changes of society. Therefore, it is apparent that changes of the government will be incurred by the changes of society. As

Ogburn (1936) asserted, "a very common pattern is for the technological change to affect, first, an economic organization which, second, causes a change in some social institution, such as the family or government, and which finally causes a change in the social philosophy of a people" (p.134).

The most apparent aspect of the future society is that it seems to be an aging society. It follows that rapid growth of the life expectancy of human nature results in the rapid growth of the older population. Klay (1997) anticipated the number of Americans who are 65 and over was about 34 million, and there will be about 69 million older people in 2030. In addition to the growth of older people, due to the low birth rate, the number of younger generation will be shrunk (Drucker, 2001). These two dominant factors change the demographics of the future society.

This change of the demography causes dramatic transformations of the society. First of all, there might be a change of work force formation. According to the growth of aging people, the age limit of working people will be higher than now. Secondly, a shortage of the young work force might induce large-scale immigrants, and these immigrants will diversify the society (The United Way Strategic Institute, 1990; Drucker, 2001).

Acceleration of technology advancement is another important feature of the future society. Especially, bio, information, and nano technology might be mostly influential to the changes of the future society. Advance of biotechnology will make the life expectancy of human nature much longer, and development of information technology might change numerous aspect of the future life, such as expansion of opportunity of formal education through distant learning, light speed contracts, and so forth. This information technology will create a literal "world village" through sophisticated communication ways, and home and office automation. Furthermore, nano technology definitely escalates those changes.

The blurring boundary between public, private, and not-for-profit sector is one of the most important features of future society. As a matter of fact, contracting out of government affairs to private sector is contemporary face of the change and the

impetus for redefinition of public sector and private sector roles is coming from both sides (The United Way Strategic Institute, 1990).

Another common aspect of present society is that it is an ordered society, which was made orderly by the presence of a series of rules. The thought of social order mainly came from a centralized, rational, and bureaucratic hierarchy. However, in the future society, neither governments nor private organizations will depend upon a formal bureaucracy. They will be decentralized and devolve power, where every parts of the society connect with very complicated networks (Fukuyama, 1999).

2. Prospects of the Future Governmental Reorganization

First and foremost aspect of future administrative reform including reorganization will be contracting out and privatization. In administrative reform, public choice ideas have been exceedingly influential in supplying supporting frameworks to legitimize and provide an intellectual underpinning. That is, one of the most recent trends of government reorganization is contracting out and privatization based on public choice theory. The implications of such notions are that the role of the state should be reduced, and those functions such as regulation, policy advice, and the public service delivery should, where possible, be privatized through either contract out or sale. Because bureaucrats look after their own interest, not the public interest, its proponents point out that organizations need to buy services from external sources through a contract (Hodge, 2000).

In 1980's, American budget constraints encouraged the Federal Government to entertain privatization at the national level. Since then, most parts of the Federal Government have privatized functions which they had previously performed themselves (Lavelle et al. 2000). Contracting out of broad non-military functions, including depot maintenance of Department of Defense, was a good example (Cohen, 1997; GAO, 2000). In addition, the 1998 Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act that obliged agencies to identify jobs performed by federal agencies that could be contracted out

to the private sectors was a good sign for the privatization of government. In 1999, with these broad endeavors, the Federal Government generated works for more than 5.5 million contractor employees (Laurent, 2001). This trend will be continued.

However, in a sense, the contracting out and privatization policy is controversial. It is argued that outsourcing puts the agency's management and mission at risk, and it can endanger responsible use of contractors in the future. That means outsourcing for outsourcing's sake is not the answer. After the attacks of September 11, the Federal Employee Union, such as the American Federation of Government Employees, questioned continuation of work out of government. The attack prompted reexamination of which activities could be performed by the private sector and which more appropriately belong to government.

Secondly, we need to think about the structural changes in an organization. Change is always an ongoing process. As we can anticipate present from the past, the future can be inferred from present. New society might provide us a wonderful gift with concomitant social problems. The most important mission of government is to encourage the good things and to solve the problems appropriately. Confronting the changes of society, government has to change its structure.

As mentioned above, demographic change will influence many parts of society. The rapid growth of aging people will be a more active social force than now. With high-tech medical support, these people can stay in workplace, especially in the white-collar jobs, including the knowledge work field. They can enjoy their life vigorously with their affluent wealth that they saved their whole life. This might stimulate the silver industry that focuses on the aging people. In terms of Federal Government, this social change makes the government reinforce health, welfare, and security for the aging people.

The rapid shrink of the younger generation will incur influx of immigrants to substitute the vacancy in the workplace caused by the lack of young people. This influx of various immigrants might change all aspects of the society. Government should pay attention to integration of these people in some areas, where subjects such

as education, linguistics, and cultural assimilation, may play a role. To properly cope with these emerging societal issues, the government should strengthen present agencies that in charge of these matters through structural changes of its own. This will be clearly the second key appearance of the future reorganization.

Thirdly, procedural change will be another facet of future reorganization. Since late 1990's, the Department of Defense has been trying to adopt the best business practice from the cutting edge of private companies. This idea focused on electronic business operations supported by information technology revolution. Defense Logistic Agency (DLA), for instance, established an electric commerce mall called "Emall." DLA's Emall provides one-stop shopping for DOD customers. Customers could order more than four million DLA managed items and hundreds of thousands of commercial items from vendor catalogs (Stone, 1998).

This case was just an example of a governmental process caused streamlining. Governmental reorganization in the future might focus more on this procedural streamlining than structural change. Internet-based commerce, Internet-based document processing, and so forth, that supported by state-of-art electronic technology will change all the current governmental work processes. Soon the government will be an perfect E-government, even though it is an ongoing process as well.

This aforementioned process, called the streamlining work process, which is based on information technology, might facilitate contracting out and privatization. This will blur the border line between public and private sector, and in a sense, this trend might facilitate integration of public and private altogether.

Fourthly, there will be much various participants in the area of governmental reorganizations. So far, the most prominent participants in the process of governmental reorganization are the President and the Congress. This is due to the logic of check and balance come from the Founding father's thought. Thus, administrative reform used to be assumed a political intent of either side, even though the real purpose of reorganization should be for the people in many cases.

The expressions from 'iron triangles' refers to executive bureaus, congressional

committees, and interest group clienteles to 'issue network' (Heclo, 1978) including professionals and issue-skilled person show the enlargement of the range of the participants in the governmental issues. This trend might be adopted to the governmental reorganization area. That is, the more participants than past and present time would join the governmental reorganization process. Cyber-ballot, E-government, and E-politics mean citizens' unbounded participation to the policy issues. Each and every people could be a participant of any governmental issues including Executive reorganization thanks to the advanced information technology.

IV. Conclusion

The public administrative structure is changing constantly. This change might be incremental or comprehensive. Specifically, comprehensive reviews of administrative structures and practices have been undertaken by governments of all political persuasions, and are under a wide variety of political circumstances. In a sense, organizations are cultural systems embedded in a wider culture, and reorganizations are symbolic and rhetorical events of some significance to that wider culture.

In addition, organizational forms reflect various interests and establish a mechanism for future dominance. Founding or changing of an Executive Department is a political act. It is one way of expressing national concerns in dealing with national commitments and values (Seidman, 1981). Therefore, the President, the Congressional committees and subcommittees, the Administrative agencies, and a variety of organized interests in society are key participants in the political struggle. To date, governmental structure reflects the societal changes and social needs. In the wake of the change of the spirit of the times, philosophies of governmental reorganization changed from efficiency to economy, to ethics, to performance.

Each and every change of society and the confronting of government to the change are not the unique aspect of America. In these days, all other countries in the

world village face the same aspect of the U.S. as well. We can see the same demographic change, development of information technology, growth of civil society, struggle between the President and the Congress, and other changes above mentioned in Korea, too. That is, all the changes are isomorphic in the world. Thus, the lesson from America is not just for the country. This is the important point that Korea could not overlook of the changes of the U.S.

What are the next needs of the times to the government? What about a small, efficient, fair, and fast responding government? Every time has its own represent value, such as efficiency, effectiveness, and so forth. However, there is an unchangeable logic. People want to pay less and get more. To respond to this very common truth, the government should continuously lose its weight and be strong. The people do not ask without paying, and they will support the governmental effort with providing cutting edge information technology and well trained knowledge workers.

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