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POST-COMMUNIST SOCIETY AND TOLERANCE AGAINST PASSIVITY OF CITIZENS IN ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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During the period of transition in post-socialist countries are implemented fundamental changes in public administration. Attention is given to legal and economic aspects of these reforms, and social aspects are neglected. Lack of communication between politicians and society and still undeveloped civil society has the effect of rejection or misunderstanding of reform efforts in the area of public administration.

Key words: post-communist society, passivity of citizens, public administration, civil society, democratic transition.

In general, the events in 1989 represented a watershed in the development of the public administration in the Central European area. After the political regimes switched to liberal democratic, each segment of the society, including the public administration, started transformation processes that have not been completed and some of them already require revision. The ongoing transformation process of the public administration in the Central European context has been carried out for almost a quarter-century but has not been completed yet.

The victory of the velvet revolution interpreted by politicians and political scientists as a victory of civic society showed that one of the problems of post-communist societies is poor civic society. It is not able to fulfil the main requirement of a «watchdog» and bring impulses to the political sphere. The «liberalized» society was freed of its «obligation» to get organized. Immediately after the fall of the regime we could witness a significant fragmentation of society, where specific requirements, objectives, interests or impulses may hardly be formulated. There was a lack of basic knowledge and skills how to prepare a project, do accounts, influence decision-making processes [3].

It is a consequence of etatization of society after 1948, such as strengthening state interventions and the state's control of society. It was the essence of a socialistic state and law. Normalization after 1968 and efforts to even more passivize citizens (inhibit their freedom of decision and thinking, leaving it only in the private family sphere) with the intention not to become involved in public events. The consequences have been adverse. What may happen again is that state paternalism and human passivity will prevail instead of self-initiative. As a result of paternalism and state command economy during the socialism, and efforts to control the entire society, any initiative and civic participation in public administration disappeared [6].

«Perhaps, therefore, the national as well as municipal policies have been marked with indifference of the vast majority of population towards any active participation in changes in terms of understanding the position of the state, the main political concepts of liberal and social state have been competing since 1989, supported by right-wing political parties, on the one

hand, and left-wing ones on the other hand... thus, we should permanently seek natural compromises to avoid the threat of extreme development changes between both interests» [6].

In a simplified way it is possible to signalise how the public administration is built according to the dominating ideology of the parties that participate in government. One of the criteria is the scope of the state – according to the concept of minimum or strong state the urgency of the public apparatus size can usually be determined. Classical liberals seek a minimum state, which means few offices and not many competences. Modern liberals support a social state, which opens up greater opportunities for bureaucracy. Conservative new right-wing parties support a strong state and repressions as an instrument to maintain morality and order. On the contrary, liberal new right-wing parties engage in a minimum state because they consider a state as an instrument for compulsion and bondage, which rather has a negative effect on lives of individuals under any government [2].

«Today, evolutionary socialism (democratic) is in many respects converging with modern liberalism ... in the political sphere self-government and direct democracy instruments are promoted ... the equalization of starting conditions is achieved by reallocation through tax policy within a social state» [5, p. 111]. If we divert from the value and ideological setting of Slovak society, and we transform it, for example, into election outcome where, within political participation, the citizens had and have an opportunity to also express their opinions about public administration reforms, according to Nižňanský (2010) a large part of Slovak society was not prepared and does not want to take responsibility for the quality of its life into its own hands, and let the public sector have only what they are not able to solve in person, in family, in clubs. The Slovak society tends to request to solve its everyday problems from the central government and criticize them for failing to fulfil a false illusion about the irreplaceability of the central government in their everyday life.

Underdeveloped civic society and a lack of civic participation are only one of the circumstances that influenced the development of public administration. Political matters significantly affected the reform processes: «If neglecting the period of totality... every six or seven years a change in organization took place. It is a consequence of the facts that central governments did not respect citizens' needs and requests, geographical, ethnical and social conditions, they did not support the state as a community of people, but used the reform solely to consolidate power» [4, p. 172].

«No reform should be sold as a marketing product that we look at with mistrust. The best appreciation of changes is when citizens will get used to them and they start to speak highly of them» [1, p. 69]. There is often a question if such changes save any material, human and other resources, whether they really contribute to improved functioning of the segment. The question of deconcentration in public administration, decentralization or centralization in public administration is almost a Hamletian question. A common answer has to be found. Offices and their elected or appointed representatives are here to serve citizens. Citizens should not feel that they serve offices or that they are bullied by them. It is an obligation of experts and politicians to make the system of public administration functional and quality in every respect.

The political culture of post-communist societies, including the Slovak Republic, is limping along. No economic indicators and presentation of improving living standards cannot fully replace what is invisible – spiritual values. Public institutions should be carriers of such values in democratic society, but unless people who work for them implement such values in them, we cannot expect that they will cultivate following generations, they will only deepen decadence and bad habits of previous regimes and fashion waves in politics.

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ПОСТКОМУНІСТИЧНЕ СУСПІЛЬСТВО І ТОЛЕРАНТНІСТЬ ЯК НАСЛІДОК ПАСИВНОСТІ ГРОМАДЯН В УПРАВЛІННІ ЗАГАЛЬНОДЕРЖАВНИМИ СПРАВАМИ

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Під час перехідного періоду в постсоціалістичних країнах відбуваються фундаментальні зміни в державному управлінні. Особлива увага приділяється правовим та економічним аспектам цих реформ, а соціальні аспекти не враховуються. Відсутність зв'язку між політиками та суспільством і все ще нерозвиненою структурою громадянського суспільства має ефект відторгнення або нерозуміння реформ у галузі державного управління.

Ключові слова: посткомуністичні суспільства, пасивність громадян, державне управління, громадянське суспільство, демократичний транзит.