

The life and times of Gordon Tullock

Charles K. Rowley* and Daniel Houser†

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice

Abstract Gordon Tullock is a founding father of public choice. In an academic career that has spanned 50 years, he forged much of the research agenda of the public choice program and he founded and edited *Public Choice*, the key journal of public choice scholarship. Tullock, however did much more than this. This Special Issue of *Public Choice* honors Gordon Tullock in precisely the manner that he most values: the creation of new ideas across the vast range of his own scholarly interests.

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1 Innocence of youth

Gordon Tullock was born in Rockford, Illinois on February 13, 1922. His father, George Tullock, was a hardy Midwesterner of Scottish ancestry. His mother, Helen, nee Crumb, was of equally hardy Pennsylvania-Dutch stock. His father's elder brother, Tom, and his two children, also lived in Rockford, but some distance away. So Gordon had no close and continuing relationship with them. Both of Gordon's grandfathers died before he was old enough to remember them. Both of his grandmothers 'lived with us for some time, but fortunately not at the same time' (Tullock 2009: 1)

Rockford, often referred to as the 'Forest City', was a mid-sized city with a 64,000 population in 1922, when Gordon Tullock was born. It is located in far northern Illinois on both banks of the Rock River and is the county seat of Winnebago County.

* C.K. Rowley
Department of Economics
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA 22030
e-mail: crowley@gmu.edu

† D. Houser
Department of Economics
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA 22030
E-mail: dhouser@gmu.edu

Known at that time for its thriving furniture industry and blessed with a relatively well-diversified industrial base, Rockford, nevertheless, suffered severely during the years of the Great Depression. So the Tullock family would have been no strangers to economic difficulty, even though they escaped the worst hardships of the unemployed.

Gordon Tullock obtained his basic education in the well-developed Rockford public school system, displaying from early childhood a superior intellectual ability that clearly distinguished him from his peers. He was in the last class to graduate from the old Central High School in Rockford:

I was not, and am not athletic, and engaged in no sports beyond what was required in Gym. I was a member of the debate team and traveled around much of the Midwest to engage in that activity. I think this was one of the reasons that I decided to become a lawyer. (Tullock 2009: 1)

The University of Chicago was the best university in the Midwest, but very expensive. So Gordon believed that he would have to be satisfied with the University of Illinois.

This turned out to be incorrect:

Chicago, however, offered scholarships on passing an examination. As a gamble I took the examination and was rather surprised when I passed. Later I found out that I had the highest grade of anyone who took the exam. This was largely a matter of luck. An important part of the exam was intended to test the candidate's ability in reasoning and for this purpose a paragraph of scientific prose was included and you were required to use this as a basis for answering. This time it involved biological evolution and I had been much interested in this in high school so I was very well prepared. As a result I was able to go to Chicago since I did not have to pay tuition for the first year and only half tuition for the rest of my time there. (Tullock 2009: 1-2).

In 1940 Tullock departed for the School of Law at the University of Chicago to combine a two-year program of undergraduate courses with a four-year formal law program. In fact, he completed the initial two-year program in a single year:

Most schools required three years of undergraduate classes before law school. Chicago, however, required only passing a basic set of four general classes plus two electives and then law school had a set of courses of a general nature which were supposed to substitute for one year of normal courses. Thus the law school normally took 4 years. I passed the entire first two years' courses in one year. (Tullock 2009: 2)

Altogether, the net effect was intended to give the potential lawyer six years at the university. Tullock was able to accelerate this process:

It was not possible to accelerate in the law school, so I graduated in a total of slightly less than five years. The reason it was less than five years was that, in mid-program, the entire class was drafted about a week before the end of the semester. We were all given an intelligence test, in which I, as usual, ranked high. All of us were then shipped off to basic infantry training. (Tullock 2009: 2)

Thus, Tullock's law school program was interrupted by his being drafted into military service as an infantry rifleman in the early summer of 1943, but not before he had all but completed a one semester course in economics taught by Henry Simons (Tullock 1983). This course was to be Tullock's only formal exposure to economics, a fact that no doubt enhanced rather than hindered his future success in contributing highly original ideas to that discipline. Surely Henry Simons's economics class ensured that Gordon Tullock, from his time in law school onwards, would be no supporter of FDR's New Deal policy program or of Keynesian economics.

2 Gordon Tullock goes to war

After completing basic infantry training, Tullock was retained as a cadre to train new infantry recruits for a few months and was then given a clerical job. Shortly thereafter, he was shipped off to England as an infantry replacement in the US 9th Armored Division (The 9th: The Story of the 9th Armored Division 1945).

The 9th would later be known as the Phantom Division, because it was deployed as a decoy, shortly before the planned D-Day landings in a camp on the British coastline opposite the German defenses in Pas-de-Calais under General John Leonard. On D-Day plus 7, however, the 9th was redeployed to France via Normandy's Omaha Beach:

On D plus 7, I waded ashore in Normandy. Fortunately for me, but unfortunately for a number of other soldiers, an American plane which had been damaged jettisoned its bombs on a chow line of the 9th Infantry forward headquarters company. The package of men in which I landed was diverted to replace them. This probably saved me from death or serious injury. The 9th infantry division was an elite unit and most of its infantry riflemen were killed or injured in the drive across France.
(Tullock 2009: 3)

Gordon Tullock makes light of this landing. But it surely would have been a frightening experience for any young soldier. Omaha Beach is known as 'Bloody Omaha', because of the 2,200 US soldiers who died on D-Day – June 6, 1944 - whilst attempting to establish a beach-head in the face of withering German fire. Even by D-Day plus 7, the beach was not fully secure, as Tullock's account makes clear. Tullock would have heard about the high casualty rate on D-Day itself, and no doubt, would have prepared himself for the worst on June 13, 1944, at just 22 years of age.

Tullock's life almost certainly was spared by the good fortune of his being left behind in a platoon supported by three anti-tank guns, with the intent of defending the forward headquarters of the division, should the Germans break through. The German break-through did not happen, and eventually Tullock was shifted to the position of company clerk, though, to his disappointment, he was not promoted to corporal. He spent most of his time riding a truck. Although he was assigned a 50-calibre anti-aircraft machine gun, he maintained it, but never had to discharge it. Eventually, his platoon

followed the 9th Armored Division across France and then crossed the River Rhine into Germany:

I could sometimes hear artillery fire in the distance, but no shell ever landed near me. I drove across France on the back of a truck, appreciating the scenery, but doing nothing to accelerate our victory. As you may remember, a German officer failed to fire the explosives on the Remagen Bridge, for which he was executed. I went across on the first night; but I was asleep on the back of the truck, and have no memory of the matter. (Tulloch 2009: 4)

The Ludendorff Bridge, known by English speakers during World War II as the Bridge of Remagen, was a railway bridge across the River Rhine in Germany, connecting the villages of Remagen and Erpel between two ridge lines of hills flanking the river. The bridge is notable for its capture on March 7-8, 1945, by the US 9th Armored Division during the Battle of Remagen, a capture that allowed the Allies to establish a bridgehead across the Rhine (www.lonesentry.com/gi_stories_booklets/9tharmored/index/html).

The bridge capture was an important strategic event because it was the only remaining intact bridge (out of 22 road and 25 railroad bridges) over the Rhine River into the heartland of Germany. The bridge was sufficiently strong as to allow the 9th Armored Division to cross immediately with tanks and supply trucks. The Germans made desperate attempts to destroy or to damage it.

The ensuing engagement continued for more than a week, including a huge artillery duel, a desperate air battle, and scrambled troop dispositions for both sides along the entire defensive front. On March 23, 1945, the long prepared *Operation Plunder* began as Field Marshall General Bernard Montgomery's 21st British and Canadian Army Group, heroes of El Alamein, crossed the Rhine in full force to the north, near Rees and Wesel, just as General George Patton deployed assault rafts to drive five divisions of his

US Third Army across the raging river at Oppenheim (south of Mainz) on their march east to Berlin and victory.

So Gordon Tullock's modest commentary of his quiet crossing of the Remagen Bridge on Day One of its seizure is all but inconceivable. It must have been an extremely dangerous operation, recognized by all concerned as a tipping point of the war in the European Theater of Operations.

Once in Germany, Tullock's unit established itself in a German house on the banks of the Rhine while Allied forces made their way across the river:

The engineers attempted to build a pontoon bridge, using the driveway as the exit, but the German artillery made them desist. A large number of other units crossed, using the railroad bridge until it fell. Meanwhile, another bridge had been provided by the engineers. The bridgehead was strengthened and eventually we broke out and Germany fell. In all of this, I was merely a spectator. (Tullock 2009: 3)

The Division exploited the bridgehead, moving south and east across the Lahn River toward Limburg, where thousands of Allied soldiers were liberated. The Division drove on to Frankfurt, and then turned to assist in the closing of the Ruhr pocket. In April 1945, it continued east, encircling Leipzig and securing a line along the Mulde River. The Division was shifting south to Czechoslovakia when the war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945. So Gordon Tullock found himself, at war's end, in what would become the huge sector of continental Europe already betrayed by the West at Yalta to the tender mercies of Marshal Stalin's USSR.

With the war over, the US army, having many troops in Europe, set up a small university in England and Tullock was deployed there for a period of two months. Returning to his job as company clerk in early December 1945, he was almost immediately ordered back to the United States for demobilization:

I crossed the Atlantic in a modified freighter, was sent by train to Rockville, and was discharged. (Tullock 2009: 5)

Although Tullock dismisses his wartime service as uneventful, this can only be with the advantage of hindsight and considerable modesty. Participation in a major land war as part of ‘the poor bloody infantry’ is never without the gravest of personal risk. Defending their own heartland, the crack German divisions that the ultimately victorious Allies had to overcome during their march across Germany were as deadly, courageous and well-marshaled as any in the history of mankind. Other, that is, than those of the 9th Armored Division and, of course, General George Patton’s relentless Third Army.

3 Chicago law

Following this wartime interruption, Tullock returned to Chicago, now well-financed by the G.I. Bill, to complete his *Juris Doctor* degree from the Chicago Law School in 1947. He forgot to remit the \$5 payment required by the University and thus never received his earned baccalaureate degree.

Gordon Tullock entered the University of Chicago in 1940 as an 18 year-old youth. He graduated from Chicago Law in 1947 as a mature adult, seasoned by military service during a hard-fought war. Over the period 1940 to 1947, Chicago’s law school was undergoing a fundamental transition – a transition that would impact significantly upon this earnest young scholar and that would provide him with forensic skills that would take him to the peak of his chosen profession.

Chicago Law was founded in 1902 as an integral part of the University (Meltzer 2003). The University’s president, William Rainey Harper, in planning the school,

turned primarily to Ernst Freund, a lawyer trained in Germany and a member of the political science department for advice, to John D. Rockefeller for money, and to the Harvard Law School for Chicago's first Dean.

Freund, like Harper, had a broad conception of a legal curriculum, very different from Harvard's scientific black letter approach devised in the latter part of the nineteenth century by Christopher Columbus Langdell. Freund, following the German tradition, contemplated a program embracing a broad social science curriculum and taught by a mixture of legally trained and non-legal scholars. Harvard objected, and a compromise solution emerged between the two traditions.

The new law school gave top billing to professional training, but also recognized the school's aspiration 'to cultivate and encourage the scientific study of systematic and comparative jurisprudence, legal history and principles of legislation' (Meltzer 2002). Chicago Law, with its radical departure from the Harvard tradition, by the 1930s had become nationally recognized and competed with Harvard for high quality faculty and law students. Inevitably, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, the school fell somewhat under the influence of the legal realism counter-culture that fundamentally challenged the predominance of black letter law.

The curriculum, by the time that Gordon Tullock entered the university in 1940, encouraged the integration of legal training within a broad perspective. The university offered a specialized track from Chicago College to Chicago Law that reduced the time line from seven to six years (or even less, as in Tullock's five years). Students would complete three undergraduate years and then complete their baccalaureate degree during the first year of their three-year law school curriculum. The prescribed courses for that

fourth year were broad in scope and diverse in methodology. This was Chicago Law's invaluable deference to the thinking of Ernst Freund.

By 1940, Wilbur Katz was Dean of Chicago Law. The Socratic-method predominated in the classroom, especially during the first year, forcing class participation and requiring students to reduce complex cases to their precedential elements. During Tullock's pre-draft years, Chicago did not offer much in the way of research writing, trial practice, negotiation and the like – the faculty was insufficiently large for such luxuries and the impact of the Great Depression lingered on.

However, when Wilbur Katz resumed his deanship in 1945, following military service during the war, the situation changed dramatically. Walter Blum, William Ming, Richard Watt and Bernard Meltzer had been added to the faculty, bolstering the intellectual strength and vitality of the school.

Most important, for the long-term future of the school, Edward Levi, who much later became America's most effective-ever Attorney General under President Gerald Ford, returned from the Antitrust and War Divisions of the Justice Department (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_H._Levi). Albeit after Tullock's time at Chicago, Edward Levi and Aaron Director would become the anvil for the law and economics research program that vaulted Chicago Law into a [or “the”?] top position among the world's legal academies.

Tragically, Henry Simons committed suicide in 1946; but Tullock had already benefited from his wisdom and insight. Aaron Director replaced Simons as key economist in the law school, and his family association with the newly hired Milton

Friedman guaranteed cordial and intellectually fruitful interactions between lawyers and economists at Chicago.

Chicago, under the charismatic presidency of Robert Maynard Hutchins, became a hotbed of intellectual debate on matters philosophical and scientific. The mature Gordon Tullock engaged fully in these debates, forging the knowledge and skills that would serve him so well in his own academic career. For a brilliant polymath like Tullock, there could have been no more fertile soil than that located in the quadrangle west of University Avenue and south of 58th Street, Chicago, where the School of Law was then located.

4 Attorney-at-law and diplomat

Gordon Tullock completed his law degree in two years and passed the bar examination. In May 1947, he commenced a short career, as an attorney-at-law with a small but prestigious downtown Chicago law firm:

There were only three lawyers and I was, of course, the most junior. I outranked the two secretaries, but was otherwise at the bottom of the office. Mainly, I looked up law in the municipal law library, but I was occasionally given more prestigious work. (Tullock 2009: 5)

During his five-month tenure, Tullock handled two cases. The first case he won when he was expected to lose, after one of the partners in his firm had advised his client not to pursue the matter. The second case he lost when he should have won and he was admonished by the court for his poor performance (Brady and Tollison 1994: 2). Fortunately for the world of ideas, these events persuaded him to seek out an alternative career.

Prior to graduation, Tullock had passed the notoriously difficult Foreign Service Examination. He was offered a commission in the Foreign Service:

I told my boss that I was satisfied with my job, but the pay was too low. Unless I received a substantial raise, I would quit and become a diplomat. Without blinking he said that it was his patriotic duty to see that fine young men like me went out to serve their country. This left me no alternative but to resign. (Tullock 2009: 5)

Tullock went to Washington for two months of training as a Foreign Service Officer, prior to receiving an assignment to Tientsin, China, as a Vice Consul in the United States Consulate:

My duties were fairly routine. As the most junior officer, I occupied a desk in the outer office, and dealt with visitors. Routine matters, I deal with myself, while passing on more important matters to my seniors. I played a role in encoding our messages to Washington, as I possessed full security clearance. This was a further indication of my junior status. (Tullock 2009: 5)

Right from the outset of the communist revolution in China, Mao Zedong understood that he must rely on Chinese peasants to win the civil war, but that he must seize and transform China's major cities in order to impose a system of industrial socialism across the country.

By late 1948, the Communists had driven the Nationalists out of Manchuria and were pushing south. They seized much of the countryside surrounding Tientsin, killing many landlords as they went as part of their policy of land reform. Tientsin was put under siege and subjected to heavy artillery fire:

In my apartment on an upper floor of the tallest building in town, I had a good view. They never hit the building, although concussion broke one of my windows. I reported the matter by telephone to the Consul General in our office on the second floor, and he sent my report on to Washington by radio. The Department of State called my family and alarmed them about my safety. (Tullock 2009: 13)

On January 15, 1949, following a 27-hour battle with the Nationalist army of Chiang Kai-Shek, Tientsin fell to the Communist forces. The Communists marched into the city, and proudly included in their victory parade a battery of captured American 105 mm. howitzers:

In general my fellow officers were happy about this, although not me or the commercial specialist. Businessmen, especially foreign businessmen, found the situation depressing. In a conversation with an English businessman in the offices of a still open American bank, he said: "They are stripping us." He seemed both indignant and surprised and did not respond in a friendly manner at my saying: "What did you expect? They are Communists." (Tullock 2009: 13)

As an important Treaty Port, servicing Beijing, Tientsin had experienced several civil wars during its lengthy history. Usually business proceeded without interruption. This time was an exception:

An American who had spent many years as the local agent for American car manufacturers told me that he was accustomed to Chinese civil wars and expected to go on as usual. He was arrested and lost his property. He became ill in prison and the Communists permitted his estranged wife to come and get him and take him back to America. He died on the trip home. (Tullock 2009: 14)

The US Consulate in Tientsin had no dealings of an official nature with the Communist government. The United States refused to recognize the Chinese Communist Party takeover, and the CPC reciprocated the snub. The CPC confiscated all radio transmitters and receivers from the Consulate. The Consulate responded by sending Chinese staff members by rail to Beijing with coded messages. The US embassy in Beijing still possessed radio contact with Washington:

Why the Communists permitted this, I do not know. We destroyed all our convenient coding equipment, which we did not want to fall into Communist hands. Instead, we used one-time pads, which are secure, but inconvenient. We continued reporting to Washington, but our limited access to any official source

meant that we had little news to send. (Tullock 2009: 15)

In the meantime, the war continued to go badly for the Nationalists and the US Department of State decided to withdraw from the Chinese mainland. Gordon Tullock shipped out on a British coaster to Hong Kong and, from there, crossed the Pacific Ocean to return to the United States. After a brief visit to Rockford to reunite with his family, he reported to the Department of State in Washington.

Determined to capitalize on his first-hand knowledge of China, the US government dispatched Tullock first to Yale University and then to Cornell University for two years of intensive study of the Chinese language. Tullock mastered Mandarin, but experienced difficulty with spoken Chinese – a tonal language – because he was substantially tone-deaf. While in residence at Yale, he made an important, ultimately career-changing contact, namely Professor Richard L. ‘Dixie’ Walker, who would later provide him with his first tenure-track academic appointment.

In spring 1952, Gordon Tullock was transferred back to Washington where he wrote a sequence of reports on the Far East situation. He was disappointed by the lack of serious attention paid to these reports by policy decision-makers in the United States government. He was delighted to make contact with the famous philosopher of science, Karl Popper, whose ideas would play a huge role in the emergence of Gordon Tullock as a world-class scholar (Rowley 1987b).

In the fall of 1952, Gordon Tullock was assigned to the ‘Mainland China’ section of the Consulate General, now located in the British colony of Hong Kong. Some nine months later he was reassigned to the political section of the US Embassy in Seoul, South Korea, where he became the resident expert on North Korea at a time when the Korean

War was winding down and protracted Armistice negotiations were under way. Prior to Tullock's assignment, Seoul had been overrun by communists from the north, until the United Nations forces, brilliantly led by General Douglas MacArthur, pushed them back across the 38th parallel (and well beyond).

Once again, Tullock (like MacArthur) found his reports ignored by a Washington whose vote-driven politicians formulated policy without consulting the professionals:

Perhaps our international relations would be better if this were not so, but we should not spend a lot of money on a pretense. A 90 per cent cut-back on our Foreign Service would save money without really damaging our international relations or stature. My career in the Foreign Service was pleasant, but I do not think that the government secured a good return on my salary. (Tullock 2009: 16).

Tullock returned to the United States in January 1955, where he was assigned to the State Department's Office of Intelligence and Research in Washington. He decided to write a book and asked for one year's unpaid leave. Tullock's request was summarily declined, and he resigned from the Foreign Service in the fall of 1956.

This parting of the ways was as reinvigorating for Tullock as it was inevitable in the bigger picture of what was now to come. Henceforth, Gordon Tullock would assume a natural position of always looking down on a government that he had so loyally served.

5 Tullock meets a great scholar and reads some books: 1956-1958

Gordon Tullock's first port-of-call after quitting government was the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, where he hoped to link up with Karl Popper, now acknowledged to be one of the greatest philosophers of science in the 20th century.

Karl Popper was a self-professed critical-rationalist, a dedicated opponent of relativism in science and human affairs, an implacable critic of totalitarianism, and a staunch supporter of the Open Society. In short, he was Tullock's kind of man. Unfortunately, Popper had little time for Tullock, absorbed as he was in translating his *magnum opus*, 'Logik der Forschung' (Popper 1935) into his blockbuster, 'The Logic of Scientific Discovery' (Popper 1959). So Tullock absorbed Popper's philosophy and departed for Princeton where he became research director of the Princeton Panel, a small subsidiary of the Gallup organization.

Unusually, for a non-academic, and a non-economist, Gordon Tullock had already published three essays in the world's leading professional journals – *Journal of Political Economy* (Campbell and Tullock 1954), *Economic History Review* (Tullock 1957), and *American Economic Review* (Campbell and Tullock 1957). These essays, dealing with hyperinflation and monetary cycles in China, and with the Korean monetary and fiscal system, had been written during his diplomatic service.

These contributions had whetted Tullock's appetite for an academic career while clearly signaling his unusual facility for observing his environment as the basis for truly creative thinking. Furthermore, he had read and had been intellectually excited by the writings of the following scholars: Niccolo Machiavelli (1514), Joseph Schumpeter (1942), Karl Popper (1959), Duncan Black (1948) and Anthony Downs (1957).

This assimilated scholarship would provide Gordon Tullock with the basis for reintegrating economics with political science within a strictly rational choice framework. Briefly, these are the key messages that our still-young-at heart, 36 year-old

would-be scholar took with him to Mr. Jefferson's academical village in Charlottesville, Virginia in that fateful autumn of 1958:

5.1 Niccolo Machiavelli

So it should be noted that when he seizes a state the new ruler must determine all the injuries that he will need to inflict. He must inflict them once for all, and not have to renew them every day, and in that way he will be able to set men's minds at rest and win them over to him when he confers benefits. Whoever acts otherwise, either through timidity or bad advice, is always forced to have the knife ready in his hand. (Machiavelli 1514/1988, Book VIII: 66)

and

So, on this question of being loved or feared, I conclude that since some men love as they please but fear when the prince pleases, a wise prince should rely on what he controls, not on what he cannot control. He must only endeavour, as I said, to escape being hated. (Machiavelli 1514/1988, Book XVII: 98)

and

Everyone realizes how praiseworthy it is for a prince to honour his word and to be straightforward rather than crafty in his dealings; nonetheless, contemporary experience shows that princes who have achieved great things have been those who have given their word lightly, who have known how to trick men with their cunning, and who, in the end, have overcome those abiding by honest principles. (Machiavelli 1514/1988, Book XVIII: 99)

5.2 Joseph Schumpeter

the social meaning or function of parliamentary activity is no doubt to turn out legislation and, in part, administrative measures. But in order to understand how democratic politics serve this social end, we must start from the competitive struggle for power and office and realize that the social function is fulfilled, as it were, incidentally – in the same sense as production is incidental to the making of profits. (Schumpeter 1942: 282)

5.3 Duncan Black

Theorem. *If, in relation to all of the motions concerned a_1, \dots, a_m and a_0 , the member's curves are single-peaked, then whether the committee follows procedure α or β or γ its decision will be O_{med} .*

This follows since O_{med} can get a simple majority against any motion against which it is put. It may be of course that O_{med} is the motion a_0 ; and the existing state of affairs will then remain unchanged. (Black 1948/1958: 24)

5.4 Anthony Downs

From the self-interest axiom springs our view of what motivates the political actions of party members. We assume that they act solely in order to attain the income, prestige, and power which come from being in office. Thus politicians in our model never seek office as a means of carrying out particular policies; their only goal is to reap the rewards of holding office *per se*. They treat policies purely as means to the attainment of their private ends, which they can only reach v=by being elected. Upon this reasoning rests the fundamental hypothesis of our model: parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies. (Downs 1957: 28)

5.5 Karl Popper

A consistent system...divides the set of all possible statements into two: those which it contradicts and those with which it is compatible.. This is why consistency is the most general requirement for a system, whether empirical or non-empirical, if it is to be of any use at all. Besides being consistent, an empirical system should satisfy a further condition: it must be *falsifiable*. The two conditions are to a large extent analogous. Statements which do not satisfy the condition of consistency fail to differentiate between any two statements within the totality of all possible statements. Statements which do not satisfy the condition of falsifiability fail to differentiate between any two statements within the totality of all possible empirical basic statements. (Popper 1959/1968: 92)

6 The Thomas Jefferson Center for Studies in Political Economy, 1958-1959

Gordon Tullock first met James M. Buchanan at a conference in Philadelphia in 1957.

Right from the outset, Buchanan's relationship with Tullock would be complex, but highly productive, for both scholars:

When I first met Gordon Tullock in 1957, he had in hand a voluminous manuscript on bureaucracy that he had tried, unsuccessfully, to publish. What I took home with me from Philadelphia turned out to be a fascinating analysis of modern governmental bureaucracy that was almost totally buried in an irritating personal narrative account of Tullock's nine-year experience in the foreign service hierarchy. (Then, as now, Tullock's work was marked by his apparent inability to separate analytical exposition from personal anecdote.) The substantive contribution in the manuscript was centered on the hypothesis that, regardless of role, the individual bureaucrat responds to the rewards and punishments that he confronts. This straightforward, and now so simple, hypothesis turned the whole post-Weberian quasi-normative approach to bureaucracy on its head.... The economic theory of bureaucracy was born. (Buchanan 1987: 11)

Although that manuscript would remain unpublished until 1965 (Tullock 1965), its payoff for Buchanan and Tullock would be much swifter. Buchanan immediately discerned the amazing talent that lay beneath the surface of Tullock's intellectually aggressive demeanor, and moved to expose the flat-spoken Mid-Western political cynic to the elongated vowels and the powerful constitutional legacy of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In the autumn of 1958, at age 36, Gordon Tullock accepted a one-year post-doctoral fellowship at the Thomas Jefferson Center for Studies in Political Economy at the University of Virginia. The fact that Tullock had not earned a doctorate was of no significance in the bigger picture of what was about to transpire.

The Thomas Jefferson Center was born in the foyer of the Social Sciences Building at the University of Chicago early in 1948:

In a casual conversation with a fellow graduate student, Warren Nutter, I discovered that we shared an evaluation and diagnosis of developments in economics, the discipline with which we were about to become associated as licensed practitioners. We sensed that economics had shifted, and was shifting away from its classical foundations as a component element in a comprehensive moral philosophy, and that technique was replacing substance. We concurred that some deliberately organized renewal of the classical

emphasis was a project worthy of dreams. (Buchanan 1992: 94)

Almost a decade later, in early 1957, James Buchanan and Warren Nutter found themselves in a position to actuate the idea that they had discussed in Chicago. They had simultaneously joined the economics faculty at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville – Buchanan hired as departmental chairman from Florida State University and Nutter hired from Yale University as Associate Professor. Almost immediately they inherited a joint leadership role. With enthusiastic support from the faculty Dean, William Duren, they established the Thomas Jefferson Center.

Buchanan would much have preferred to name the Center for James Madison, but grant money would be more easily forthcoming for the Charlottesville author of the Declaration of Independence. Money was indeed forthcoming in the form of a five-year grant from the William Volker Fund that enabled Buchanan and Nutter to bring a sequence of distinguished visiting scholars to the Center for stays of six months each – Frank Knight and Friedrich von Hayek, initially, followed by Michael Polanyi, Maurice Allais, Bertil Ohlin, T.W. Hutchison, Duncan Black and Bruno Leoni.

Buchanan and Nutter were not alone as classical liberal political economists on the Virginia campus. Rutledge Vining was already there, and would play a major role in directing Buchanan's scholarship towards the making of rules, rather than the choice of policies under existing rules. Leland Yeager joined the program in 1958, and was also in place during Tullock's fellowship year (Yeager 1988). But something was missing, an essential ingredient that would turn the Center into an intellectual powerhouse over the coming decade. That missing ingredient was Gordon Tullock:

An element in what was to become the 'Virginia School' was, however missing in the Knight, Wicksell, Nutter, and Vining influences emergent in my own work

in the classically oriented academic program of Charlottesville in the late 1950s. This element was to be added when Gordon Tullock joined us in 1958, first as a post-doctoral fellow...and, after a spell at South Carolina, as a faculty colleague. Tullock brought with him his near genius sweep of received knowledge in the sciences and in history, along with a rare ability to make dramatic leaps across intellectual bridges.... In a real sense, Tullock's contribution to Virginia Political Economy was to harden the underlying behavioral model, to make the individualist approach that I had long stressed more amenable to precise analytical manipulation. (Buchanan 1992: 97-98)

Tullock amply justified Buchanan's evident enthusiasm. Tullock spent his year in Charlottesville forging a unique hard-nosed *homo economicus* perspective on the economics of politics. The principal publication of his fellowship year was a seminal paper on the relevance of logrolling to the problem of majority voting, completed in June 1959 and published in December 1959 in the *Journal of Political Economy* (Tullock 1959). Once again the Rockford Slugger hit the leather right out of the ball-park.

In 1959, most economists and almost all political scientists were strong supporters of the majority vote principle, not because they were acquainted with the median voter theorem, but because they believed that democratic elections enabled simple majorities to dominate policy over an electoral cycle; and that such domination was welfare-enhancing. Tullock challenged the validity of this belief, noting that the secret ballot prevented vote-trading, thus denying minorities with intense preferences any opportunity to enter into welfare-enhancing bargains with majorities endowed with less intense preferences. To rub yet more salt into saltwater wounds, Tullock further demonstrated that, if all voters are rational self-seekers, majority-voting may well lead to an over-allocation of resources through the political process.

Such insights were not warmly received in the Ivy League academies of the Eastern seaboard of the United States. But they surely lit up the soul of the Man from

Tennessee, most especially when Tullock produced an 80-page mimeographed research paper entitled: ‘A Preliminary Investigation of the Theory of Constitutions’. Buchanan recognized pure gold when he saw it. This paper would eventually constitute Chapter 6 of *The Calculus of Consent*, arguably the keystone chapter of the entire book.

In the autumn of 1959, his Volker Fund scholarship having expired, Gordon Tullock hit the trail south from Virginia to South Carolina, with an exciting new joint project in his briefcase: to co-author with James Buchanan, a book that would become world-famous under the name of *The Calculus of Consent*, the seminal text that would go a long way to winning for James M. Buchanan the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, a little over a quarter of a century into the future.

This time the Rockford Slugger would not simply hit a home run. In partnership with the Tennessee Curve-Ball Pitcher, James Buchanan, he would play a major role in winning the World Series for Mr. Jefferson’s Virginia.

7 Deep in the heart of Dixie, 1959-1962

Richard L. ‘Dixie’ Walker, whom Tullock had first encountered at Yale University early in the 1950s, while learning Mandarin Chinese, was the source of his first tenure track appointment. Walker, very definitely, was Gordon Tullock’s kind of man, as indeed anyone fired by Yale University for offending far-left political sensitivities was almost honor-bound to be (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_L._Walker).

During World War II, Richard Walker served from 1943 to 1946 as Mandarin Chinese language interpreter with General Douglas MacArthur’s headquarters in the Pacific Theater of Operations. He later served with distinction in the Korean War.

Following his military service, Walker served on the faculty of Yale University until 1957, when he was summarily fired because of his openly expressed distaste for the suffering and atrocities occurring under Mao Zedong in the communist People's Republic of China. Walker forcefully argued that communism was incompatible with Chinese culture, an insult that no Maoist Yale faculty member would tolerate at that time (perhaps even now):

His unorthodox views had soured the Yale faculty on him, and *vice versa*. When he went into the chairman's office to resign, before he had spoken a word, the chairman interposed: "Dick, I have a tragic decision to tell you about. You are to be terminated." Dick told him that he was not at all unhappy with the decision. For he had other academic plans, in the heart of Dixie. (Tullock 2009: 17)

Richard Walker had been invited by the Governor of South Carolina to organize a new program in international studies at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. He assumed responsibility for the program in 1957 and directed it until 1971. In 1961, he founded the Institute of International Studies and directed it until 1981, by which time it was recognized as a pre-eminent center for research and publications.

In 1981, Walker was nominated by President Ronald Reagan and was confirmed unanimously by the Senate, to serve as ambassador to the Republic of Korea. He served with distinction in that post until 1986, securing the release from prison of Kim Dae-Jung, who was under sentence of death, but who later would become President of South Korea.

In 1959, Richard Walker hired Gordon Tullock to a tenure-track Assistant Professorship in the Department of International Studies at USC. The three-man team

that Walker assembled worked out of a converted church – for a professed atheist, Gordon Tullock seems to have had a penchant for working out of converted churches.

In any event, living in, and with, ‘Dixie’ would turn out to be a perfect choice for Gordon Tullock. The bulk of *The Calculus of Consent* was written by Buchanan and Tullock during the course of the academic year 1959-60. Tullock was primarily responsible for Chapter 6 (A Generalized Theory of Constitutions), Chapter 8 (The Costs of Decision-Making), and Chapter 16 (The Bicameral Legislature). Buchanan was primarily responsible for Chapter 5 (The Organization of Human Activity), Chapter 7 (The Rule of Unanimity), and Chapters 11, 12 and 13 (applications of game theory and theoretical welfare economics). The remaining 12 chapters in the 20-chapter volume were crafted jointly. The two lengthy appendices were separately written and signed. The Thomas Jefferson Center provided clerical support for the final typing of the manuscript.

Whether or not Divine Providence energized him, Tullock surely continued to write prolifically and to publish impressively while crafting his sequence of key chapters and co-authoring several other chapters for *The Calculus of Consent*. On this basis, Tullock quickly gained tenure as Associate Professor of International Studies at the University of South Carolina before rejoining James Buchanan at the University of Virginia in February 1962, this time as a tenured Associate Professor of Economics, just as the University of Michigan Press was publishing their seminal book (Buchanan and Tullock 1962).

8. Mr. Jefferson’s academical village, Rouss Hall, 1962-1967

The Calculus of Consent (Buchanan and Tullock 1962) successfully combined two developing strands of intellectual inquiry, the emphasis on the rules within which choices are made and the economic model of behavior of political agents. The book also explicitly embedded these two strands in the normative framework of Paretian welfare economics. James Buchanan provided the entrepreneurial framework within which such an unorthodox political economy was able to grow and flourish. Gordon Tullock was an indispensable engine of its creation.

The physical environment of Rouss Hall was perfect for innovative scholarship:

The Virginia economists were almost entirely housed in the basement floor of one building. Department faculty offices were in an L-shaped relationship structurally. One branch of the L housed the younger members of the faculty. At right angles, the other stem of the L housed the Thomas Jefferson Center for Studies in Political Economy. The stars of the faculty were found there.

However, notwithstanding some age differences between these groups, there was no discernible rank difference as far as social relationships were concerned. Upon entering the Thomas Jefferson Center one encountered a small foyer. On the immediate right was a comfortable lounge which served as a department seminar room and also housed the faculty journal club's periodical collection. This room was also a commons room and an examining room for thesis and dissertation defenses. It was an area where a good deal of faculty and student contact took place. A narrow corridor led to a reception room where Betty Tillman, the secretary to James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock presided. On her right was Tullock's office. On her left the more spacious quarters of James Buchanan. The other members of the Center had offices that lined the hall leading to Betty Tillman's chamber. (Breit 1986: 2-3)

Because Charlottesville was small, most of the economics faculty lived within a short driving distance of the university grounds. Working long hours on campus was the rule rather than the exception, allowing for abundant faculty interaction and discussion of emerging ideas. This was an indispensable feature of the developing Virginia political economy program during the early 1960s (and indeed well beyond).

Those who came together at precisely 12:30 p.m. each day for lunch in the University Cafeteria included two future Nobel Prize winners – James Buchanan and Ronald Coase - as well as another great scholar who should by now have won that Prize – Gordon Tullock:

Ideas were discussed, recent journal articles analyzed, and the present state of one's research criticized. Each lunch had the aspect of a seminar. The discussions were almost always energetic and vigorous and the arguments at the highest level. I think that many of us felt that we were collaborators in the process of rediscovering political economy. This was conducive to a sense of mutual loyalty and a deep devotion to many of the ideas being espoused. (Breit 1986: 3)

For Gordon Tullock, these five years in Charlottesville would prove to be his halcyon years. He would write as though obsessed, regardless of disciplinary boundaries. If the rational choice model was relevant, it would be ruthlessly deployed, be it on method, on economics, political science, the law, or biology, and most especially across the entire range of the new field of public choice. To aid him in his task, Tullock launched, in 1966, a new journal – *Papers in Non-Market Decision Making*. This journal would become the anvil on which the public choice research program would be forged. Together with James Buchanan, Gordon Tullock also initiated a series of meetings beginning in 1963 in Charlottesville, that would eventually evolve into the Public Choice Society.

Graduate students imbued with a love of individual liberty and a yearning for classical political economy flooded to Charlottesville in order to imbibe the wisdom that would be denied to them across the vast sea of Keynesian socialism that had swamped out the larger part of the post-World War II American academy. The names are now legendary: Toby Davis, Charles Goetz, David Johnson, Cotton Lindsay, James C. Miller

III, Mark Pauly, Charles Plott, Paul Craig Roberts, John Snow, Robert Tollison, Richard Wagner, and Thomas Willett (Goetz 1991; Tollison, 1991)

Early on, however, the sky had begun to darken and storm clouds had begun to form over Mr. Jefferson's academical village as the forces of progressive socialism struck back. The University administration at the University of Virginia, from the president down, and, notably, including the Dean of the Graduate School, was composed of left-leaning Democrats. In a small city, without a substantive business community, such anti-intellectual misfits were able to pursue their progressive agenda without any apparent cost, and indeed, to much rejoicing among the Marxists who dominated the liberal arts faculty. So the Fifth Column was already firmly established within the university itself.

Almost inevitably, the attack center was located outside UVA, among the Marxist-Leninist bureaucrats who had captured the Ford Foundation, and who used the wealth accumulated by America's foremost capitalist to weaken the infrastructure of capitalism and freedom across the United States:

In 1960 the Ford Foundation had refused to provide a grant to the Thomas Jefferson Center, giving as a reason the statement in the Center's brochure to the effect that the scholars involved wished to preserve a social order based on individual liberty. This was cited as evidence that the Virginia department was opposed to academic freedom. Kermit Gordon, the officer at the Ford Foundation in charge of grants in the field of economics said the Foundation could not consider making any grants to support work at Virginia until the economics department became as balanced politically as those at Harvard and Yale. (Breit 1986: 8-9)

Well, that was certainly not about to happen under the intellectual leadership of James Buchanan and Warren Nutter. In 1963, a secret report on the Department of Economics was commissioned by the Dean of the Graduate School at UVA, and dispatched to an

external accreditation body. The document surfaced only in 1974 and shows that a Salem-style hunt for ‘free-market witches’ was rampant across the UVA campus during the early 1960s (Breit 1986: 9).

The report insisted, *inter alia*, that faculty additions within the department should consist exclusively of faculty ‘of different modern outlook’ and that there should be no further recruitment from the Chicago School. One can only imagine how the author of the Declaration of Independence would have responded to such a perverted initiative.

No doubt rubbing salt into the wounds of the UVA bureaucrats, Warren Nutter took a one-semester leave of absence in 1964 to serve as an adviser in the presidential campaign of Senator Barry Goldwater. Indeed it is widely acknowledged that Nutter provided Goldwater with the most powerful, if also the most polarizing, words of his acceptance speech at the 1964 Republican Party convention:

I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice! And let me remind you that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue! (Goldwater 1964)

The secret document, together with the perceived link between the Thomas Jefferson Center and the emergence of the ‘New Right’ in American politics, fully explains the events that followed. In 1964, Ronald Coase received an attractive offer from the University of Chicago. Despite strong pressure from Buchanan, the UVA administration refused to counter-offer. Coase was the first future Nobel Prize winner to leave the UVA campus. In 1966, Andrew Whinston, arguably the most able of the Department’s younger faculty, received an attractive offer from Purdue University. Once again, the UVA administration refused to counter-offer.

The biggest hit, however, was reserved for Gordon Tullock. Despite his distinguished resume, Gordon Tullock would be denied promotion to full professor of economics on three consecutive occasions by a politically hostile and fundamentally unscholarly University administration. As a result, Tullock resigned in the fall of 1967 to become Professor of Political Science at Rice University in Texas

In the fall of 1968, Buchanan protested these negative decisions by resigning to take up a position at the University of California at Los Angeles. There went the second future Nobel Prize winner. In 1969, Warren Nutter took an extended leave of absence from UVA in order to serve as Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Richard Nixon administration. Warren Nutter – a Humphrey Bogart character himself – undoubtedly held the UVA administration in the same low regard that Bogart’s character displayed in the movie *Casablanca* for Marshal Petain’s Vichy government in Nazi-occupied France.

It appeared that the nascent Virginia School of Political Economy might have been deliberately and effectively nipped in the bud by the left-leaning administration of the University of Virginia, and that the wider American academy might be able to heave a collective sigh of socialist relief, with the Chicago School now the only remaining blot on its red intellectual horizon.

9. Regrouping in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, 1968-1983

Neither Buchanan nor Tullock entertained any thoughts about regrouping in Virginia, when they departed for California and Texas respectively in the late 1960s. Surely Blacksburg, Virginia, fell well below their expectations:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI or Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg was never in play as a back-up or default option in the considerations of those

of us who moved “from” Charlottesville, rather than “to” alternative institutions. We, too, had taken on some of the arrogant veneer that permeates “Mr. Jefferson’s university,” and we looked with disdain on the state’s “cow college,” with its military and athletic emphases. (Buchanan 2007: 182)

Other entrepreneurs, however, entertained ambitions to resuscitate a Virginia Political Economy program that appeared to be confronting an early demise. The Commonwealth of Virginia, during the 1960s, had introduced a sales tax that generated significant budget surpluses. This temporary surplus coincided with burgeoning enrollment pressures on the campuses of the Virginia state university system. Dollar bills are never left lying untouched in the corridors of politics.

Under the dynamic leadership of President Marshall Hahn, Virginia Tech seized the initiative from its slower moving rivals, transformed itself from a male-oriented military, engineering, agriculture focus into a full-fledged university, and quickly outpaced all its rivals in terms of size, as measured in terms of both enrollments and budget.

By 1968, Marshall Hahn, supported by a far-sighted provost, Warren Brandt, and an outstanding Business School Dean, William Mitchell, also was ready to outpace his rivals intellectually, by hiring the best, the brightest and the most entrepreneurial scholars onto his Blacksburg campus. If Marshall Hahn could beggar his neighbors by making such hires, so much the better for Virginia Tech, and so much the worse for Mr. Jefferson’s short-sighted academical village. Into this Darwinist environment stepped Wilson Schmidt and Charles Goetz.

Wilson Schmidt had assumed the chairmanship of the Department of Economics at Virginia Tech in the mid-1960s, brought in from George Washington University with

the express purpose of firing up the economics curriculum. Schmidt was a dedicated Republican, leaning towards the Goldwater position within the GOP. Among his early promising hires to the Virginia Tech faculty was Charles Goetz, the very best of all James Buchanan's UVA graduate students in the early 1960s, whom Schmidt lured away from the University of Illinois.

Charles Goetz sensed that Gordon Tullock had not settled well into his new position at Rice University and that he might welcome a return to Virginia (Goetz 1991). Schmidt moved swiftly to hire Tullock as Professor of Economics and Public Choice in the fall of 1968, just as Buchanan was departing from Charlottesville. The move was incredibly smart and Tullock's title foreshadowed a new, more tightly focused research program than would ever have been possible at UVA.

Goetz and Tullock immediately established a new *Center for Studies in Public Choice* in 1968, as the basis for promoting scholarship in the field and as a means of attracting James Buchanan to join them at VPI. This initiative bore fruit in 1969, when James Buchanan – infuriated by the cowardly response of President Charles Young's UCLA administration to student riots and to the bombing of the Department of Economics by the Black Panthers – departed the anarchy of *Lotus Land* in disgust and settled for the mountains of a commonwealth that had not lost all comprehension of the hard-earned lessons of the history of Western civilization.

Buchanan joined the VPI faculty in the fall of 1969, and assumed the General Directorship of the Center, which was immediately renamed as the *Center for Study of Public Choice*. Simultaneously, Tullock somewhat reluctantly renamed his journal *Public Choice*, and the new sub-discipline set down fruitful roots in the peaceful foothills

of the Appalachian Mountains. The location was peaceful. The upcoming public choice revolution in economics and political science would prove to be intellectually disrupting.

Although Virginia Tech was less prestigious than UVA, its location in Blacksburg was even more conducive to highly focused scholarship. For the most part faculty lived within easy walking distance of the campus. There were few outside distractions, yet air-travel was plentiful to New York and Washington via Roanoke Airport. Consulting opportunities were minimal. Adam Smith's maxim of 'applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair' would be the dominant rule for the Public Choice Center. And faculty had better be in their offices by 8:00 a.m. daily, no excuses allowed. As always, James Buchanan would set the pace, typically arriving at his office by no later than 6 am seven days a week.

For a confirmed bachelor like Tullock, Blacksburg was little short of paradise. Every lunch-time was a seminar, designed to place faculty and visitors in the firing line of unremitting interrogation. The President's House, which eventually housed the Center, provided the perfect setting, standing splendidly alone in its own well-treed grounds, and offering spacious accommodations for faculty, visitors and graduate students.

Gordon Tullock's office standing directly across from the larger office of James Buchanan, right at the only entrance to the Center, was luxuriously furnished and contained its own functional fireplace to counter cold Appalachian winters. Evenings were filled with countless small dinner parties as faculty and visitors mingled, further to explore the intricacies of the developing research program that had brought them all to this remote location.

The research program took off with a vengeance, led by Buchanan and Tullock, separately and in combination. Publications poured out of the Center; the *Public Choice Society* found its name and created its reputation; and *Public Choice*, the journal soared into the top rankings of the world's social science journals. Success builds on success. Great scholars flocked to the campus of Virginia Tech from across the globe (Mueller 1985).

In 1971, a redneck from the Georgia swamps, Winston Churchill Bush, came to Blacksburg, and fired up the engines of the Center, refocusing scholarship on the Hobbesian state of nature and its implications for public choice and constitutional political economy (Mackay 1989). As if knowing that his time was short, Bush dragged the faculty into some of its most creative work, preparing the ground for Buchanan's path-breaking 1975 book, *The Limits of Liberty* (Buchanan 1975) and for Tullock's 1974 counterpoint, *The Social Dilemma* (Tullock 1974). Within two short years, Bush would be dead, drowned in a few inches of water following a car accident. His death broke James Buchanan's heart. But Winston Bush had generously given new life to the Blacksburg experiment. Tullock seized the advantage by publishing two edited volumes on the theory of anarchy (Tullock 1972, 1974)

Would-be scholars of public choice flocked to Blacksburg to learn at the feet of their two masters. Dennis Mueller, Nicolaus Tideman, Robert Staaf, Roger Faith, Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky all visited as postdoctoral fellows. Tideman, Staaf, Faith and Brennan later returned as members of faculty. Richard Wagner joined the Center from Tulane University and Robert Tollison from Clemson University. Other faculty hires included Mark Crain, Thomas Borcharding, Dwight Lee, Melvin Hinich,

Art Denzau, Robert Mackay and David Friedman. International visitors to the Center included Bruno Frey, Fritz Schneider, Alan Hamlin, Robert Sugden, and Charles Rowley twice (in 1974 and 1979 respectively).

Between 1968 and 1978, these idyllic conditions continued on the Blacksburg campus, though, to be sure, some key changes occurred. Marshall Hahn moved on to pastures new during the summer of 1974, resigning from Virginia Tech one day after President Nixon resigned the presidency of the country. Charles Goetz moved on shortly afterwards to develop law and economics at UVA. No new faculty hire brought the pure undiluted oxygen of Winston Bush, though Brennan, Tollison, and Wagner surely made significant contributions. Crucially, however, Wilson Schmidt fell from favor with the Center faculty, largely because he was considered to have caught Potomac Fever while serving in the Nixon administration. Out of favor, Schmidt stood down as chairman in 1977, although he remained on the Center faculty.

In the spring of 1978, Daniel Orr swept in from the University of California at San Diego as the new departmental chairman. Once again, storm clouds would form over the Virginia political economy program. This time, the turbulence was not over perceived political differences, but rather over perceived differences of methodology. Dan Orr was determined to re-orientate the Virginia Tech economics program towards mainstream neoclassical economics, and to do so even if such a shift of direction came at the price of the Center's world-famous research contribution.

This came at a time of growing internal tensions within the Center, as major scholars immediately below Buchanan and Tullock jockeyed for recognition, and as a number of fine public choice scholars were relocated from the President's House to the

small white house by the Virginia Tech duck pond. Abraham Lincoln's pregnant warning that 'a house divided against itself cannot stand' comes to mind with respect to this troubling change of fortune for the Virginia School.

With Dan Orr pursuing a policy of faculty hiring diametrically opposed to the instincts of James Buchanan, and with a number of white house public choice scholars splintering away in favor of the chairman, in 1981, James Buchanan and Center Executive Director, Robert Tollison, engineered a complete administrative severing of the relationship between the Center and Department. This gamble was predicated on the notion that Virginia Tech would recognize the intellectual dominance of the Center and would fund its expansion accordingly.

The gamble failed, and the University rallied in favor of Dan Orr, leaving a small, seven-man Center for Study of Public Choice threatened at best with a budget freeze and at worst by slow attrition:

It was at this point that I made a serious misjudgment. The ultimate choice rested with the Dean of the College of Business, William Mitchell, with whom I had established a decades-long personal friendship and mutuality of respect. Again, perhaps with naïve arrogance, I presumed that the combination of personal understanding and the professional-scientific dominance of my side of the issue would leave no doubt as to the outcome. I was totally wrong. Mitchell came down squarely in support of Orr's authority, leaving me and my colleagues at the center hanging out to dry, so to speak. (Buchanan 2007: 190)

Although Buchanan does not refer to this episode in his autobiography (Buchanan 2007), it was not actually the end of the Blacksburg story. In order to shore up donor support for the Center in its new situation, Buchanan organized a meeting in the fall of 1981 between Center faculty, Virginia Tech administrators, and major donors, at The Homestead in West Virginia. Among those who attended that meeting was Charles

Rowley, President of the European Public Choice Society, Chairman of the Department of Economics and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in England.

At the end of the conference, the new Dean of the College of Business, together with his senior advisors, requested a confidential meeting, alone with Charles Rowley. At that meeting the question under consideration was whether Charles Rowley would be willing to join the Department of Economics at Virginia Tech with an expectation of replacing Dan Orr as chairman. Once that was accomplished, the Center would be relocated back into the Department of Economics under a strong chairman, who would provide effective and experienced leadership to harmonize the two strands of the Department, and who would ensure that the distinctive contributions of the Center would continue to flourish.

This proposal was accepted and Charles Rowley was extended and accepted an offer of appointment to the faculty both by the Dean of the College of Business and personally, back on the Blacksburg campus, by Chairman Dan Orr. The offer was subject to formal confirmation. Unfortunately, the chairmanship implications of this proposed deal leaked out from the Center to the Department of Economics before the deal was finalized. Dan Orr understandably fought back, garnered the support of some of the white house faculty, as well as others in the department, and succeeded in having the offer rescinded. Diplomatic skills (despite Gordon Tullock's prior experience in the Department of State) rarely featured center-stage in decision-making at the Center for Study of Public Choice.

The collapse of this arrangement led, within days, to the resignation from Virginia Tech of Robert Tollison, Executive Director of the Center, who took up a senior position in President Ronald Reagan's market-friendly Federal Trade Commission. His position, both as Center faculty member and Executive Director of the Center, was immediately offered to, and accepted by, Charles Rowley, but on the clear understanding that the chairmanship of the department would remain with Dan Orr, and that the Center would remain severed from the department.

By December 1983, when immigration procedures had been completed to enable Charles Rowley to take up the position, the Center had already migrated to George Mason University, and Dwight Lee had been appointed as its Executive Director. Gordon Tullock had played no direct role in any of these events. Characteristically, he refused to become involved in institutional disputes, efficiently pursuing his intellectual interest in the advancement of scientific knowledge. Once a decision to relocate was made, however, Tullock loyally, even perhaps eagerly, accepted the decision to come down from the mountain to the big city. For human behavior in that particular big city had always been the central focus of Tullock's intellectual inquiries; more so even than his studies of ant and bee colonies.

10 Potomac fever and the Stockholm syndrome, 1983-1987

In 1983, the Center for Study of Public Choice moved as an entire unit from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg to George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. At the time of the move, the Center unequivocally descended the ranks of Virginia's state university system. For George Mason University was a fledgling institution, having gained its

independence from UVA as late as 1972, and, at the time of the first overtures to the Center in 1981, without even a doctoral program in economics.

The entrepreneurial initiative behind the relocation came from relatively low down on the GMU totem pole. Karen Vaughn, an Austrian economist at GMU, identified the growing unease of the Public Choice Center in Blacksburg in 1981 and traveled up and down Interstate 81 in an attempt to interest the group in a move to Fairfax. The chairman of the GMU Department of Economics, Philip Coelho, at least initially, was not actively engaged in this courtship

Once James Buchanan began to nibble at Karen Vaughn's bait, GMU's top bureaucratic brass moved in. President George Johnson had been hired out of Temple University to put GMU on the academic map. Like Marshall Hahn at Virginia Tech, Johnson had the energy and the vision to capitalize on his major asset – location, location, location – as he was wont to say. Any university located just 13 miles west of Washington, in one of the nation's most wealthy and rapidly growing counties, only had to seize its opportunities to scale ahead of less well-located rivals. And George Johnson, unlike many a later Washington Redskin's quarterback, was not a man accustomed to fumbling the ball in the red-zone.

So, when push came to Commonwealth of Virginia shove, Johnson used his Richmond contacts to overcome any political hesitation about relocating a prestigious research unit from one Virginia state university to another. Philip Coelho recognized the wisdom of stepping down to allow Karen Vaughn, now as Department chairman, to welcome six of the Center's seven faculty on board in September 1983 – James Buchanan, Gordon Tullock, Geoffrey Brennan, Dwight Lee, Mark Crain, Joe Reid and

David Levy - Charles Rowley arriving in December of that year and with David Levy relocating from the GMU economics faculty before year's end. And George Johnson sat back to await the recognition for his institution that the Center for Study of Public Choice and the Swedish academy would surely deliver.

Gordon Tullock found himself, for the second time in his career, working out of a former church – St. Georges Hall as it then was called. This time his office was the spacious room formerly accommodating the resident pastor, and the chapel (now the lecture theater) was just across the hallway, albeit with the church organ no longer in place. The pulpit surely remained in place, and the choir, by now, was world-wide.

For his home, Tullock chose a condominium right at the top of a high-rise tower block overlooking the Potomac. Gordon Tullock erected a powerful telescope in that residence, trained directly on the Capitol, where he would observe with intellectual curiosity the day-to-day behavior of the strange animals in the political zoo. Tullock, at long last, had assumed his pre-ordained role in looking down on government.

Tullock thrived in his new environment, editing *Public Choice* as it continued to soar in the citation rankings of social science journals, opening up an entirely new field of study in the political economy of autocracy (Tullock 1987), making contributions to the growing public choice literature on federal deficits (Buchanan, Rowley and Tollison 1986), and advancing yet further into the intricacies of the political economy of rent-seeking (Rowley, Tollison and Tullock 1988).

In April 1986, Tullock was honored for his contributions to liberty at a conference held in Colonial Williamsburg and directed by Charles Rowley. Almost all the world's founding scholars of public choice came to Williamsburg for the occasion and

contributed to a fine *Festschrift* in recognition of Tullock's 65th birthday (Rowley 1987a). The world must have looked very bright for this remarkable scholar as 1986 drew towards its final quarter. Surely the world looked very bright for the Center for Study of Public Choice, now well settled into its Northern Virginia environment. Geographically important to this new equilibrium was the reality that Fairfax, Virginia was located south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

On October 16, 1986, the skies suddenly darkened for the scholar from Rockford, Illinois, just as those same Virginia skies shone so brightly for the scholar from Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Buchanan received an early morning telephone call from Stockholm, Sweden, advising him that he had been awarded the Central Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Science in Honor of Alfred Nobel. *The Calculus of Consent* played a significant role in the citation for that award. However, Gordon Tullock was not recognized at all by the Swedish academy.

The time had come for Gordon Tullock to find pastures new, far away from the bells that were pealing wildly across Fairfax and throughout the world-wide global village of free market economists. As 1987 dawned, Gordon Tullock was already gone, sucking his unique oxygen out of St. Georges Hall and pumping it into the crystalline blue skies and desert environment of Barry Goldwater's Arizona.

11 Sojourn in the Arizona desert: 1987-1999

Tullock would choose to settle in Tucson, with the University of Arizona's economics department. Then the dominant flagship of the Arizona university system, the U of A was a desert oasis of energetic intellectual activity. The economics department

contributed mightily to this atmosphere. Consistently ranked in those years around 20th in the nation, it boasted an exceptionally creative faculty unafraid to work outside mainstream neo-classical traditions. The department was dominated by future Nobel Laureate Vernon Smith who in 1985 (with the able support of Department Head Edward Zajac) secured millions of dollars in funding (over 20 years) to support research in experimental economics. For Tullock, now transitioning to the status of “grand old man” in the profession, a well-funded, creative and in some sense heterodox department was an easy and exciting choice.

From Arizona’s perspective, Tullock was of course an ideal addition. One reason was that the College of Law was attempting to add energy to their program in law and economics, and Tullock was viewed as one who could contribute to that agenda. Also, Tullock’s institutional interests fit extremely well with the general faculty desire to expand in this area – a goal furthered with the rapid subsequent hires of leading economic historians.

Tullock was an especially good fit in that he had long expressed sympathy for Vernon Smith and experimental economics. Within the context of a very positive review of the first volume of Vernon Smith’s series *Research in Experimental Economics*,

Tullock wrote:

I have been biased in favor of experimental work in economics and other social sciences, since I first advocated them in the *Organization of Inquiry*. It seems to me this is a research tool which we have tended to ignore, and which should have received a good deal more resources than it has. (Tullock 1980)

In light of the visibility and ever-increasing importance of Vernon Smith and experimental economics, there is little doubt but that Tullock’s sympathy for experimental economics played a role in smoothing his transition to Arizona.

The University of Arizona successfully attracted Tullock, giving him the distinguished title of Karl Eller Professor of Economics and Political Science. They knew the gem they had attracted, and they treated Tullock well. In 1990, when the Economics Department moved to the brand new McLelland Hall, Tullock was offered the largest non-administrative office on the building's top floor. Moreover, the back wall of this office was entirely glass, and included a door that opened onto a private patio overlooking the campus and, in the distance, the striking Santa Catalina mountains.

Tullock was highly productive and happily gregarious in his new environment. A visitor to the department would almost surely find his door open, Tullock involved in scholarly activity that, very often, included dictating a new paper or book. (Tullock was a very early adopter of voice-recognition technology, finding speaking papers to be faster and more natural than the typing process). If not writing a book he would surely be reading one. Once read, the book would be added to his collection of "give aways" kept in a large box outside his office door. Tullock's memory was phenomenal, and a question about any of the box's contents would be met with a lengthy review of the recently discarded book's merits.

Tullock enjoyed discussing not only books, but all manner of things. His insistent desire to push faculty and students to sharpen and extend their ideas was an exceptionally positive force within the department, a force which was felt in a number of ways. For example, Tullock rarely missed a seminar, and was always seated in the very front of the room in order to better allow him to interject. His comments were invariably insightful, and often left eloquent speakers speechless as Tullock drew surprising and complex connections among sets of seemingly disparate ideas.

This same penetrating style was evidenced in the classroom environment, and not only Tullock's own classes. Many graduate courses were held in a room within the Economics faculty office suite, just a few steps from Tullock's office. He would occasionally stop into this classroom, listen attentively to the lecture, and then, as the lecture concluded, note that the Professor's lesson was not the entire story. He would proceed to enlighten and thrill the room with scholarly anecdotes that perfectly reinforced the day's topic. Despite holding them well past the allotted time, students were always grateful that Tullock was willing to share his knowledge and insights in that way.

Tullock enjoyed nothing more than spending time with his colleagues, young and old, and standing invitations were available for all who were interested to share lunches. Sharing dinners was also common, and a special treat. Tullock had a regular rotation of seven restaurants, one for each day of the week, and he would often bring groups of people together for dinners. He would not reveal the others he had invited, and part of the fun was being surprised by one's dinner companions. But the greatest fun was the dinner conversation, moderated by Tullock, which would revolve around a thematic question he had proposed. Topics included: Why is democracy good? Why was there an industrial revolution? Why wasn't there an industrial revolution in China? What role should aristocrats play in society? Many other equally intriguing topics were always on the evening's menu. When dinner ended Tullock would invariably pick up the check, and on good nights invite the entire group to his place for midnight popcorn!

Gordon's scholarship was impressively broad during his time at Arizona, including many dozens of (authored or co-authored) articles, monographs and edited

volumes. Some of these contributions were in the field of Public Choice, but he also furthered his long-held interests in biology and economics (Tullock published the article “Biological Externalities” in the *Journal of Theoretical Biology* in 1971). He provided an important contribution to the New Palgrave (Tullock 1987, “Biological Applications of Economics”) and also produced a monograph “The Economics of Non-Human Societies” (Tullock 1994). This latter contribution was one of which he was especially proud, and visitors frequently left his office with that particular work in hand.

No doubt inspired by his surroundings, while at Arizona Tullock also designed and conducted an experiment on the Prisoner’s Dilemma. This was a topic near to his academic heart, one on which he had been publishing since at least the 1960s. While the typical Prisoner’s Dilemma experiment found little cooperation, Tullock hypothesized that under a particular set of conditions cooperation would in fact emerge. His well-executed study confirmed his hypotheses, shed important new light on decisions in this key environment, and was ultimately published in a leading journal (Tullock 1999). An impressive outcome indeed for Tullock’s first and only research experiment.

While Tullock was a major intellectual force within the University of Arizona’s economics department, and while he was clearly influenced by the department’s scholarly environment, he also maintained a strong professional independence. He collaborated on few (if any) papers with members of the Arizona faculty, and supervised few (if any) doctoral students. It might be said that, while Tullock was “at” the University of Arizona for a dozen years, he was never “of” the University of Arizona. This might be best understood as a missed opportunity for the University of Arizona: the faculty frequently lamented that the institution had failed to take full advantage of

Tullock's tremendous academic talent, energy and enthusiasm. At the same time, it might also be the case that Tullock maintained his independence because he ultimately viewed Arizona as a happy but temporary academic home. Indeed, Tullock would choose to leave Arizona upon learning that the environment of George Mason had changed in a way that made more comfortable his return.

12 You *can* go home again: 1999-

In May 1999, at the age of 80, James Buchanan retired from the faculty at George Mason University, although he retained his position as Advisory General Director of the Center for Study of Public Choice and his office in Buchanan House. In September 1999, at the age of 77, Gordon Tullock returned to George Mason University as Professor of Law and Economics, ending his 12-year sojourn in the Arizona desert.

George Mason University in 1999 was categorically different from the primitive institution that had first welcomed Gordon Tullock 16 years earlier. Building well on the Nobel Prize, and taking full advantage of its location, the University now demonstrated excellence over a wide range of disciplines – including economics, law, public policy, the arts, information technology and psychology. George Johnson had built outstandingly until his retirement in 1996.

The Center for Study of Public Choice - now without James Buchanan, Geoffrey Brennan, Robert Tollison, Charles Rowley, William Shughart, Richard Wagner and Viktor Vanberg - was significantly less dominant within the economics program, one of several sub-units operating under the umbrella of a largely Koch-financed James M. Buchanan Center. Its faculty now was more diverse and less explicitly public choice in

its orientation. Yet, the old church remained – now renamed for a donor as Carow Hall – and this was to become one of Gordon Tullock’s two intellectual homes. Indeed, for the first time ever, Gordon Tullock was now the most senior member of the Public Choice Center, entitled to the largest remaining room (though sadly most of the rooms by then were subdivided).

Charles Rowley was still (until July 2007) Joint Editor of *Public Choice* and Tullock would be a regular contributor to that journal throughout the remaining nine years of his career. Roger Congleton would provide him with good company during his days in Fairfax; and Roger Congleton and Charles Rowley would be introduced regularly over lunch to the latest gems of insight from Tullock’s still extremely fertile mind.

Tullock’s second home would be the Arlington-based School of Law, transformed by Dean Henry Manne (Manne 2005) during the late 1980s and early 1990s into one of the top law and economics programs in the nation. Tullock slipped comfortably into the second largest office in the school’s splendid new building, the largest room being reserved for the Law School Dean. For the remainder of his time at GMU, Tullock fastidiously divided his time, two days a week in Fairfax and the remainder of the week in Arlington, where he now lived.

Between 1999 and 2003, Charles Rowley directed a Distinguished Lecture Series in Law and Economics, on behalf of the James M. Buchanan Center for Political Economy, out of GMU’s School of Law. All the founding fathers of law-and-economics - save for Ronald Coase, who was too old to travel – participated in that program; and Coase contributed a self-styled career-ending final paper.

Tullock was always seated front-row, dead-center, the better to hear their presentations and the more effectively to probe any weaknesses. The dinners that would follow each presentation allowed Tullock to display his intellectual muscle, as he worked to pluck the very best ideas from always splendid contributions. When the Distinguished Lectures were published, in a volume edited by Charles Rowley and Francesco Parisi, Tullock's own paper would stand out as a gleaming sapphire among the many precious stones on display (Parisi and Rowley 2004).

In 2002, when Gordon Tullock celebrated his 80th birthday, Charles Rowley was engaged by Liberty Fund to edit Tullock's Selected Works. In 2006, the last of ten large edited volumes was published, and Gordon Tullock's lifetime of scholarship was made easily available to an adoring readership (Rowley 2012). This indeed, was a fitting finale for a beloved star of the community of scholars.

Universities had recognized Tullock's contributions by appointing him to a sequence of Distinguished Chairs (VPI & SU 1972–1983, George Mason University 1983–1987 and 1999–2008, and the University of Arizona 1987–1999). Professional associations had honored him by electing him to their presidencies (Public Choice, the Southern Economic Association, the Western Economic Association, the International Bio-Economics Society, the Atlantic Economic Society and the Association for Free Enterprise Education).

In 1992, at the instigation of George J. Stigler (Nobel Laureate) an Honorary Doctorate of Laws was conferred on Tullock by the University of Chicago. In 1996, Tullock was elected to the American Political Science Review Hall of Fame. In 1998, he was recognized as a Distinguished Fellow of the American Economic Association. These

awards and honors reflect powerful entrepreneurial contributions across three major scholarly disciplines.

In September 2008, at age 86, Tullock officially retired from George Mason University and returned to the bosom of a loving family. He now resides with his younger sister, Mary Lou Gunderson and his brother-in-law, Bob Gunderson, easing his arthritis in the dry desert air of Tucson, Arizona, cared for by two good people who, in the past, had benefited greatly from the generosity of this most beneficent of men (Rowley 1987b).

This Special Issue of *Public Choice* provides an opportunity for some of Gordon Tullock's closest colleagues to honor his contributions and to show our respect for the indispensable insights that he has offered into the social, and indeed the natural, sciences. The quality of these contributions reflects both the depth of our gratitude and the profundity of our devotion to a man who elevated all us to be as good as we could be by his exemplary life and scholarship.

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