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Almost a quarter-century of Republican state administration followed cessation of wartime inconvenience and economic controls that did not help national or state Democratic candidates in their 1946 campaign. From that time on, Idaho's state officials served four-year terms and their elections were set for non-presidential years, insulating them somewhat from national politics. Depending upon national political trends, that system sometimes helped Republicans and sometimes helped Democrats in state elections. From 1946 to 1970, Republican candidates benefited, or at least won consistently, in contests for governor.

Like state governments everywhere, Idaho's public administration changed notably during that quarter century. Previous public-service appointments had been largely political, even for clerks and typists, and state government had been more of an amateur operation than seemed desirable. Constant staff turnover every two years for a decade after 1936 had not helped.

Partly in response to federal requirements for grant programs, Idaho gradually developed a professional and technical staff of state employees who no longer were appointed for political purposes. A state personnel system extended an already existing professional government service to almost all state positions after 1967.

Reform of Idaho's entire educational system, after a 1946 survey that recommended school district consolidation and establishment of an independent four-year state college in Pocatello, preceded a gradual shift of educational funding toward greater state equalization and support. Prison reform, with nonpolitical administration of penitentiary and pardons, also started at that time. By 1950, state highway administration followed a similar course. State parks and recreation programs came under professional management more than a decade later. Budgetary and legislative staff operations, with a legislative

council after 1963, provided more continuity and expanded professional services supporting lawmaking and fiscal activities.

Judicial reforms provided for a more efficient operation of a reorganized county and local court system.

Federal projects and management activities also assumed greater postwar importance. Forest Service concern for multiple-resource development affected a substantial part of Idaho.

Wilderness legislation in 1964 also applied to large tracts of Idaho forest lands. Range lands remaining in Idaho's public domain came under Bureau of Land Management administration when that federal agency grew out of General Land Office operation in 1946. A long conflict among federal, state, and private developers for control of important Snake River power sites finally was resolved in 1955 in favor of Idaho Power Company construction of a series of dams and reservoirs extending eighty miles below Weiser. A still higher Clearwater dams site, near Orofino, was assigned to Army Corps of Engineers builders for power and flood control purposes. During clashes over expansion of federal management and operational programs, Idaho's state government tended to resist or accept such changes with caution.

Since almost two-thirds of Idaho's land is federally owned, however, national authorities commanded more influence in local Idaho affairs than they did in states lacking vast tracts of public lands.

Particularly during Robert E. Smylie's long tenure as governor, Idaho began to have more influence in national activities of state government officials. Smylie served for twelve years after his initial victory in 1954, and his seniority gave him added strength. He was a founder of the Republican Governors' Association and served as its chairman from 1963 to 1967.

Other Idaho officials also gained positions of importance in their professional associations. These activities, in turn, had a considerable effect upon Idaho state government operations, which were modernized to match nationally accepted standards of state administration.