Debate: Faction and the Environment

Douglas Ginsburg, Moderator*

This afternoon we have a program that is extremely well suited to carry on the discussion that followed Governor Ray’s speech. We have just heard in some detail allegations that billions of dollars are being spent to no good purpose—no purpose that anyone would stand up and defend. The subject of our debate is essentially: Why are we doing this? How does it come to pass that billions of dollars are being transferred, if they are, from one set of hands to another set of hands, all to no public purpose?

We have with us this afternoon two close students of this subject to disagree for our benefit. We will hear first from Dr. Michael Greve, who is the Director of the Center for Individual Rights in Washington, D.C. When I say that he is a close student of the subject, I am thinking in particular of his role in co-editing, with Fred Smith, Environmental Politics: Public Costs, Private Rewards,¹ which they brought out last year. It is an excellent treatment of Dr. Greve’s point of view.

We will then hear from Susan Rose-Ackerman, a distinguished economist at Yale University, whose most recent book, if I have been keeping up with her, is Rethinking the Progressive Agenda.² Ms. Rose-Ackerman is a close student not only of policy, but also of how policy is made.

So let us begin with Dr. Greve.

² Susan Rose-Ackerman, Rethinking the Progressive Agenda: The Reform of the American Regulatory State (1992).