

## PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION: CONTEMPORARY THINKING---I

*The handling of large organisations efficiently requires new approaches to be able to deal with the problems in a scientific fashion. This statement is not theory. Do we not know and have we not experienced the results of continued "ad hocism" for the last 22 years? Traditional thinking mainly concerns itself with efficiency here, efficiency there .... This is not good enough today; we must lay the basis for optimum use of all the resources—cash, fixed assets, borrowing power, goodwill and above all our human talent. This means converting untrained human raw material into a finished product capable of creating policy, then converting such plans into reality and finally attempting to measure reality to determine what corrective action must be taken to conform to or even alter the original plan. In training lies the key to continuity. We will increasingly find—and we trust, not the hard way again and again—that work accomplishment should be built around programmes or tasks. This also means that must learn to question our inherited district administrative process*

IF this article starts off with a reference to India it is because both India and Pakistan have inherited common administrative legacy which was designed for a specific purpose to meet specific needs of a specific age. Two other "colonies" have abolished the Macaulayan legacy of administration: they are Ceylon and Burma.

The Indian Administration Reforms Commission Report on Personnel Administration was completed on April 18, 1969, and made available to the general public in the same month. The Fulton Report was published very soon after submission and its main recommendations accepted; since then Lord Shackleton has been working out the details of implementation. Cornelius' Pay and Service Commission Report was completed in 1962 and it saw the light of day some six years later!

Hanumanthiaya in his letter of transmittal concerning the Personnel Administration Report, to the Indian Primer Minister, quotes from her Convocation Address at Roorkee University in November 1967 "...It is odd that the greatest doctors and engineers in the country, who would be rated as the leaders of the profession and who save lives or add permanent assets to the nation, can rarely hope to receive the pay or status of Secretaries or Ministers. The brightest of our young men and women chose engineering and machine. If they happen to go into Government, they are soon overtaken by the general administrator. This must change and I am trying to change it. The Administrative system must reflect an individual's contribution to human welfare and economic gain...."

### MAN AT JOB

Recently at a Seminar held here on the "Systems Approach and O&M", on the day devoted to Personnel Administration, Prof: O Glenn Stahl, Chief of the Bureau of

---

\* Pakistan Times, October 17, 1969.



Programmes and Standards in the U.S. Civil Service Commission, brought out that the requirements of a job should point towards the person with the requisite qualifications to man it. This is no more than sound commonsense, but it requires being hammered home from time to time for we apparently have short memories and need such reminders. A year has not yet gone by and we would do well to reflect on the unanimous demand by almost all the services that more attention must be paid to "Specialisation." Apart from this, there is the question of decentralization (and centralization). There may not appear to be any connection between the specialist/generalist and centralization/decentralization issues but there is. There will be no satisfactory long term answer to any of these problems unless we all know what our goals or objectives are.

It is apparent that the goal or objective of One-unit was never realized. And even if it were in the minds of men, precious little was done to adjust the administrative tactics within the strategy of the overall unified development of West Pakistan. The demand for the formation of Pakistan originated out of the Muslims of British India despairing of equitable treatment on the part of the powerfully entrenched Hindu majority. They proclaimed "that nationality, according to Islam, was a matter of religion or culture and not of geography, race or language." The fact is that on account of administrative incompetence a golden opportunity to make a success of One-Unit was lost. Our administrators were not equal to the task of recognizing the increasing complexities in the system between man and man, man and State and even, State and State.

A recognition of the importance of determining the results of interactions of functions at each level in the administrative hierarchy was missing and will continue to remain missing unless we have associated as equals at the policy making level individuals drawn from widely differing backgrounds on account of both profession and service.

There is also something called a feeling, intangible but very real of frustration when one knows that merit is penalized on account of "unmeritorious" reasons. Unless the administrative system at the highest levels reflects the contribution made to the total welfare of the organism by its component parts, dissatisfaction ultimately makes impossible the fulfillment of high operational administrative efficiencies. Indeed the rot sets in from within, and to what effect we should know. Have we not as yet learnt the hard way?

We are all aware (or should be) that, as far as planning is concerned fairly sophisticated tools are being made use of to lay the foundations of progress, but it is of no use unless the sophistication at the planning stages is matched in even measure during the "execution" and is yet an equally even measure in evaluation of results. One strong link in the chain does hardly anything to increase its strength. In fact it might create a feeling of false security.

Because "planning" is conceptual or intellectual in character, may be we as material men do not interfere to the extent we should when we consider "execution." What would we think, if some-one said that a five-year plan was made by planning only one year at a



time, five times, and then adding up the five partial plans and then presenting it as a five-year plan? But this very thinking pervades "execution" in the entire administrative process.

If quick transfers do not confirm this, what does? No individual, however, gifted or brilliant in administration can even expect to achieve results that over a period of time show continuous improvement unless he has been through at least one cycle of the administrative process. If making a budget takes six months, implementing it one year and then another two years are taken to evaluate what happened, then obviously the administrative cycle is four years (assuming it takes six months to bone-up on-the-job). Anything less than that creates an attitude of mind which cannot permit of achieving high (not necessarily maximum or optimum) efficiencies.

Another aspect of such fractured thinking is to insist that the administrative vehicle designed a 100 years ago is yet good enough on account of the continuous centolike additions, creating a fabric that disintegrates on account of the very weight of the patchwork. A time comes when the vehicle itself needs changing. There is no doubt—looking at our 22 year history – that a major change in our administrative process is necessary before we can make the best use of our resources (human, financial and time). And add to this the complexity that we face as of now ie the accretion of the messy situation contributed by each year of the 22 years, that we have been in existence. New approaches and new skills are required to be trained to progress systematically. Such approach will only be of permanent value if ways and means are found to link short term gains with the long term. And this is practically possible. The ways and means lie in training the human material or recognizing that human material that will respond to training. In the final analysis it is the quality of the man behind the process that matters.

## **FILTERING**

When we think of training we must automatically think of firstly, creating an environment conducive to achievement. And secondly, to filter out the better from those who are not so good (a start could be made by consigning to the dust-bin our unreliable means of evaluating human performance) and to concentrate on making them aware of what the world of "execution" has to offer for purposes of co-ordination for better control. If such training can be imparted to fairly large numbers, the law of averages will throw up the more gifted. It is this body of individuals that will consolidate the short-term gain into something of permanent value.

Presently we look at work as falling into three categories:

1. General Administration eg the D.C.
2. Specialised eg the I.T.O.
3. Technical/Scientific eg the X.E.N.

and in this way of dividing up work, assert that it is the general administrator who alone can fit at the top most levels of the hierarchy. Fulton's Committee (1966), the Indian Administrative Reforms Commission (1969) as well as Cornelius Commission

(1962) all recommend a unified Service Structure. We must pay heed to all the thinking and work that has gone into the formulation of such recommendations. Sweet words butter no parsnips, we must admit that our administrative structure is not in tune with the times.

(to be continued)

/Personnel Administration