

**PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION:
CONTEMPORARY THINKING—II**

by Masood Hasan

THE result of such analysis led Fulton's Committee to recommend that even though the tasks that fall to an administrator's lot are immensely varied, they fall into broad categories which are identifiable on the basis of subject-matter of the work rather than on the basis of the particular department in which the work is done. It is on this categorization by subject-matter that administrative specialization should be based. The broad groups that Fulton's finding recommend were:

1. That which is concerned with primarily economic and financial matters. This covers in some departments areas on general economic planning and control; in others, international trade or industries, in others, financial control of major programme of capital and revenue expenditure, in others (mainly in technical and scientific departments) on the economic and financial aspects of large technological projects. Thus, from a general economic and financial bias, the work develops its own internal specialisms. Such a pattern must be reflected in the training and career planning of the individual administrators concerned.
2. That group of administrative jobs where the bias is essentially social: eg housing, education, social security, health, personnel management etc. Again within a common framework of knowledge and experience, the work develops its own specialisms. There too both the training and career planning of officers must reflect this pattern. Fulton did not preclude the formation of more groups as and when required.

INDIAN COMMISSION

It lead to the Indian Administrative Reforms Commission's recommending that a functional field must be carved out for their C.S.P. class (I.A.S.) and that it could consist of "Land revenue administration, exercise of magisterial functions and regulatory work in the States in fields other than those looked after by other functional services." They further recommend eight areas of specialism as follows:

1. Economic Administration.
2. Industrial Administration
3. Agricultural and Rural Development Administration.
4. Social and Educational Administration.
5. Personnel Administration.
6. Financial Administration.
7. Defence Administration and Internal Security.
8. Planning.

* Pakistan Times, October 18, 1969.

Also the posts in the Indian Government service should be grouped into "grades so that all those which call for similar qualifications and similar difficulties and responsibilities are grouped in the same grade. The number of such grades may be between 20 and 25."

On recruitment, the Indian Reforms Commission goes on to say that five-year projections must be made regarding personnel requirements and that subjects offered at the "combined competitive examination for non-technical services may include engineering subjects as well as subjects relevant to a medical degree."

CORNELIUS REPORT

The Cornelius Commission recommended that the government service structure should be unified and that there would be a total of 30 grades in seven tiers. This Report also recommended the formation of services such as the Land Revenue-cum-Excise and Taxation Service, the Judicial Service, the Social Welfare-cum-Local Self Government Service.....

It follows that such compartmentalization would require professional competence to oversee their activities. Such professional competence would arise out of special training being grafted on to a basic functional skill, be they in the Economic, Social, Regulatory or other functional fields.

If we were to look at economic and financial administrators, their basic background would include experience and training in subjects such as economics, finance, business administration and statistics, especially as applied to government work. Added to this, as the officer rises up the hierarchy, training at the appropriate stage of his administrative development would be imparted at establishments located away from their day-to-day work. At present we have institutions such as the NIPA's and the Pakistan Administrative Staff College. Unfortunately their training programmes are not in tune, as of now, with the requirements of the times. They are not less than five years behind current developments. Also, their methods of admitting members to a course of training needs being radically overhauled.

TRAINING

In India 0.4% of the government service wage bill is spent on training. The Administrative Reforms Commission have recommended that 1% should be spent on the same. What the figures are out here is difficult to say. This, of course, merely reflects the secretive attitude of our administrators who hoard information which truly belongs to the tax-payer!

Training is directly related to the sifting process ie of recognizing merit which means emphasis on the job and performance rather than on the man and his qualities.

The importance of training is not yet properly understood in Pakistan as far as the administrative process is concerned. It needs being repeated that it is the quality of the man in this process which is of paramount importance.

If we are currently looking for short cuts to achieving efficiencies that we should have attained long ago. If we wish to make sure that whatever short-term gains we achieve are to be meaningful in the medium and long term, then we must pay attention to the link—the vitally important link—that will provide this bridge to permanence, ie the properly trained human being.

Training, Planning and Education are three facets of a single system. Whilst education should look after the development of character and mental powers, it is training which permits the attainment of high standards of efficiency through instruction and practice. Planning, of course, makes sure that the process remains continuous. Absorption of new ideas and being able to create a “formal” process, of management or administration, is the only way that we will be able to find out what is going on. The formalization is not what it commonly called “red-tape” but the application of systematic (scientific) ways and means of doing things. These developments concern what has happened in the last 7 or 8 years (this is why the NIPA’s and PASC are already out of date) in the use of the systems approach to problem solving.

Can we recognize the nature of our problems, which have come about on account of developments in science and technology? Principally, they are on account of the economics generated out of large scale operations in a large variety of fields; thus administratively we face:

1. With size, the terrific increase in personnel. New ways have to be found to ensure a round peg is placed in a round hole and that there is equality of opportunity for advancement and equal pay and facilities for equal work.
2. The horrendous increase in volumes or routine work eg land revenue assessments, radio licences, registration of motor vehicles, handling of freight local and otherwise....
3. Policy making at the higher levels having to have its feet firmly rooted in a reliable data-base. This it does not have. It must, because the impact of an error is directly, proportional to the size of the problem itself.

It is obvious new skills and techniques are required to remove above-mentioned administrative difficulties. This can only come through a change in our administrative philosophy of negative action. This ancient philosophy is so firmly rooted in us that the only way open to us now is to change the “administrative vehicle of action” itself. Merely putting in oversized piston rings may improve the performance of the administrative engine but when it moves faster we will find that the administrative brakes, administrative shock absorbers and administrative bearings will not carry the added load and the administrative chassis will give up the ghost once again!

In appropriate training lies the key to successful administrative reform. If this idea is found acceptable it means we sincerely accept the idea that knowledge does not have the name of the owner tagged on to it. It belongs to the person who finds it "as it where is. This attitude will create the administrative infrastructure so necessary for providing an environment that encourages the innovative process. If we sleep over the situation, sleeping dogs will not lie, not now-a-days, though they did a few decades ago. Other forces will then force us to act. And when we are not given luxury of working out in our own time a programme of how to act, we have to act on patchy and inadequate information ie the degree of ignorance is high. The results of action taken can be dangerous on account of such ignorance.

When given time—of which we have not much, but hopefully just enough at the present, it is possible to plan effectively. The Central Asian Changez Khan started his career pretty late, at the age of 40, with a new technique (the cross-bow) which revolutionized the process of war, it did, in fact, provide a unifying force. "The original strength of Islam was the result of welding of tribes of the Arabian peninsula by the spiritual force of the Prophet. Later on Arab tribalism raised its head as an atavistic tendency and caused much disruption in Islamic polity. The collapse of the Arab power in Spain, too, was partly due to ancient tribal rivalries. The demand for linguistic or racial Provinces, or States within Pakistan is the same old poison that has always eaten into the vitals of Islam. The genius of Islam is foreign to it. Such demands are the offshoots of a type of nationalism that has worked so much havoc in Western Civilisation" (Kh A. Hakim 1955). Good administration is an essential ingredient in providing a unifying force which we need desperately today.