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STUDIES IN ADMINISTRATION No. 35

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**PUBLIC PERSONNEL PROBLEMS**  
**FROM THE STANDPOINT OF**  
**THE OPERATING OFFICER**

# PUBLIC PERSONNEL PROBLEMS

## FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE OPERATING OFFICER

BY  
LEWIS MERIAM

*Supplied by-*  
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A few years after the writer entered the United States Census Bureau in 1905, as the result of an open competitive examination, he was given an assignment to prepare a bulletin on statistics of employees in the executive civil service of the national government. The specific interest in public personnel administration thus aroused has continued and made him particularly interested in personnel while he was directly concerned with operations within the national service. His work, both within and without the service, has brought contacts and associations with operating officers, civil service commissions and their staffs, personnel specialists in research and educational institutions, and in some instances with legislative committees and commissions and with political officers. Co-operation with associations of government employees, civic organizations interested in public personnel, and organizations interested in the standards of particular classes of government work has been a delightful part of the experience. The writer's obligation to the many persons who have given him of their experience and discussed personnel problems with him is thus great, but unfortunately it is impracticable either to catalogue them or to select a few for special mention. He can only express generally his appreciation and indebtedness.

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LEWIS MERIAM

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**PUBLIC PERSONNEL PROBLEMS**  
**FROM THE STANDPOINT OF**  
**THE OPERATING OFFICER**

## INTRODUCTION

Three objectives have been sought in the preparation of the present book: (1) to attempt to see public personnel administration as a whole; (2) to view it primarily, although by no means exclusively, from the standpoint of an operating officer immediately responsible for getting a certain specific task done or for rendering a specific governmental service; and (3) to deal with the subject as simply and as realistically as possible, making free use of illustrative cases. Each of these objectives deserves some introductory comment.

### PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION DEFINED

If public personnel administration is to be viewed as a whole it must be broadly and inclusively defined to include all the relationships between the government as an employer and its employees. For the purposes of definition this broad field may be divided into three main branches: (1) operating personnel administration; (2) control personnel administration; (3) developmental personnel administration.

Operating personnel administration is that part of personnel administration which has not been separated, and perhaps cannot be separated from the rest of day-to-day management of an operating agency and thus remains in the hands of the responsible operating officers.

Control personnel administration is that part of personnel administration which has been separated out and centralized in a special personnel agency that exercises control over the regular operating officers with respect to these personnel matters. The United States Civil Service Commission is such an agency, controlling adminis-

trative officers with respect to initial appointments to positions within the classified civil service and with respect to salaries in agencies that are under the Classification Act of 1923 as amended.

Developmental personnel administration is that part of personnel administration which is educational and promotional in character and designed to discover better practices and procedures and to encourage their adoption. This type of work may be found anywhere in the administrative structure or entirely outside it. Associations or unions of government employees, agencies such as the National Civil Service Reform League, governmental research agencies, the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, professional organizations such as the American Association of Social Workers, and individual university teachers and research workers may play an important part in it. At times legislative bodies such as the United States Congress may make material contributions in this field through their investigations preparatory to the adoption or amendment of personnel laws, as in the case of the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries.

Operating personnel administration that has not been separated and perhaps cannot be separated from the rest of the day-to-day management of an operating agency is, in turn, divisible into two broad categories: (1) functionalized operating personnel administration; (2) non-functionalized operating personnel administration.

Functionalized operating personnel administration is carried on by a specialized personnel division or specialized personnel officers within the operating unit. Such divisions in the national government conduct relationships with the Civil Service Commission, apply certain

personnel techniques such as classification of positions according to duties and responsibilities, and efficiency rating, maintain the necessary personnel records, deal with individual personnel cases, and often engage extensively in developmental personnel administration.

Non-functionalized operating personnel administration includes the day-to-day and possibly even minute-to-minute relationships between an employee and his immediate supervisor. The personnel duties of the immediate supervisor are in the main inseparable from his other duties. He may or may not have had any special training in personnel administration. This type of personnel administration is of course the oldest. Much has been written regarding its defects, and these defects have given rise to control personnel administration and to functionalized operating personnel administration. In private personnel administration the importance of this branch is receiving increasing attention because experience has demonstrated that foremen have to be educated to handle well those matters of personnel administration that are inseparably intertwined with their other duties. In this connection it should be pointed out that the number of positions in the control personnel field is rather limited; the number in the functionalized operating personnel field will doubtless be materially larger but none the less limited. The number of supervisory positions in the non-functionalized operating personnel field, from the lowest supervisor to the highest administrator, is large. This part of personnel administration therefore deserves special consideration, especially by those who do not expect to become, or perhaps even desire to become, personnel technicians but expect to do some other kind of work or practice some other profession.

## THE STANDPOINT OF THE OPERATING OFFICER

The attempt to view public personnel administration primarily from the standpoint of an operating officer is something of a departure from the historical approach. Because the spoils system and rotation in office were introduced into the national government of the United States in the Jackson administration and ultimately became a sort of cancer of the body politic, many writers on public personnel administration have taken up the subject from the standpoint of the merit system and a central controlling personnel agency, usually called a civil service commission, as these were the devices introduced to eradicate the disease of the spoils system. In recent years techniques and procedures in the application of the merit system and the administration of central controlling personnel agencies have been given increasing attention. They are frequently spoken of as the positive aspects of civil service administration, as distinguished from the older activities for the elimination of the spoils system, which are called the negative aspects. Yet in the literature most of the discussion of even the newer positive techniques and procedures is still written from the standpoint of the central controlling personnel agency.

Anyone who has himself been an operating officer in a federal agency which comes under the Civil Service Act of 1883 is keenly aware of the fact that only a relatively small part of the real personnel work of his office falls within the jurisdiction of the United States Civil Service Commission. The bulk of the real personnel administration, which determines the efficiency of his office as a going concern, remains his own responsibility, and rami-fies down through the entire hierarchy of his organization.

Under the civil service rules in effect prior to the



President's executive order of June 24, 1938, the United States Civil Service Commission came into the administrator's field mainly at two points: (1) when new appointments were to be made from outside the service; and (2) when his salary classifications for positions in the District of Columbia had to be approved by the Civil Service Commission under the Classification Act of 1923.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Under the old rules, when an administrative officer in the national civil service proposed to promote a classified employee to a position of a higher class, the recommendation was referred to the Civil Service Commission. If the position to which the employee was to be promoted lay within the normal line of advancement from the competitive gate through which the employee entered the service, the Commission customarily approved the recommendation. It only exercised its control if the administrative officer proposed to move the employee into another line for which he had never demonstrated his qualifications before the Commission. Then it might refuse its approval, or order a non-competitive examination requiring the employee to demonstrate his qualifications. Since most promotions are in the normal line of advancement, the reference of the case to the Civil Service Commission was ordinarily routine procedure, done by transmitting the necessary forms. So far as the writer's knowledge and experience go, it would be a mistake to include this promotion procedure as a major contact between the Civil Service Commission and the operating officers, because it was important only when the administrator proposed an unusual, or one might even say an irregular, transaction. So long as the administrator kept within normal lines, the Commission allowed him practically complete freedom.

While the writer was in the classified civil service, dealing with personnel as an operating man, he had in several years only one case in which the Commission did not approve promotion papers as a matter of routine. In that case the employee had been covered into the classified service when the Bureau of the Census was made permanent and she was carried on the civil service records as a clerk. When it was proposed to transfer the employee to a position as special agent or field investigator in the Children's Bureau, the Commission very properly investigated. The Commission's representative was satisfied that the employee's successful experience as a field worker in social investigation had been demonstrated and had proved her capacity for original field investigation, but he felt that the capacity to organize and present the results of the investigations should be demonstrated by written tests. The bureau officers were pleased rather than put out by the Commission's ruling. They knew that the candidate could easily pass the eminently fair but searching tests proposed by the Commission, and they saw that the procedure would

The new rules promulgated by the order of June 24, 1938, to become effective February 1, 1939, are presented in Appendix A. Under these rules the control of the Commission will probably be somewhat extended.

In some of the states and municipalities that have a general merit system law the civil service commission has greater power and authority, but even under the most far-reaching merit system statutes most of the responsibility for real personnel administration remains in the operating officers. In federal agencies which are not under the Civil Service Act of 1883 and in governments which have not adopted a general merit system, practically all personnel administration remains in the operating officers.

A distinct difference in point of view often emerges in conversations, conferences, and committee hearings between the operating officers on the one hand and the representatives of the central controlling personnel officers on the other. When a merit system law is first introduced and the problem is to stamp out the evils of the spoils system, civil service commissions and the champions of the merit system generally and properly feel that politically selected appointing officers are not to be trusted; they are the very ones to be curbed and controlled. Thus may creep into the habits of mind of the staff of the central personnel agency a distrust of all operating officers. After a merit system has been in effect for some years, the upper positions in many of the operating units may be occupied by career men and women who are just as interested as are any representatives of the civil service commission in developing and maintaining high personnel standards. The equals of representatives of the civil serv-

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help block certain requests for undesirable transfers that were being pressed in behalf of civil service employees with more political influence than ability for the work in hand.

ice commission in ideals and objectives, these career men may be superior to them in knowledge of the concrete problems faced by the operating agencies. If these agencies have scientific, professional, or specialized technical duties, the career men in the operating agencies are generally superior with respect to scientific, professional, and technical knowledge; familiarity with the colleges, universities, and professional schools where such knowledge may be obtained; and familiarity with other agencies and professional organizations dealing with similar problems. They are as a rule specialists in their particular fields, whereas the representatives of the central personnel agencies are often at best excellent general men with a specialized knowledge of civil service techniques.

Good recruiting for entrance positions in such circumstances calls for cooperation between the career men from the operating departments and the representatives of the civil service commission skilled in the specialized techniques of examining. Not infrequently the fixed idea of the representatives of the civil service commission that no operating officer is to be trusted arises to prevent that cooperation. Civil service commissions may go ahead by themselves and later present to the responsible operating officers lists of eligibles for appointment that the operating officers regard as eminently unsatisfactory for reasons that they are perfectly willing to expound with some heat and often with no little light. Some of them may even go so far as to maintain that the civil service system as it is actually administered does them more harm than good, though in making such statements they may fail to appreciate that it was the civil service system that made permanency of tenure and something of a career service an actuality. Were it not for the civil service law, able scientific, technical, and professional workers might not

have replaced the spoilsmen in the controlling positions and they themselves would not be concerned with high standards of agency operation.

In view of the fact that so much of the existing literature on public personnel has been written mainly from the standpoint of the central personnel agency, that even in jurisdictions having a strong central personnel agency most of the real personnel work remains the responsibility of the operating officers, and that there is frequently a distinct difference in point of view between representatives of the central personnel agency and the operating officers, the decision has been reached here to approach the entire subject mainly from the standpoint of the operating officers. That does not mean that the central personnel agency will be ignored, but merely that it will be brought in from time to time just as it comes into the personnel work of the operating officers. The main thing that will be omitted is the history of the spoils system and the rise of the civil service system. That history is readily available in many other books.

Another reason has prompted the approach to public personnel administration from the standpoint of operating officers. Many colleges and universities are now giving courses in public administration and are training for the public service. Persons who are familiar with the public service know that the number of positions in operating agencies vastly exceeds the number in the central staff agencies. Hence more college graduates who enter the public service find themselves in operating units than in central staff agencies. Some complaints have been heard from operating officers that students from the universities trained in public administration know a lot about the overhead controls and the staff agencies but they do not know much about the work in hand. Conceivably this

difficulty might in part be overcome if more books on public administration were written not about staff agencies and overhead controls but about work in the operating units. In a sense, therefore, the present book will be an experiment to test the practical utility of a different approach.

#### THE ATTEMPT TO SECURE SIMPLICITY AND REALISM

The decision to deal with the subject as simply and as realistically as possible was arrived at in conferences with the late Arnold Bennett Hall while he was the director of the Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution. It was agreed that the book should be written more on the basis of personal observation and experience than on the basis of a study of the literature, and that it should not attempt any detailed discussion of personnel techniques. It should not be designed to make, or to attempt to make, personnel technicians but rather to promote better understanding of the broad problems of personnel in American governments. The effort has therefore been made not to carry discussions of techniques and technical problems further than is necessary to give that general understanding.

Since simplicity and realism were objectives an effort has been made to avoid academic and abstract language and to give preference to the more colloquial words in common use in government offices. In some of the illustrations and in the cases, words actually used are reproduced to the best of recollection, although the dictionary may mark them colloquial, if indeed it includes them at all.

The use of illustrative cases demands some explanation. In actual administration, personnel matters generally arise as particular cases or special problems. In fact

most of the worth-while efforts to arrive at principles of public administration are attempts to generalize from specific cases. On entering the public service those who have learned principles from books thus have to reverse the normal administrative process and attempt to apply the principle to the specific case or problem. Teachers of public administration would be materially helped if more case material were readily available so that the students could at least see the application of the principle in a concrete situation if not deduce the principles for themselves from a study of cases. Unfortunately case material is not readily available, as it is in the legal field; and practical administrators are often too busy to reduce cases to writing. Some of the most illuminating cases are, moreover, so highly confidential that they are skeletons in the official closet and the administrator must be close-mouthed about them. In the present book an effort will be made, sometimes in the main text but perhaps more often in the footnotes, to supply some illustrative cases. Of necessity these cases will in the main be drawn from the writer's personal experience, because such material from other sources is not readily available.

The presentation of actual cases, particularly in footnotes, has raised a rather interesting question regarding form of presentation. Should the statement of the case be strictly confined to the points that are germane to the main text to which the footnote is subordinate, or should the case be presented more or less as a whole, including material which may be fairly remote from the subject being discussed in the main text, although within the scope of the book as a whole? Despite the fact that the inclusion of collateral material in a case presented in a footnote may distract attention from the main point in the text, the decision has been reached to put it in, so

that the case is reasonably complete in itself. Actual cases often are not focused sharply on a single point: they may involve several other points. Sometime students of public administration may be able to study real cases and get from them not a single principle distilled in some writer's mind but an understanding of the complex of factors that are ordinarily involved in actual administration. Then they may get the idea that they are dealing not so much with fixed major principles but with significant factors the weight of which varies in different situations. Something is to be said in favor of the inclusion of much that is irrelevant and beside the point, because in an actual personnel case much that is irrelevant and beside the point is frequently presented, and the administrator has to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Since the writer's experience and contacts have been mainly in the national service, what he has written on the basis of personal observation and the cases he has presented relate mainly to that service. Only on a few occasions has he worked in a state or a municipal government and been close enough to it to know what was really going on. He has, of course, read about personnel administration in those areas and discussed problems with others who have worked mainly in such governments. Far from agreeing with those who contend that the principles are the same regardless of the level of government, he believes that very real differences explain the wide variations in opinion between persons whose experience has been with different levels of government. In fact, experience has led him away from the idea that there are principles of public administration everywhere applicable and toward the view that at most there are common factors in public administration. Although the factors may be much the same in the several levels of government, their weight

is generally different. Such factors as size, geographic distribution, nature of activities, degree of specialization and professionalization, extent of division of labor, and the extent of improper political interference with administration play a vital part. Thus, because of differences in the weight of the several factors, the equations differ and necessarily the answers differ.

The writer subscribes to the ideal that research workers in the field of public administration should strive for scientific objectivity, yet he rarely feels any confidence in having achieved it. In the present undertaking he has been acutely aware of the fact that when one writes in part on the basis of experience and observation, one has extreme difficulty in being objective. Although one may have had a fair amount of actual experience and a reasonably good opportunity to observe and to discuss problems with persons who have had long service, an essential element remains fairly constant: one's own point of view. The leopard cannot change his spots. One cannot escape certain personal convictions or, perhaps, prejudices.



## CHAPTER I

### ANALYSIS OF POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES

Basic to effective personnel administration are the analysis of positions with respect to their duties and responsibilities and the selection for each position of an employee who has the necessary qualifications for performing those duties efficiently.

#### THREE TYPES OF ADMINISTRATORS DESCRIBED

Administrative officers, with respect to their habits of analysis of positions and employees, may be roughly divided into three broad groups. The first group consists of those who are extremely personal in the sense that they think of each of their employees as an individual whom they know pretty well, whom they like or dislike, or to whom they are more or less indifferent. The second group is made up of administrators who are extremely impersonal and think of their agencies as made up of certain positions involving fairly concrete duties and responsibilities which in turn demand reasonably definite qualifications. The third group habitually starts with a definite, clear-cut analysis of the positions, but is aware that the employee who fills the position is a human being and that no two human beings are ever just alike or have exactly the same combination of qualities. This type of administrator from time to time makes adjustments in positions and their duties, or in work assignments, so that the duties and the employees fit as nearly as possible. In the frequent adjusting of duties and assignments, he may be concerned primarily with securing immediate operating efficiency, or he may be looking ahead and

deliberately training certain of his more promising employees for larger duties and responsibilities.

*The highly personal administrator.* The extreme of the highly personal administrator is perhaps the most difficult to work with or for, because so much depends on his attitude toward the particular employee. One might assume that in such an office what is sometimes called "the teacher's pet" would be in an enviable position, but in the long run that is far from the case. If being the favorite means merely that all assignments are light and easy, the employee only suffers the penalty of having the other employees know him and treat him as a favorite. It is far worse if the administrator knowing him, liking him, and having confidence in him, gives him assignments and duties without any clear-cut analysis of what those duties are and what qualifications he has to perform them. If this happens, the employee sooner or later gets an important assignment that is beyond his capacity, and does so poor a job that the administrator gets in trouble over it. Then the favored employee who went up like a rocket may come down like a stick, for the highly personal administrator remains personal. He does not appreciate that the failure resulted from his own inability to analyze duties and responsibilities on the one hand, and the employee's strength and weakness on the other. To quote such an administrator, "I trusted *F* and he has failed me: I shall never trust him again." As a matter of fact, *F* was a good man in his field of competence, but the administrator had given him a difficult assignment entirely outside that field without realizing what he was doing. When *F* turned in a product that could not be used, and no time was left to patch it up, he found himself in the group which the boss did not like or trust.

In one office a commissioner was so highly personal

that recommendations from the favorites customarily received an affirmative vote, recommendations from a member of the "in-bad club" a negative vote. Proposals from employees to whom that particular commissioner was indifferent were the only ones to receive, from that particular commissioner, consideration on their merits. Gradually the highly personal nature of the votes became known, not only within the organization, but outside and higher up. A time came when the personal commissioner was not reappointed, but by that time the staff was pretty thoroughly demoralized, because good employees cannot work efficiently in such an atmosphere. Since human nature is what it is, there will always be some employees who discover the way to reach the highly personal administrator by playing to his likes and dislikes. Flattery, sometimes palpable and blatant, but often subtle, may do the trick.

*The highly impersonal administrator.* The highly impersonal administrator, who thinks almost entirely in terms of definite positions with fixed duties and responsibilities, is of course much more efficient and much easier to work with or for. Under such an administrator the organization pattern and the business practice and procedure tend to remain fixed and rigid, and the employees must conform to them. Such a system is perhaps well adapted to average employees, but it is hard on those who deviate from the average. The markedly superior employee not infrequently chafes at the limitations of the position, whereas the employee who is scarcely up to the mark on the more difficult duties may feel the strain, even if not subject to criticism for shortcomings.

*The administrator who analyzes and adjusts.* The administrator who analyzes both the positions and the employees is much like the successful coach of a football

team. He adapts his plays to the capacity of his players. In many public offices the division of labor, and even the business practice and procedure, are not fixed and rigid, but are, within limits, adjustable. Thus it is often possible so to divide the work that the employees of limited capacity are employed almost entirely on tasks well within their range, whereas the really superior employees are engaged almost exclusively on work requiring higher degrees of skill and involving greater responsibility. Such a division of labor, to adjust the work to the capacity of the employees, almost invariably increases the efficiency of the office and, perhaps curiously, adds to the happiness of the employees. One can readily understand that the superior employee is happier in a position that involves the more difficult assignments and the greater responsibility; it is a little harder to understand that the less able employees generally prefer tasks within their range of competence and rarely complain of the fact that they are not given more difficult assignments.<sup>1</sup> Often they seem to be aware of their own limitations and are content day af-

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, as every experienced supervisor has doubtless learned to his sorrow, there are exceptions to this general rule. The employee who is ambitious to do the most difficult work in the office, but lacks the ability to do it well, may be constantly importuning the supervisor for better assignments. Even failure on a brief assignment may not convince such an employee. It merely proves to the unhappy employee that the chief has it in for him and says the work is unsatisfactory when it is not, or refuses to allow him time to become proficient. The experienced supervisor under such circumstances ordinarily has the unsatisfactory work reviewed by others, perhaps quietly, so that he has independent checks on his own judgment. He has on his hands a problem case, about which more will be said later.

Perhaps more curious are the highly competent individual workers who are afraid of supervisory positions with larger responsibilities. Often excellent employees lack confidence in their own ability and will confess that they are scared to death when given a big new assignment. They may even resist the assignment. During the World War one exceptionally competent individual performer declined repeatedly to assume supervisory duties and ultimately had to be practically ordered into them. Once in

ter day to do reasonably well the customary assignments.

Concrete illustrations of analysis of positions and employees may be in point. In some statistical offices the work is organized on what is sometimes called the "desk basis." The employee on the particular desk is responsible for all the steps and processes incidental to the preparation of tables on a given subject, and does everything from routine copying and adding to designing table forms and possibly writing statistical text and designing graphs. The finished product is as good, or as bad, as the particular employee. Unless every employee in the unit is excellent, some of the work is sure to range from mediocre to bad.

The administrator who analyzes both positions and employees breaks down the desk system and divides the work among the employees on a process basis, according to the capacity of the workers. Routine copying, adding, and computing go to those who are not proficient in the more difficult processes. The most competent are made verifiers, responsible for the accuracy of everything that passes through their hands. Verifiers ordinarily work in pairs: the senior of the two verifiers runs the work of all the group whose work that pair verifies; the junior veri-

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the supervisory position, she did well and her unit was efficient. Her earlier work history furnished the key to this employee's attitude.

On her first government job she was under a supervisor who was, first and foremost, a tartar for routine discipline. This particular highly efficient individual performer rebelled against routine discipline and hence had no little trouble. She apparently developed a contempt for supervisors and did not want to be one herself and "have all the girls despise me." When she was made a supervisor against her will, she was directed to handle the discipline in her own way. In her section there was practically no routine discipline, and no need for it ever developed. Incidentally the girls all liked her. From the section under the tartar for routine discipline, personnel cases were constantly coming up to the division chief. From the other section no cases ever came up, and yet the work was excellent.

fier understudies the senior and takes her place in event of absence. The verifiers soon learn the strong and the weak points of the employees in the unit, and they assign the more difficult tasks to those most competent to do them. Verifiers are not likely to play favorites for they are held responsible for both quantity and quality of the work, and thus they have themselves to pay for any unwarranted favoritism.

The Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries in 1919 found a similar situation in some of the auditing offices then in the Treasury Department. In certain offices, cases were assigned to an auditor just as they came in, and the auditor was responsible for every process from verifying all extensions and additions to passing upon the legality of every transaction. In other offices, the accounts went first to a verifying section where machine operators verified all figure work and certified to its accuracy or prepared a memorandum on errors. Then the account went to the expert auditor who, freed from all routine figure work, devoted all his time to the high-grade work of considering legality and preparing memoranda when the legality of the transaction was in question, or when the verifying section had found errors in the figures. The second office with division of labor and with employees assigned to duties on the basis of their qualifications was far more efficient.

#### ANALYZING POSITIONS

How does an administrator get information regarding the duties of the positions in his organization?

In mechanical pursuits, whether public or private, where the operations are specialized, repetitive, and more or less the same from day to day, management engineers have a highly developed technique of job analysis, in-

cluding time and motion studies. Often these studies are used for determining both the most efficient way of doing the work and the rate of pay on a modified piece-work basis. The introduction of these methods in the national service met resistance from the craft unions and in certain instances their use, except in a highly modified form, is prohibited. They will not be discussed at length because the number of places in which they can be used successfully in the public service is rather limited; but the person who in the public service finds himself responsible for the operation of mechanical equipment used constantly and repeatedly, day in and day out, should make himself thoroughly familiar with these techniques of job analysis. With the necessary modifications probably essential in a government service, they are useful tools both for securing efficient operation and for dealing fairly and intelligently with the employees.<sup>2</sup>

Positions in the public service are generally much less specialized than are jobs in mass production industries. Employees, particularly in the smaller organization units which do not permit of minute division of labor, have not one duty but a combination of duties. In some cases the combination of duties remains fairly constant from day to day, whereas in others it changes frequently. Some offices have a fairly definite periodic cycle, such as the week, the half-month, the month, or the year, and the complex of an employee's duties changes in accordance with the cycle. Other offices deal with individual cases, projects, or jobs, so that the complex of duties of the employee changes not only in accordance with the particular case,

<sup>2</sup> The federal law also provides that "no recording clocks for recording time of clerks or other employees in any of the executive departments shall be used in any of such departments at Washington." (30 Stat. L. 864.)

project, or job in hand, but also with the stage of the activity. Such activities may pass through a series of fairly distinct and separate processes which follow each other in a more or less preordained sequence. Incidentally some of these processes may be much more difficult than others, so that the distinction between employees lies in their ability to do well the more difficult processes. All the employees in a group may be used in the easy processes, whereas only the best are used in the hard processes. The person who is attempting to analyze positions must therefore look, not only for the many similarities, but more especially for the distinguishing differences. These differences are ordinarily well known to the employees in the group and the really skilled craftsmen among them take pride in their ability to do well the hard parts.

*The desk survey.* If the complex of duties remains more or less constant from day to day or even if it follows a fairly fixed and reasonably short cycle, the desk survey or position survey works rather well. Under this system an investigator representing the responsible administrator or the personnel office visits the place of work and goes through, step by step, the duties of the particular position with the employee and the immediate superior and then prepares a description of the duties and responsibilities of the position that will be acceptable alike to the employee and his superior. If the investigator is on his guard not to miss the nice distinctions that mean so much to the employees and to the efficiency of the unit, he may even prepare a single description for a group of like positions. As the desk survey technique is slow and painstaking work, the investigator may be tempted to see the similarities that permit of groupings and common descriptions and to



ignore what may at the moment seem minor differences; but his work will fail of its purpose if he does not note distinctions, for when the material is put to real use, attention will frequently be focused not on the likenesses, but on the differences.

When the complex of duties varies widely from day to day in no cyclical way or over a very long cycle, the investigator may be grossly misled on a desk survey because he gets a very clear, even graphic picture of what the employee is doing today, whereas his ideas of what the employee did a month ago or will be doing next month may be anything but clear. He sees, moreover, the tangible duties but not the intangible. He will discover too the marked differences between the employees interviewed. Some give mere "yes" and "no" answers to such questions as the interviewer has the skill and knowledge to ask, whereas others may be voluble, but not very clear. They may assume that the investigator has the knowledge and background to understand the office jargon, to recognize all office forms by their numbers, and to grasp instantly an involved procedure. Occasionally he will wonder whether the duties performed last month or to be performed next month are as difficult or responsible as the employee tells him they are, or whether the employee is just trying to "stuff" him. Here he confronts two dangers: one, that he will permit his first reactions to the personality of the employee to influence him, and, two, that his own subjective reactions to a particular type of work will destroy his objectivity.

Obviously the investigator using the desk survey method should be thoroughly familiar with the type of work he is investigating. "He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies must take the wealth of the Indies

with him." When a group led by a former hotel clerk investigates a great statistical office, when a group of accountants examines the care of the insane in a government hospital, when an expert on adding and computing machines investigates an enormous library, and when persons with no knowledge of or experience in social work examine a department of public welfare, the results are practically certain to be unsatisfactory for the purposes for which they are intended. Even worse, the staff of the office investigated, usually from top to bottom, is disgusted with the investigators. If the organization gets what it wants, the whole procedure makes a good story to be retold when any one says "experts." If the results are adverse, the efficiency of the organization may be seriously crippled.

The experienced investigator versed in the field knows the danger of the personality factor. One employee seems almost to resent the interview and answers shortly such questions as are asked. Another receives the interviewer graciously, even charmingly, and without hesitation gives what appears, even to one who knows the field, a perfect picture of the job.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the difficulties of the desk survey, the time it takes, and the fatigue it engenders, it cannot be recommended as the first and principal method, although it has its distinct place as a check, in special cases, on other

<sup>3</sup> The writer must confess to having been taken into camp on a desk survey of a statistical clerical job made in connection with a general study of a federal bureau. The employee seemed to be doing well an important independent assignment, but later information disclosed that on occasion she saved long painstaking work by faking her computations. In this instance the analysis of the duties was not far wrong, but the evaluation of the efficiency of the employee was about as wrong as it very well could be. It is hard not to permit the personality and manners of the employee to influence the extent to which statements of fact are accepted.

methods. In general it should be said that a combination of methods is better and safer than any one method used exclusively.

*The questionnaire method.* The best general method, certainly for a large agency, appears to be to require from time to time that each employee shall fill out and submit to his immediate superior a complete and detailed statement of the duties and responsibilities of the position he occupies, made out on a questionnaire that calls for all essential facts.<sup>4</sup> The employee should show clearly who is his individual supervisor and, if he himself has supervisory responsibilities, whom he personally supervises. Under this system the questionnaires for the several employees of a unit, if consistent, fit together like parts of a picture puzzle, and taken together make the whole picture of the unit. If they do not fit together, it is at once apparent that investigation of the desk survey type is necessary to clear up discrepancies. If one employee alleges that he does certain things which as a matter of fact

<sup>4</sup>Laurence F. Schmeckebier of the writer's advisory committee suggested that it would be helpful to some readers if a personnel questionnaire of the type used in a survey of positions were included as an appendix. The writer thereupon telephoned Mr. Ismar Baruch, the head of the Personnel Classification Division of the United States Civil Service Commission, an outstanding authority on classification, and asked his advice regarding the selection of a questionnaire for this purpose. Mr. Baruch suggested the selection of the questionnaire prepared in 1925, by a committee appointed by the United States Civil Service Commission, for the use of the Territory of Hawaii, because of its comprehensiveness.

Since we had cooperated in the work of that committee we had in the files of the Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution a copy of the entire plan of the proposed survey as it was submitted to the Governor of Hawaii by the United States Civil Service Commission on December 18, 1925. It seemed as if the entire plan might be of some value as an illustrative case and therefore, with the consent of the United States Civil Service Commission, it is here reproduced in its entirety as Appendix C. Action on this plan was deferred. Subsequently the project was carried out by the Territorial Government of Hawaii under the direction of Oscar F. Goddard of the Hawaii Bureau of Governmental Research.

are done by some one else in the unit, he cannot get away with it, unless the employee who actually performs those duties fails to report them. Since the higher, more responsible duties are the ones which would be ordinarily involved in any deliberate misrepresentation, the person who actually performs them is not likely to omit them. Experience with this method indicates that practically never do employees allege that they perform duties that they do not as a matter of fact perform. Personality may be revealed in the way in which the employees express their duties and responsibilities and dress them up, but, curiously, under-statements are at least as common as over-statements. Generally the check of questionnaires for similar or related positions either clarifies the facts or raises the questions that must be investigated.

The statements of duties and responsibilities are reviewed by the employee's immediate superior, who is ordinarily asked either to approve the statements, to prepare an independent statement, or to make necessary modifications and corrections. The questionnaires go up the official hierarchy until the whole organization is represented.

*Examination of work and records.* The questionnaires filled out by the employees themselves, supplemented by desk surveys and other methods of investigating discrepancies and inconsistencies, are by no means the only evidence available and used by competent investigators who know the field. Most organization units have tangible products and work records that can be studied, not necessarily to give information about a particular position or employee, although that is often possible, but at least to verify the picture of the work of a unit as a whole and to assist in the evaluation of its difficulty and even its quality. In some instances the work records and other tangi-

ble evidence are so complete that adequate statements might be compiled from them without bothering the employees to make statements, but it is a good check to have such statements made by the employees. Many offices have manuals, procedural instructions, rules and regulations, and other similar material that are valuable aids.

*Why not depend on supervisors' reports?* Every now and then some one says: "Why bother with the employees' statements? Let the supervisory officer make them for the different classes of employees he has under his supervision; he knows all about them." It is generally true that, next to the individual employees in a unit, the immediate supervisor is the best informed person regarding the work. How well informed he is depends in part on how close he is to the unit, and how carefully he follows the details. Instances could be cited in which supervisors were not aware of shifts in duties and procedures which the employees had worked out for themselves without direction.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes supervisors in

<sup>5</sup> In one instance the writer had installed a work record system that he thought fool-proof, but its product with respect to the employees in one sub-section, located in a single room, did not check with either his own observations or those of the section chief in charge of all work of that class. The employee he regarded as the ablest in the unit had the lowest production, whereas the poorest employee had the highest. The section chief in charge of all that class of work took some special task of her own to a vacant desk in the room where the problem lay, and watched. The sub-section chief in charge of the room had a difficult individual assignment. The girls in the room all knew it, and not wanting to bother her, took all their questions and all their hard cases to the clerk we regarded as the best of the group. The poorest clerk sat next to the best clerk, and simply laid all her hard schedules on the desk of the best clerk. Every now and then the best clerk would stop her own work, do the accumulation of hard cases thus referred to her, and turn them back. Since our production records were based on number of schedules assigned to each clerk the results were ludicrous. In correcting this situation we merely made official the plan the employees of the unit had themselves put into effect. We relieved the sub-section chief of the supervisory duties that interfered with concentration on her difficult

reporting give an idealized set-up rather than the actual set-up; they report not what they have, but what they think they ought to have. How fair a supervisor's report may be will depend in part on his own objectivity and impartiality. If he is a highly personal supervisor given to playing favorites, his report may be rather far from accurate: the favorite is the one who does the responsible work, whereas the one who is in disfavor performs none but the simplest routine. Cases have been known in which the supervisor assigned all difficult work to the favorite who in turn passed it along unofficially to another employee who actually did it and returned it to the favorite. The best procedure is not to depend solely upon the evidence of the employee or of the supervisor, but to get the evidence from both and to check it against other available data.

#### CLASSIFYING POSITIONS

In an office which is under a centralized personnel control agency operating under a law providing for the classification of positions in accordance with the duties and responsibilities involved, the positions in the organization will have to be classified in accordance with that law and the rules made by the control agency in pursuance thereof. Under some classification laws the control agency itself actually allocates the positions to the appropriate classes, whereas under others, the head of the department makes the initial allocation to classes subject to the approval of the control agency. The decision of the control agency in either case is generally final. If there is

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assignment, made the able clerk with the lowest production record subsection chief, and ultimately got rid of the employee with the highest production record because she proved unable to do by herself cases of even moderate difficulty.

no classification law, the administrative officers generally make their own classifications.

*Definition of a class.* Under modern American public personnel classification acts, a class is generally defined as a group of positions sufficiently similar with respect to duties and responsibilities thereof that the same qualifications may be properly required for entrance and the same compensation may be paid with equity under like working conditions. The several classes are generally described in class specifications prepared and published by the central personnel control agency. The specifications contain: (1) a brief official title for the class; (2) a description of the duties and responsibilities, generally and preferably illustrated by examples of typical tasks; and (3) a statement of the minimum qualifications required for entrance into the class.

*Major uses of classification.* Under a centralized system the class specifications and the allocations of positions to classes are used for two major purposes: (1) for fixing and controlling salaries; and (2) for enforcing the merit system in initial recruiting and promoting. In modern American practice for the public service, with the notable exception of teachers, the tendency has been to divide a given calling, occupation, or vocation—in federal government classification terminology called a “series”—into a number of classes constituting the steps of a ladder; and for each class a rather narrow range of salaries is fixed with a minimum or maximum and several intermediate grades. The employee may generally be promoted from class to class within a given series as his duties and responsibilities merit.

Some critics maintain that the division into distinct classes within an occupational series is much too minute. It must be remembered, however, that in America a

common practice, prior to the adoption of formal classification and salary standardization acts, was for the legislative body to fix a flat rate of salary for each individual position, often regardless of the duties and responsibilities of the position and the efficiency and length of service of the employees. The legislative bodies were by no means prepared to set up just a few broad series of occupations with a wide range of salaries from bottom to top of each such series, leaving to administrative discretion the fixing of the exact salary rate within that broad series. Not without some measure of justification did legislative bodies hesitate to establish, instead of fixed flat rates, salary ranges for even narrow classes, because they feared that "the first thing we know every employee will be at the top of the range for his class."

The division of an occupation, calling, or profession into a number of related, step-ladder classes, with rather nice distinctions between classes in respect to duties and responsibilities, was thus dictated in part by a traditional American legislative attitude, which does not appeal to persons who believe that legislative bodies should leave to the executive a large measure of control over all administrative matters. On the other hand, a good many administrators and students of personnel administration believe that, if the distinction between the classes are real, though nice, they serve a valuable purpose by focusing attention on the essential differences and securing more thought on selections for promotion from class to class. Employees are put on notice as to what will be required of them for promotion to a higher class. High salaries cannot be paid on the mere basis of length of service while the employee continues to perform only the lower types of work in his calling and to carry only a small degree of responsibility. Prior to the passage of the



federal Classification Act many administrators did give a great deal of thought to these nice distinctions, and took them into consideration in selecting for promotion and in fixing salaries in so far as they were free to fix or adjust them.<sup>6</sup>

*Centralized classification vs. decentralized classification.* The administrative officer who believes in analyzing both positions and employees and in making constant adjustments will have a classification of positions, formal or informal, based on duties and responsibilities, because he has to have one for the orderly presentation and consideration of the facts. If he is not subject to a general classification law administered by a central personnel control agency, he has freedom to make his own classes, based on duties and responsibilities, to adopt such administrative titles as he will, to allocate positions to classes, and, in so far as the appropriation acts and other governing legislation permit, to fix salaries. If he is an able,

<sup>6</sup> Some students of the British national system point out that the British do not use such narrow classes in their central control agency, the Treasury, and that is true. But it is also true that many of the operating departments of the British government have their own detailed sub-classifications within the broad classifications established by law and Treasury regulations. These departmental sub-classifications resemble ours and indeed appear to be a necessary part of efficient personnel administration. The difference between the two systems with respect to classes is perhaps not as great as it has been painted. In the United States the whole classification plan, where it has been adopted, is generally brought together and the specifications printed in one volume by the central control agency. Any one who examines these volumes of class specifications will find page after page devoted to positions that are located in a single agency or group of related agencies; and with these pages most of the other agencies have absolutely no concern. American books of class specifications would indeed be relatively thin if they included only specifications that are common to most departments and left the publication of specifications for positions that are peculiar to a single department or to a small number of departments to the department concerned. The federal Classification Act of 1923 moreover confines itself to a relatively small number of broad services and grades within services, and leaves the development of classes within grades to the central control agency.

efficient administrator he may attain results equal to, and often in his own opinion superior to, those which are secured under a classification act administered by a central personnel agency.

The conviction of some good administrators that they can do better personnel classification work and salary fixing if they are independent than they can do under the direction and control of a central personnel agency deserves special consideration. With partisan and highly personal administrators who object to centralized control because it prevents, or at least hinders, them in playing personal or political favorites, we are not here concerned; we are dealing with good administrators who are voicing their honest convictions. The explanation of the preference for independence appears to be that the administrator, free from centralized control, decides for himself, in accordance with his own best judgment, many matters of broad policy that under a general classification act are decided for him either by the legislative body or the central personnel control agency.

For example, in the federal service an administrator may be convinced that the key men in his organization are entitled to salaries similar to those paid by private enterprise. Such a policy in his judgment is eminently sound; yet the Congress of the United States has always rejected such proposals and has kept the upper salaries in the Classification Act at very modest levels. The same administrator may believe that routine clerical workers should be paid at the prevailing market rate in the community in which they are employed, and this market rate may be low because of the number of girls who live at home and are only partially dependent on their salaries for support. In the Classification Act the Congress has established what is virtually a minimum wage for such

employees; and in comparison with what the administrator would pay, it may be high. What he could save on the salaries of his lowest paid workers would give him more than enough to pay high salaries to his key men, were he free to determine his own policies and not bound by the policies fixed by the Congress. He honestly believes that his policy is better than that which the Congress has definitely laid down for most of the establishments in the District of Columbia.

Similarly an administrative officer may be of the opinion that two other stenographers in his office are entitled to the same classification and hence the same salary as his stenographer-secretary. He would pay all three the higher stenographer-secretary rate and would not recognize any differential. The Civil Service Commission, enforcing the Classification Act, insists upon the differential and will not permit him to pay the other two stenographers what he thinks they should be paid. Both the administrator and the classification examiners of the Civil Service Commission may be in complete agreement regarding the duties and responsibilities of all three positions: the difficulty is that the administrator has a different idea as to the relative value of the jobs. He does not like the differential as established in accordance with the salary schedules in the Classification Act.

Classification and salary standardization acts, enforced by a central personnel agency, are passed for three main reasons: (1) to prevent partisan and highly personal administrators from grossly abusing their powers; (2) to bring about uniformity of policy throughout the agencies covered; and (3) to provide the appropriating body with a mechanism whereby it may get the facts in a uniform, orderly, and comprehensive way, and make adjustments and determine policies in the light of all the facts. When

each administrator builds his own classification and fixes his own salaries, wide discrepancies arise between different agencies and sometimes even within the same agency: comparable positions are paid at rates so widely different that they cannot be justified. In the absence of standardized class specifications and titles, it is almost impossible for the legislative appropriating body, or the executive budget agency, to learn the facts and act on the broad questions of policy involved. They are forced to consider individual positions or small groups of positions in each agency, without any device for comparisons, and they cannot make general adjustments applicable to the service as a whole in the light of all the pertinent data. Two slogans are often used in advocating and sustaining classification acts:<sup>7</sup> "Equal pay for equal work"<sup>8</sup> and "Salaries

<sup>7</sup> In the national service one often finds an interesting and significant difference in attitude toward the centrally administered Classification Act between the administrators who were in the service before the passage of the Classification Act and the administrators who entered subsequently. The newer administrators in agencies under the Classification Act often chafe at the control and are sure they could do better without it. The old administrators are keenly aware of the fact that the present control system is vastly superior to the old control where for many agencies Congress prescribed in detail the exact number of positions which each should have, and the exact salary for each position. Congress used to make wide use of this device, called "the statutory roll"; and it is still used by many states and municipalities. Congress preferred the statutory roll because of the abuses that resulted from the so-called "unrestricted lump sum roll" that gave administrators almost complete discretion as to salaries. The Classification Act represents a compromise between the two. New administrators who chafe at control and wish complete independence may not appreciate the difficulties into which complete independence might lead them when the Congress is in the mood to criticize what it regards as extravagant salaries. In our national government the Congress is the board of directors of the administrative branch and can, if it wishes, largely dictate the rules under which the work is to be conducted.

<sup>8</sup> The women employees and the women's organizations interested in them usually give this slogan: "Equal pay for equal work without discrimination as to sex."

fair alike to the government, the employees, the taxpayers.”

#### DETERMINING EFFICIENCY OR VALUE OF EMPLOYEES

To determine the duties and responsibilities of a position is a relatively simple matter compared with determining the efficiency of an employee and evaluating his qualifications, not only for the position he now occupies, but for advancement to higher positions.<sup>9</sup> In the whole

<sup>9</sup> Control personnel agencies and functional personnel offices within operating organizations, when classifying positions on the basis of duties and responsibilities, ordinarily draw a sharp line between the position and its incumbent. They are concerned in classification with the duties of the position and not with the efficiency of the incumbent. They assume reasonable efficiency and classify only the position itself on the basis of its duties and responsibilities and the qualifications necessary at entrance for the proper performance of such duties.

From the standpoint of the central control agencies and functionalized personnel offices, this procedure is, it would seem, both necessary and sound. The techniques for the analysis of the duties and responsibilities of positions are radically different from those for measuring the efficiency of individual employees and the objectives of the two techniques are different. Maintenance of the efficiency of the individual employee is moreover the primary responsibility of the managing officers immediately in charge of operations, whereas the proper classification of positions on the basis of duties and responsibilities for the purposes of salary standardization and enforcement of the merit system is a control function to keep managing officers in line with general policies.

From the standpoint of a managing officer in charge of a group of workers the sharp distinction between the duties and responsibilities of a position and the efficiency of an employee often partakes of the nature of a legal fiction. In some cases, it is true, the duties and responsibilities of positions are, practically speaking, fixed and unchangeable and management must secure employees who can perform those fixed and unchangeable duties efficiently. In many cases, however, the duties of positions are neither fixed nor unchangeable, and the skill of the managing officers is shown in the way they modify duties and responsibilities of positions in accordance with the ability and efficiency of individual employees. Thus it often happens that while an employee is occupying a given position his duties and responsibilities gradually change as he learns to perform with marked skill the more difficult duties, and as his superiors delegate to him more and more administrative discretion.

The technique to meet this situation is for the managing officer to

field of public personnel administration probably nothing is more difficult or calls for greater skill; and yet accurate evaluation is basic for attaining those two related goals, efficiency and high morale.

*Measurable work.* In a limited number of public positions, the work consists, almost exclusively, of the daily production of standard units. Each unit is exactly alike, or at least involves substantially the same amount of work, the application of the same knowledge and skill, the performance of the same processes in the standard order. The duties are reasonably comparable with those in many positions in mass production private industry

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request the control agency to reallocate the employee's position on the basis of the change that has taken place in its duties and responsibilities. Classification of positions has a dynamic side, keeping the classification up to date, which differs materially from the single static act of reclassifying a service. Reclassifying a service is done on the basis of a general study, whereas keeping classification up to date must be done on the basis of individual cases or groups of related cases, coming up a few at a time.

To prevent the classification from becoming hopelessly out of date through failure of managing officers to report changes which may be gradual evolutions taking place almost without their knowledge, it is essential that the control agency shall from time to time audit the classification of an operating organization to see that it is not out of line.

In this connection it should be pointed out that managing officers sometimes neglect or possibly even refuse to report changes in duties and responsibilities that would require paying the employee a higher salary. They defend this failure on the ground that appropriations will not permit of paying higher salaries. True, a good classification act provides the right of an appeal by the employee for a review of his classification but naturally employees hesitate to appeal against the wishes and advice of their official superiors. In one case, not verified by the writer, an employee alleged that in his office employees of a lower class were assigned to higher class duties with no change either in classification or in salary. If an employee complained, or threatened to appeal, he was immediately reassigned to his old duties and another employee was assigned to the higher duties. Such procedures are, of course, entirely within the range of possibilities. They indicate the necessity for occasional audits of classification by the personnel control agency and incidentally the real place which an independent voluntary employees' union occupies in public personnel administration.

where hour after hour, day after day, the employee performs exactly the same processes as units pass before him on the conveyor belt or the assembly line. Since the units produced are all substantially alike it is simple to count them; and a mere count measures accurately the quantity of product of the employee. If each unit is in some way inspected or verified to establish the quality of the work, it is likewise simple to determine accurately the quality of output of the individual employee.

In positions such as these, quantity and quality of work, plus the attendance record, tell pretty much the whole story of the efficiency of the employee in the actual position to which he is assigned. Granted that such records may have little bearing on the unutilized potential abilities of the employee, they do with marked accuracy measure his value in the position he holds. In some instances employees in positions of this type may be charged with breaches of discipline which affect their value, but such cases are not common. The facts regarding the breach of discipline can be recorded and the case considered on the basis of the seriousness of the offense and the disciplinary history. For the great mass of the employees engaged in standardized repetitive activities, the statistics of quantity and quality of work and attendance serve as accurate measures of efficiency on the immediate job.

*Work not precisely measurable.* In the great bulk of public positions, the work does not consist of standard units of output so alike with respect to work involved that mere statistics based on counting will measure efficiency. Skilful administrators are constantly striving to perfect useful standard units for measuring quantity and quality of output not only to determine the efficiency of the individual employees but also to control operations

and to get cost figures for reporting and estimating. The problem is extremely complex and difficult. The difficulties deserve some consideration, for the administrator who would rate efficiency must understand them.

Even when the duties of the position require the employee day after day to perform the same processes and exercise the same knowledge and skill, the various jobs upon which he is engaged may be anything but uniform in difficulty. A typist, for example, may at times be copying from perfectly straight copy so that the quantity of her output depends on her accuracy and speed as a typist. Again she may be copying from a rough draft, long-hand manuscript full of interlineations and corrections, with perhaps an occasional incomplete sentence or an undecipherable insertion. Here her skill in deciphering the manuscript is the time-determining factor. Stenographers who take routine correspondence, "Yours of the 23rd received and contents noted," should make much better time than the stenographer to whom is dictated highly scientific work full of technical words and phrases.

In a statistical office where a great amount of computing is done, it is recognized that the number of computations per hour depends in part on the size of the figures worked with and in part on the number of times the computing machine must be reset. On some jobs hundreds of figures may be divided by the same number or, as it is usually done, multiplied by the same reciprocal. One setting of the reciprocal is all that is required, and the subsequent calculations are quickly made without clearing the machine. On another job the machine must be completely cleared and reset for each calculation.

Even figure copying, which is a common task in statistical offices, is affected by the number of digits in the figures copied and even more by the sources from which



the figures come and the way they are to be arranged in the table being made. It is one thing to take a column of figures from a single table and duplicate it exactly in a table being prepared. It is quite a different thing to write a column of figures of equal size and length when each figure comes from a different page or source. In the first case skill and speed in copying are the controlling factors; in the second, speed depends on the ability to find the figures in the different sources.

Thus even in what appears to be more or less routine work, the number of variables may be so great that precise measurement becomes impracticable. The administrator may, however, find it worth while to have the time spent on each job by each employee recorded. If two or more employees do the same job or reasonably comparable jobs, he can get some objective data on their relative efficiency.

The further one gets away from the routine and the repetitive, the less becomes the chance of measurement, even if the processes remain fairly constant from day to day. How much a government editor can edit in a day depends on the manuscript he is editing. Some manuscripts are so good that the editor has only to read them through word for word, scarcely touching the blue pencil to paper. Others are so poor that the editor has a virtual rewrite job on his hands and has to revise practically every sentence. Some editors make speed by adopting a relatively low standard of acceptability, whereas others are slow because they fix a high standard. The result is that the administrator cannot measure either quantity or quality according to any standard unit. The most he can do is to have records kept of the time spent on the several jobs and by studying, or having studied, the nature of the work involved on the several jobs, and

the resulting product, reach a conclusion as to the value of the employee or the relative value of the several employees.

The administrator dealing with scientific and professional workers often has extreme difficulty in reaching a conclusion regarding the relative value of his employees. On the one hand he has an employee who is uniformly dependable and reliable. Everything he does shows meticulous care and good workmanship, but not a spark of originality or brilliance. On the other hand is the employee who shows at times flashes of real originality and brilliance, but who is not so good at steady hauling of a heavy load. Which of the two is the more efficient? The administrator generally knows that they are not interchangeable; that on a certain assignment one may make good whereas the other may easily be a disappointment. His skill as an administrator is tested by his selection for assignments. When he is asked to rate the two according to a uniform system of efficiency rating he is a little inclined to regard the whole matter as a farce, because although the two are engaged on the same kind of work in the same profession or science, they are not directly comparable.

Thus far we have been considering positions in which the employees are doing one kind of work day in and day out. Such positions are ordinarily found in organizations large enough to permit of fairly minute division of labor. Hundreds of positions exist—especially in small units—where the individual employee during the course of a day performs a number of different and distinct duties, some of them simple and routine and others difficult or involving a considerable degree of responsibility. To attempt to measure quantity and quality of work under such circumstances is quite out of the question. What if

anything can be accurately measured is generally the more routine part of the job which any good employee could do reasonably well. The part that cannot be measured is that which calls for the greatest knowledge and skill or involves the greatest responsibility. On the basis of time consumed, the routine part may far outweigh the high-grade part, but the administrator very properly will judge the value of the employee on the basis of the high-grade part. Perhaps only occasionally does the employee have to deal with the public or the press, or to make official rulings, but if he cannot do it and do it well he gets his superior into trouble. The usefulness of the employee to the office turns on his ability not only to do the more routine part of his work well, but to perform creditably the occasional more responsible and difficult duties.

*Supervisors' reports.* Except in the relatively few cases in which the employees are engaged in work which can be accurately measured with respect both to quantity and quality, efficiency rating must rest in whole or in part on the judgment of those who know well the performance of the employees.<sup>10</sup> In a relatively small organization the top responsible administrative officer may be able to know personally the work of each of his subordinates. He may have, through direct personal knowledge, the facts upon which to base judgment. Such instances are, however, rather rare. In most organizations the administrator must depend in part at least upon the reports and

<sup>10</sup> Some books on personnel say that in rating efficiency the raters must be objective and not subjective. It is easy to say that, but it is extremely hard in making a judgment rating to draw the line between objective and subjective. If a particular job involves human relationships, one has to try one's best objectively to consider matters that are distinctly subjective. "A winning smile" has no place in an objective study of a punch card operator, but it may be a vocational asset to a receptionist who has to make people wait or even to send them away.

judgment of the foremen or section chiefs who are in direct contact with the work of the employees under their immediate supervision. They are the ones possessed of the facts or in a position to ascertain the facts, and judgment to be fair and sound must be based on facts.

Since the responsible administrator must in many instances base his own conclusion on the facts supplied by his subordinate supervisors and their judgment, it is imperative that he know these supervisors well and from time to time make or have made such independent checks as he can on their objectivity and fairness. He must appreciate that he sees the great mass of the employees through the eyes of his subordinates. Some subordinate officers have normal vision; others are troubled by near-sight or far-sight, often accompanied by astigmatism. Unless corrections are made for these defects, the responsible administrator is himself operating with distorted vision. Several of the worst situations the writer has ever encountered in organizations he has studied have had their origin in the fact that the responsible administrator accepted, without check or corrections, the reports and evaluations of his subordinate supervisors.

How can the vision of subordinate supervisors be checked?

To the maximum possible extent the administrator can demand that the supervisor supply him with all the available factual material that the administrator regards as pertinent. He can see to it that all the essential points are covered by the reports and thus prevent the supervisor from concentrating on one point and ignoring all the rest. Some supervisors will make a minor matter of discipline, for example, the one essential, ignoring the real productivity of the employee. Other supervisors resent the employee who suggests changes in the practice

and procedure. Some can never forgive an employee who questions their infallibility.

S. N. D. North as director of the Census [1903 to 1909] made it a general rule to transfer to another supervisor those employees against whom a really adverse efficiency report was submitted. The employee was told of the nature of the adverse report, as was the new supervisor to whom the employee was transferred. Thus the employee was given an opportunity to comment on the charges, if he so desired, and a chance to correct defects if the charges were well founded. The new supervisor was required to report frequently on the progress of the employee thus transferred. Through this process the Bureau gradually identified a group that Mr. North called "the dead wood," persons against whom adverse reports had been made by most of the supervisors in the office. The problem then became how to separate them from the payroll—more difficult in those days than now, because the government at that time had no system for taking care of the old or the prematurely disabled.

In some cases the system disclosed gross unfairness on the part of a supervisor. One supervisor had a profound conviction that no married woman with a husband capable of supporting her should ever work, and he made a thoroughly adverse report on such a married woman. Her sick leave record was not good, but every other supervisor under whom she had ever worked had otherwise given her a high rating. Her new supervisor gave her an excellent rating and the sick leave record showed some improvement. This particular employee moved up and up in the public service until she herself was a successful supervisor and organizer. This unfavorable report was probably the only one in a highly successful career of about thirty-five years.

Staff conferences of the employees in a given class within the agency to discuss the standards which shall be applied in the rating of their work have a double value. The discussion may bring out differences of opinion among supervisors or differences between the supervisor and the employees which help in the evaluation and education of supervisors. Thus the employees learn through the discussions what is expected of them, not only by their supervisors but also by their fellow employees. If the employees have been selected on the merit basis and are qualified for their work, sound, reasonable standards are likely to evolve from such a discussion. If, on the other hand, the employees are themselves sub-standard, the conference procedure will doubtless do more harm than good. With a sub-standard group the responsible administrator or supervisor must superimpose standards and make them clear to the employees, preferably with some statements as to the ways and means which will be used to help the sub-standard employees to attain the required competence. Complaints from a sub-standard group regarding their supervisors are perhaps indicative of needed changes in the staff, but they do not necessarily reflect on the supervisor.

The opinion of fellow employees is of great value. The question is how to get at it, for the best employees are not going to be tale bearers, however much they may talk among themselves. Instinctively somehow the administrator distrusts the tale bearer. At times the fellow employee rating plan can be used to advantage. Under this plan all the employees, or a considerable number of them, may be asked to arrange their fellow employees, including supervisors, in the order of their value to the office, or according to their rank in certain essential qualities. These rankings are then submitted to the adminis-

trator or his representative without going up the regular hierarchy. The immediate supervisor may never see them. In one instance this system was used very satisfactorily when reduction of force was impending. Not all the employees were asked to participate in the rating: only those who had a well-established reputation around the office were called upon. The similarity in the rankings was rather striking.<sup>11</sup>

Some administrators have the genius for wide personal contacts and get to know the people throughout their organization, whatever their position in the official hierarchy.<sup>12</sup> Such an administrator on every convenient occa-

<sup>11</sup> Some people are experimenting with the device of having certain employees actually rate themselves. This method may perhaps have considerable usefulness in helping employees to develop and adjust, but its value as a basis of comparison between employees seems questionable. Work with employees leads one to distinguish the unduly self-critical and modest, from the unduly self-confident and self-laudatory. Certain problem employees are keenly aware of their own perfection and the defects of their fellow employees and their supervisors. Their ratings of themselves would be interesting psychological documents, but not particularly valuable in arriving at an objective ranking.

<sup>12</sup> A few months after the writer entered the federal Census Bureau, S. N. D. North, the director, sent for him. For almost three-quarters of an hour the director asked questions regarding the writer's college professors and college courses, his parents and brothers, people the director knew that the writer might know. Throughout the delightful interview the writer kept wondering, in the back of his mind, what the director was getting at. All became clear at the end, when the director said that he liked to have a little free time that he could use in getting acquainted with his new men.

When Mr. North left the service, the employees asked for a chance to say good-bye. Several hundred of them walked through his office single file, each pausing to shake hands with him. The chief statisticians and division chiefs were in the background, but each one stepped to the director's side as the employees of his particular unit approached, to refresh the director's memory for names if it should fail him. Many of us had the same experience: never once did the director hesitate for a name of an employee in our unit, and always he had a few words for each employee that showed his knowledge of them. That reception came when the mountain laurel was at its height about Washington. One of the women in the chief clerk's unit, which was the first to go through,

sion talks with the employees individually about the work, usually making them do most of the talking. Under such an administrator it is not at all unusual to find at a conference not only the official supervisors, but a few individuals invited in by the administrator because he wants their point of view and their judgment. If they do not volunteer it, he may ask them direct and pointed questions. Some supervisors resent this procedure, because they think it undermines their authority. The answer is that this particular type of higher administrator does not care much for that kind of supervisor. He wants not a boss, but a group leader; and by his procedure he is trying to get at the best in the group mind. He expects his supervisors to run their units in the same way.

Progressive organizations have a personnel officer who generally has no direct administrative authority over the line officers in charge of employees. He is on the staff of the responsible administrator. One of his duties is to consider the individual personnel problems that arise in the agency. His official duties include, not only talking with the supervisors, but also talking with the employees. He can give more time to the problems than an ordinary administrator can afford to give, and he has in his office all the records. He knows the various techniques for getting at situations. His position enables him to gather

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carried a big spray of laurel which she had brought for the director. He accepted it graciously. As soon as she was out of sight the chief clerk stepped up to relieve the director of his rather cumbersome burden, but the director declined to be relieved and held that big spray in his left hand as the hundreds came filing through.

One evening two of us had worked overtime and happened to get on the street car with a number of the charwomen who had just finished giving the office its evening cleaning. At the next street corner the director got on the car. He stopped for a few minutes to chat with the charwomen and then joined us to talk shop. As one of the charwomen later expressed it, "Ain't he the fine fatherly man?"



facts for the administrator that are at least partial corrections for the bias of the supervisors in rating efficiency.

#### UNIFORM EFFICIENCY RATING SYSTEMS

Thus far the subject of determining the efficiency of the employees has been considered from the standpoint of the administrative officer responsible for the operation of his organization. Persons interested in economy and efficiency in public administration recognize that if government is to be economical and efficient the individual employees must be efficient. They therefore seek to secure efficiency directly through the legislative process by advocating laws requiring the introduction of efficiency rating systems. Members of legislative bodies, in governments that have adopted the merit system and at least partly removed or checked the spoils system, are quick to accept such proposals. It is perfectly clear that under a merit system pay and advancement should be based on duties and responsibilities and on the efficiency of the employee in the performance of those duties. To write a statute that will provide for efficiency rating is easy. The whole thing is so logical and apparently so simple that the adoption of such legislation is difficult to oppose, yet the present writer has a conviction that laws providing uniform systems of efficiency rating prescribed and in part operated by central personnel agencies such as the Civil Service Commission, have done at least as much harm as they have done good.

Four points need to be borne in mind in this connection:

1. The extent to which efficiency can be actually measured depends on the nature of the work, and that varies widely from agency to agency, and even from one class of position to another within the same agency.

2. The material upon which efficiency ratings may be based is often more or less the same as the material for cost analyses and production control reports.

3. The problem of efficiency rating grows more complex as the number of different units increases, and as the number of steps between the lowest units in the hierarchy, and the top, increases.

4. Efficiency ratings have to be corrected for the bias of the rating officers.

Efficiency rating systems emanating from a central control agency, and imposed from the top downward, tend almost inevitably toward uniformity and standardization. They are too frequently designed so that they will fit everything, with the result that often they do not really fit anything.<sup>13</sup> Administrators who have themselves conscientiously and ingeniously struggled with developing efficiency rating systems in their own units generally see at a glance the weakness in the plan imposed from above. Frequently it is not as good a plan for

<sup>13</sup> The heart of the difficulty appears to be that the uniform system or systems emanating from a central agency must be couched in broad general terms. The several factors that must be rated are broadly defined. The definitions are so broad and general that they are not directly applicable to the duties and responsibilities of a particular class of positions. To apply them to a given class of positions, they must be interpreted. Thus they are in no sense standards of measurement for the work done in positions of a particular class. They are rather a scheme or plan in accordance with which the administrator or the supervisor is expected to develop his own standards. Unfortunately the scheme or plan has been superimposed without any consideration of the nature of the work to be rated or the possibility of developing real standards. The situation is particularly bad when the superimposed plan not only defines the factors in broad and general terms, but fixes the weights that are to be attached to the several factors. From the standpoint of an operating officer, not only the factors, but the weight to be attached to the several factors should be related to the particular class of positions being rated and to the maximum possible degree standards of performance should be developed for the particular work in hand. The superimposed plan often hampers the development of genuine standards.

their own office as the one they themselves had developed. Administrators who have never bothered with efficiency rating systems, or who consider them more or less impracticable for their work, regard the superimposed system as something of a nuisance.

Proponents of uniformity and standardization think they will get them through the centralized system. What they actually get is the appearance of uniformity and standardization. Most offices can work the system the first time so that it will produce the results they want it to produce. Practically any office can work it the second time, profiting from its earlier experience.

When an efficiency rating system is developed within an operating organization or unit of an organization, the operating officers know its limitations and defects and how much weight should be attached to it. When the system is imposed from above and is going into a central office, they do not know what weight will be attached to it and therefore they are inclined to play safe by so using the system that it will produce the results that the office at the moment deems desirable.

Some years ago the Census Bureau had its own relatively simple system of efficiency rating which it used in its own personnel administration. No attempt was made to adjust the reports from the several divisions to make them uniform and directly comparable. The efficiency committee just knew that chief statistician *A* was an easy-marker, or as one member expressed it, "all his ducks are swans." On the other hand, chief statistician *C* was a tartar and that fact had to be borne in mind in considering individual cases in his division. Later the Department called on the Bureau for efficiency reports, using a system very similar to that used by the Bureau itself. Obviously the Bureau could not use, in its reports to the

Department, the raw marks submitted by the several statisticians, for the statisticians were not using the same standards. The efficiency committee adjusted the returns, rating the raters, and marking up the tartar's figures and marking down the swan's. The whole set of cards looked neat and efficient when, after considerable labor, it was finally sent to the Department; but in the opinion of the committee, the departmental cards were nothing like as useful a tool as the original cards that reflected the personality of the operating officers who were directing the employees. But the Census committee knew the markers and in many instances they knew the employees being rated. They could consider those factors in deciding what if any action was to be recommended to the director. The Department did not know well either the raters or the rated and therefore the committee used its best judgment.

As efficiency ratings pass up the hierarchy, at each step getting more remote from the employees being rated and the persons making the original ratings, at each step being adjusted on the judgment of a group, they more and more come to represent judgments and guesses rather than actual facts. If the judgments or guesses are always honest, fair, and objective, the results may be worth the effort and the cost, but if bias or favoritism creeps into the avenue that is wide open to it, the results will not serve the purpose intended.

Within recent years a tendency has developed to require that the distribution of efficiency ratings shall conform to the normal frequency or bell curve of distribution. Mathematical or statistical assumption thus may take the place of facts. It is well known, however, that the mathematical assumptions are true only if the number of cases is large, and that a high degree of special

selectivity may upset the assumptions. In many units the numbers are small and the degree of selection is high. In a big undergraduate class a professor may with some justification "mark on the curve" but he would hardly use the curve in grading four or five picked students taking an advanced course. An administrator with a hundred punch card operators for whom he has actual production records, would, moreover, hardly want to substitute any mathematical distribution formula for his actual records of production. The use of a mathematical device does not solve the main problem.

Much of what has been said about efficiency rating is thus negative; and yet it has been written by one who would have the public service operated at a high degree of efficiency. What then are the conclusions? They may be briefly stated as follows:

1. Every responsible administrative officer should periodically and systematically make or have made a survey or study of the efficiency of the employees under his charge.
2. The results of this survey with respect to each individual employee should go into the personal history file of that employee, or into some other appropriate file, so that the results become part of the permanent record of that employee and permit of a review of his entire record.
3. To the maximum possible extent the efficiency record should be based on facts and work records, rather than on judgments, although in many instances judgment has to be used and should be recorded.
4. The uniform practice should be to place in the personal history or similar file, memoranda on any significant deviation from normal or average in the work or conduct of the employee. Deviations may be in either

direction, a particularly good performance or a particularly poor performance. Care should be exercised to make these memoranda concrete and specific, giving facts rather than deductions from the facts.

5. Rating may be used with great advantage if some standard unit of measurement is available; and the administrators will be constantly striving to develop units of measurement because of their general value in administration, and not solely because of their use for rating efficiency.

6. In the absence of standard units of measurement, or well-developed standards or norms of performance, the administrator will be slow to use comparative ratings and to attempt to express the value of an employee in terms of a percentage or of a grade. To get a percentage or grade, weights have to be attached to particular characteristics or qualities and the reports of different raters have to be adjusted. Weights may be inaccurate and the adjustments may be faulty. The detailed evidence, factual to the maximum possible extent, is more significant than the grades. If on occasion a rating or ranking becomes essential for a particular purpose, a plan of rating or ranking can be specially adapted to meet that purpose. Then the weights attached to the several factors can be made to fit the particular objective.

7. Promoting efficiency is, in no small part, individual case work with the employee. In dealing with individual employees it is generally better to talk concrete facts rather than grades and percentages. Some experience suggests that it is better to keep away from comparisons between the employee and his or her associates rather than to encourage such comparisons. Many employees can punch holes in the efficiency rating system. When comparisons with other employees are attempted, one

may get such remarks as "Her supervisor is sweet on her," or "She gets a lot of cases done because she slights them." When one is talking to an employee with a view to helping him overcome his weaknesses or defects, it is well to stick to the work of that particular employee and not to be sidetracked into a general discussion of all the employees in the office. An exception may be noted. If the administrator has statistics based on standard units that are well recognized by the employees, the tabulation showing the data by employees can well be shown the individual.<sup>24</sup> Most employees want to do good work, but too frequently they do not know what is expected of them, or exactly where they are falling short. The objective is to be as specific and direct as possible. For this purpose single weighted averages are of little use.

8. Although a central personnel agency can with advantage encourage operating officers to develop their own efficiency recording systems and help them with some of the techniques, it is decidedly questionable

<sup>24</sup> In the Census Bureau the writer used in several cases this method of showing the production records of the various employees, and in all but one it resulted in no argument or discussion, but in prompt and marked improvement. In the one case the employee first accused the other employees of falsifying their production records. When he was reminded that neither he nor any other employee had made a production report, and that all the figures had come from the central record office, he charged the writer with being "a slave driver." The answer to that was that the employee was not only low man, but that his production was less than two-thirds of the average production the group was making without any pressure whatever. It was only half the production of the top employee. Pressure was now being applied for the first time, and only on those whose work was unreasonably bad. The employee then announced that he would not work in any organization which used such methods; he would resign first. He was given twenty-four hours to think it over. As he had been advocating among the employees standardization of output at his minimum rate which he had deliberately kept well below his own capacity [this fact came out in the interviews with the other low men] the writer was not disturbed that he stuck to his determination to resign.

whether a uniform standardized system or systems produce any really valuable results, and such systems are costly because of the amount of detailed work involved.

9. If an organization is so large that the administrator cannot himself do all the personnel work that is necessary, he should have on his personal staff an experienced personnel officer, as an adviser to him, who can devote the time necessary to developing the efficiency of the individual employees when and if difficulties arise between the immediate supervisor and an employee, and who can work cooperatively with supervisors in developing standards.

In concluding this discussion of evaluating employees and rating efficiency, the point should be emphasized that there appears to be a marked distinction between (1) those personnel actions that affect an entire class of employees and necessitate the arrangement of the several members of the class as nearly as possible in the order of their value to the government; and (2) those personnel actions that are primarily concerned with the work, conduct, or development of a particular employee.

Thus if the administrator has to select certain individuals from among the group for salary advances, or, in event of reduction of force, for dismissal, it is essential that he use some device, as objective and scientific as possible, for ranking the employees in the order of their all-round value; and this process involves distinguishing the several factors affecting value and attaching weights to those factors. On the other hand, in the far more frequent instances when the administrator is selecting employees for assignments to particular tasks, or taking action looking toward the development of a particular employee, he is not concerned so much with all-round value as with particular qualities or lack of qualities. In



such cases he may be concerned not only with a single factor as set up in the efficiency rating plan, but with particular elements in that composite factor. The weight which has been attached to that factor in the efficiency rating plan may be, for his immediate purpose, of no particular significance. If any comparisons with other employees are involved, they relate to the particular factor or items in the composite, and not to the rating as a whole. The administrator, for example, has a particular task that calls for superior mental attainments within the field, and properly he selects the employee who has these superior mental attainments, often regardless of the general rating for efficiency. Another job requires some minor supervisory duties and naturally he selects the employee who has supervisory capacity. Even within a given class, assignments may differ with respect to the factors involved, and the weight to be attached to them.

The variation in factors and weights among different classes of positions explains why the efficiency ranking of the employees in one class of work cannot be used as the sole device for selecting employees to be promoted to a position of a higher class involving different duties and responsibilities. Time and time again the higher position involves some supervisory duties and the star performer in the class below is an individual worker with no supervisory inclination or capacity. That employee tops the list when the employees are arranged in the order of their value in the particular work of the class, but that same employee would perhaps be near the bottom were the employees arranged in the order of their managerial or supervisory ability, demonstrated or potential. The same thing may be true where the higher position calls for superior mental equipment. Ranking according to capacity for the immediate job may be very different

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from ranking according to capacity to perform the duties of a higher job. Efficiency rating is a tool of limited uses. It is designed for a narrow and particular purpose. Evaluations of employees must be made in many different ways, each adapted to the particular purpose to be served. The central personnel agency cannot prescribe a uniform system that will meet all needs. It can perhaps help the operating officers by passing on to them knowledge of devices that have proved of value in other agencies.

## CHAPTER II

### SELECTION OF EMPLOYEES

Selection of an employee becomes necessary when an old employee withdraws,<sup>1</sup> when the force is expanded, or when a new agency is created. In any of these events a vacancy occurs.

#### THREE METHODS OF FILLING VACANCIES

Vacancies may be filled in one of three principal ways: (1) by the promotion of an employee already within the organization, (2) by the transfer of an employee from another agency of the same government, or (3) by the appointment of a person not at present in the service of the government. If the person not at present in the service has previously been in it, his selection may under certain circumstances be termed "reinstatement." If the appointee has never been in the service or is not selected on the basis of any previous service, the term "new appointment" may be used.

*Promotions.* If the vacancy is in a position above the ordinary entrance class, and especially if it is well up in the official hierarchy, the administrator may face a serious question. If he fills the vacancy by promotion, he creates a vacancy in the grade below, which may in turn be filled by promotion. Thus one vacancy near the top may mean promotions all down the line; and promotions are tonic to an organization. They are the essence of a career service within the unit. On the other hand if a new employee

<sup>1</sup> "Withdraws" is here used in an all-inclusive sense and covers voluntary resignations, dismissals, retirement because of age, retirement because of disability, death in the active service, etc.

from the outside is brought into an upper position, no line of promotions results and many employees are disappointed. If there is the least ground for suspicion that the outsider was brought in through any kind of personal or partisan favoritism, the effect on morale may be particularly disastrous.

The administrator may believe, however, that no employee already on his staff exactly meets his requirements and that new blood is desirable. In an old comic strip the oft-repeated slogan was, "They all look good when they are far away." Some administrators are so constituted that they always see the weak points of each employee already on their payroll and the strong points of outsiders who are making their mark in another environment, possibly a freer environment than the public service. Such an administrator may say, "If I could only get that brilliant man in my organization, he would help me infuse new life and strength into it." Soon after he gets the brilliant one, he discovers a disappointing side, for almost inevitably there is a disappointing side. Occasionally the very qualities that spelled brilliance in the field of private enterprise wreck the individual in the public service. Hence the quest goes on for the perfect man from the outside, thus piling up in the service a group of disappointed, disillusioned employees.

Another type of administrator expects no perfect employees, but attempts so to combine what he has into a team that he uses the strong side of each employee and bolsters up the weak side by some readjustment of duties. Such an administrator is less likely to bring in new men near the top. The vacancy means to him the necessity, even the opportunity, for a general readjustment. Although the employee who moves into the high vacancy may leave something to be desired and may not

be as good as his predecessor, there may be compensation down the line, the chance to promote and further develop the promising youngsters who in a few years will be ready for the higher places. Such an administrator appreciates that he must hold his promising youngsters. They are the ones who are often quickest to go if the boss adopts the policy of filling top positions from the outside. Why should they stick around if there is no real chance for advancement? The policy of filling upper positions from the outside creates a vicious circle. When another vacancy occurs, the promising ones have resigned and again it is deemed necessary to go outside.

Some persons even go so far as to advocate law or rules requiring selection from within for filling upper vacancies. Such a rule would not be bad if the organization is large and has for years been following a sound personnel policy and has a staff made up on the whole of the right kind of employees. Some organizations, particularly old ones, may, however, have followed poor policies in the past and be pretty well filled up by employees who lack essential qualifications. In some instances new professions within the general fields of the organization have developed since it was established, and may be scarcely represented on its staff. If the administrator feels obligated to reorient the entire organization, to do so he must introduce new blood at the top, perhaps easing out some of the old-timers to accomplish his reform. Watch the skilful ones and ordinarily you will see two moves: (1) the introduction of a few new leaders in the key positions, made available by the retirement of old employees or their reassignment to new duties, and (2) the introduction, by the customary entrance gate, as rapidly as the administrator can accomplish it, of a group of excellently trained, promising

youngsters. If the administrator can win the cooperation of the budget and appropriating authorities, the influx of new blood at the bottom may be pretty rapid. The young employees one way or another are then given intensive in-service training. Within a few years the administrator rarely goes outside, for he and his new key men make their selections for promotion from the best of the youngsters. It often happens too that some of the older employees under new leadership disclose unexpected qualities and merit promotion. The administrator regards each old employee who thus develops as a god-send, because it hastens the day when he has successfully amalgamated the old and the new and has overcome that hostility of the old group which appears to be an inevitable incident to this type of reorganization. No law or rule should ever prevent an able administrator from performing this surgical operation where it is necessary. Rarely does he do it for the fun of the thing, for easing out old-timers or reassigning them to less important duties is often intensely disagreeable work.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In one recent reorganization the device used was to create some new upper positions to which certain old-timers were transferred, and new men were appointed to the key positions thus made vacant. As the veterans reach the retirement age, which will happen within a few years, duties will be again reassigned and some of the newly created positions will disappear. Persons who do not know the public service may contend that this represents a waste of public funds and that the veterans should have been dismissed or demoted. They were and as a matter of fact still are, good men of their day and age and have rendered years of efficient service. Had they been either dismissed or demoted a storm would have broken which would probably have wrecked the reorganization. Then it may be asked, "Why not postpone the reorganization for a few years until these veterans reached the retirement age?" The answer to that is that the key men in this organization direct the expenditure of large sums. The top salaries constitute only a small percentage of the total costs. The improvements which will result from the changes will far more than compensate for the cost of the extra positions which are not in themselves sinecures. The case is an illustration of readjustment of duties and responsibilities to meet an actual situation.



In the national government there are several relatively small scientific, professional, or technical agencies engaged primarily in fact gathering, investigation, and research. They operate in part on a project basis. Their clientele is often an entire profession. The older part of the Office of Education in the Interior Department is of this type. It serves the educational profession. The Children's Bureau in the Department of Labor is partly of this type. It serves the profession of social work. When such an agency undertakes a project, it is often essential that the persons engaged on the project be such that the results of their efforts will command the respect of the profession and be largely accepted by it as authoritative. That objective can often be attained only by having the project carried on by persons of established reputation in the field. Frequently this requirement necessitates bringing in temporary experts from the outside for the particular project. Any law that required promotion from within, in an office operating on a project basis, might seriously impair the effectiveness of many federal government bureaus.

In discussing promotion from within it seems necessary therefore to consider several closely related factors. Among them are such questions as:

1. To what extent is a particular government agency a monopolistic employer? The national government is virtually a monopolistic employer in its vast postal service, and it is likewise a monopolistic employer in the Army, the Navy, and the numerically small Foreign Service. Numerically the greatest of all public services is that of education but in that field are hundreds if not thousands of more or less competing public employers. State highway departments usually stand near the top of state agencies in number of employees, and in the past

the highway engineers have moved rather freely from state to state. Serious question may be raised as to whether in such numerically great municipal services as the police department, the fire department, and the street cleaning department, the United States would not get better service if it encouraged rather than discouraged competition among municipalities for good men.

2. To what extent is the work professional, scientific, or technical? In a professional, scientific, or technical service, the employee normally looks for his career to his calling rather than to a particular employer. In the numerically great educational service it has been repeatedly recognized that movement from employer to employer is in the interests of both the school systems and the profession. State highway departments have similarly profited from free movement. In the younger, growing profession of social work, free movement is essential.

3. To what extent is knowledge of a highly specialized and intricate business practice and procedure essential? In the income tax division of the Bureau of Internal Revenue as in the examining corps of the Patent Office, knowledge of the practice and procedure is of the essence of the job. In a research and investigative bureau, operating on the project basis, in contrast, the vital knowledge is generally that of a subject matter which is common to professional positions within the general field, and office practice and procedure are of less consequence. Heads of project bureaus often maintain that any rule requiring promotion from within would materially diminish their effectiveness.

4. What is the size of the agency involved? How many employees does it have of a given class, or series of related classes? A numerically great agency like the

postal service with thousands of employees with like experience can adopt a rule of promotion from within far more safely than can a small agency or even a large agency which has only a few employees of a certain specific group. If members of a given profession or calling are distributed in small numbers among many different agencies, the development of a career system necessitates freedom of movement which is counter to the policy of promotion from within.

Variations in these factors prevent one from endorsing without qualification any proposal for general laws requiring selection from within. The most that can be said is that the burden of proof lies in favor of selection from within.

*Transfers.* Filling vacancies above the lowest grade by transferring an employee from another agency of the same government presents somewhat similar problems. Some students of personnel administration believe that all the employees of the government, regardless of the agencies in which they work, should be regarded as constituting a common pool. When a vacancy occurs it should go to the best qualified person in that pool to whom the appointment would represent advancement or promotion. To make the idea effective these students advocate selection for promotion by competitive examination open to all qualified members of the pool. The competitive examinations would be given by the central control agency. Such a system, it is argued, would make maximum utilization of the competitive principle and offer the greatest opportunity for really competent persons to advance rapidly in the service. Administrators should willingly give up, for the good of the service as a whole, their power themselves to select for promotion in their own agency.

This theory is in many respects attractive, but it must be examined from the practical standpoint of efficient administration.

The first difficulty arises in establishing the necessary qualifications for entrance into the competitive tests; and it must be remembered that the tests are being given not for an entrance position but for positions above the entrance grade in a going organization. For many such positions the employee requires knowledge of the business practice and procedure of that organization, familiarity with its organization and the people in it, and acquaintance with its clientele. Often the major difference between the new appointee from the outside and the veteran employee is that the veteran has acquired this knowledge to such a degree that he is because of it extremely valuable. Two illustrations from familiar clerical pursuits may clarify this point.

The basic educational requirements for a filing clerk are generally not above high school and the common methods of filing are not hard to master. What characterizes the good upper filing clerks in an agency—and upon them rests in no small degree the routine efficiency of an office that handles a mass of papers—is their complete mastery of the particular filing system, their familiarity with the papers in the files, their knowledge of the people in the office, and their speed and accuracy. Speed and accuracy are moreover in part the product of knowledge and familiarity. A top file clerk from one agency is not interchangeable with a top file clerk from another. Every newcomer into a filing system has to learn that system and become familiar with the papers in it.

Similarly what often distinguishes the skilled stenographer-secretary from the new entrant is her knowledge

of her boss, the organization, the personnel, the clientele, and the business practice and procedure. Her outstanding qualifications may be her skill in handling people and her ability to take care of the bulk of the routine work of her principal without dictation and often without specific instructions. She may use her stenography so little that she is a bit rusty on it and may not have the speed of some of the new entrants, although she has all the speed that her principal requires. The principal and his secretary have learned to work together and have developed a division of labor that meets the wishes of the principal. He has trained her for his work. If she leaves, he would often prefer to train a new girl without much experience than have passed on to him a girl who has made good as a secretary to another officer in another agency. Neither the new inexperienced girl nor the transferred girl would know the work; they might be equally good as stenographers; but the experienced secretary might want to do things as she did them in the other office and not as her new chief wants them done in his. He would rather have his new secretary ask questions than go ahead and do things her own way, but he is likely to be more patient in answering the questions of the inexperienced girl than in answering the questions of a veteran. He is much more likely to be patient if he himself has had some voice in the selection of a secretary than he will be if his secretary comes to him from another agency as the result of a promotion examination. Not infrequently when his secretary has been on vacation or has been ill or during periods of rush work, he has had other stenographers from his own unit or from "the pool" as secretaries; he has given them some training and he is not at all unlikely to feel that they are better qualified for his work than a girl from another

agency, because they know their own organization and its personnel.

The existence of this need for knowledge of the work of the unit, its business practice and procedure, personnel, and clientele, puts the central personnel agency which would give a competitive promotion examination on the spot. If it requires the possession of this special knowledge for entrance into the competition it practically limits the competition to employees or former employees of the unit where the vacancy exists. Then if the records of the employees are given weight in the tests, as they properly should be, the administrators must be consulted or their records used. In most instances the elaborate procedure will end with the selection of the person the administrator would have chosen in the first instance. Candidates from other agencies are practically eliminated. If, on the other hand, to keep the competition broad and open, the central personnel agency eliminates as one essential qualification all this special knowledge to be gained only through service in the agency, it has to fall back on broad and general tests which may send the administrator an employee less qualified for the actual job than those already in his own office.

In recent years much has appeared in personnel literature on the subject of "in-service training." One should not make the mistake of assuming that the thing itself is as new as the technical name for it. Skilful administrators have for years been practicing in one way or another "in-service training," sometimes without even being conscious that they were doing it. Just instinctively and as a matter of plain common sense they knew that employees had to be broken in and developed. That was an inevitable and inescapable part of their job. Some of them did it extremely well, using most of the techniques, whereas

others did it poorly, using only a single technique. What is new is neither the idea nor in fact many of the techniques, but rather the emphasis and the systemization.

In the old days many administrators, as a matter of practical expediency, used, as is done in the theaters, the understudy system. Just as the play must go on, regardless of the individual actor, so must the work of most government offices go on regardless of the individual employee. Administrators were therefore in the habit of having someone more or less ready to step into the shoes of a key man in his absence. Most key men had at least one subordinate who worked intimately with them and in many instances they turned over to him more and more of the details as he became competent to handle them. The key men had these understudies take their places when they went on vacations or had to be away. Since the key men were held responsible for the work of their office during their absence, they were under obligation to have good understudies. The same situation exists today. Thus often when a vacancy occurs the office has a man already specially trained to step into it, often a man who has already demonstrated during the absence of his chief his ability to handle the work to the general satisfaction of the office.

Many of the older successful administrators knew the necessity for developing executive ability and familiarity with the organization as a whole and its problems. Thus certain promising younger men were given assignments that familiarized them with the whole organization. In executive work they were broken in like colts—tried first with a light load. If they made good the next load was heavier, and so on until the administrator was ready to trust them with large responsibilities. As they demonstrated more and more promise, they began to appear at

staff conferences where they heard the chief administrator and his principal assistants discuss the problems of the office. If a secretary to a committee was needed or if a particular piece of investigation had to be done, they were pretty likely to get the assignment. Thus they got to know all the older key men of the office and the major problems of the several units. Sometimes a key man would ask to have one of them assigned to his unit because he preferred them to his own regular employees.

Today we attempt to have such practices generally followed. We recognize that certain types of in-service training must be given in the particular agency that specializes in a particular field because no other agency does exactly that type of work. Some of us believe that the type of executive ability that calls for management of men and handling the human relations with employees, legislators, and the general public must be developed and demonstrated through experience. If an employee has demonstrated such ability in the particular agency in which a vacancy occurs, he is the logical man for that vacancy.

In so far as in-service training must be pointed to the work of a particular agency, it seems to contradict service-wide promotional tests for vacancies in that agency. If the experience and in-service training gained in that agency are to be ignored in the competitive tests, the training program appears a little absurd; on the other hand if experience and in-service training count, the outsider has little chance, and the interdepartmental competitive tests are an expensive gesture.

The practical procedure appears to be to let the responsible administrator make the nominations for upper positions, leaving him free to select from his own organization, to transfer an employee from another gov-



ernment agency, or to go outside through a competitive test. To protect the service from the administrator who is playing favorites or playing politics, it is entirely possible to provide that the nomination for promotion made by the responsible administrator must be confirmed by the central controlling personnel agency, usually the Civil Service Commission. Under this system an examiner from the Civil Service Commission would examine the records and interview the nominee, the appointing officer, and such other employees as he sees fit. In the vast majority of cases the nomination of the responsible administrator would be confirmed. The fact that confirmation was necessary and that competent investigators would examine the evidence, would in itself tend to check bad selections. Such a system would not tie with red tape the hands of the good administrator, but it would leave open the chance of checking the poor administrator.

*New appointments.* If the administrator must go outside the service for a new employee he is of course governed by the existing law relating to new appointments. He may be absolutely free and untrammled in his choice, he may be restricted by the provisions in the laws relating to his own agency, or he may be under a general merit system law applicable to the entire service. Let us assume that he is operating under a general civil service law and that the appointment must be made through open competitive examination.

### THREE TYPES OF VACANCIES

Vacancies to be filled from civil service registers of eligibles fall into three broad categories.

1. Positions, such as that of stenographer, that are common to practically all agencies of the government

and are so numerous that registers of eligibles must be kept constantly available.

2. Positions, such as that of post office clerk, that are all in one agency but are so numerous that registers of eligibles must be kept constantly available as the result of tests that are regular and standardized.

3. Positions that are small in number and unusual, frequently being found only in a single agency, although occasionally they may be in two or three agencies. For such positions registers are generally established as the result of special examinations given when need arises.

*Positions common to many agencies.* Most administrators appreciate the value of a central personnel agency operating the competitive merit system for recruiting for positions common to many agencies of government. From their standpoint it possesses the following major advantages:

1. It largely relieves them from political pressure for the appointment of particular individuals and for the creation of unnecessary positions to give employment to political henchmen. Such pressure, when coming from officers above them in the hierarchy or from members of the legislature who control appropriations, is extremely difficult to resist, and whether the administrator yields or stands adamant, he must pay the price of his choice.

2. If politics is largely eliminated from initial recruiting it may play only a relatively small part in subsequent administration of the organization. The employee sentiment of the agency is ordinarily against the member of the organization who, after appointment, uses outside political pull for advancement instead of standing on his own feet. The administrator and his staff stand together for merit operation of the office.

3. The office is not subjected to invasion by applicants

for appointment, descending in a swarm at any public announcement of vacancies and coming in one or two a day in ordinary times. A mere statement by the first person the applicant encounters that the office is "civil service" and that applications must be filed with the commission eliminates the few who do not know, with little loss of time and generally no ill feeling. A mimeographed form letter takes care of those who apply by mail. If the office is not under the merit system, applicants must be received and interviewed; letters must be handled individually and filed; worst of all the applicant's "influence" must be taken care of and that is as mean a job as an administrator ordinarily gets.

4. It is generally recognized that civil service tests for the common positions have been so perfected that far better employees can be selected through tests than can be selected without them, even by a good picker. Yet the administrator who is only going to need a few new employees during the course of a year cannot afford to give elaborate competitive tests to hundreds of applicants. He cannot afford to have on his staff a group trained in the techniques of testing. If he is unprotected by civil service, his most practical course is to subject to short standardized tests the most promising of the applicants. If some of them must be admitted to the tests because of their pull, he has to take the onus if he flunks them, and if they pass by the skin of their teeth, he can hardly turn them down in favor of the candidate without pull who passed brilliantly. In exchange for the economy, efficiency, and protection of the competitive merit system, he has only given up the privilege of appointing from time to time a particular person whom he regards as unusually promising or to whom for one reason or another he feels committed, and the chance of making one

political friend and ten political enemies by playing politics in appointments.

*Numerous positions in a single agency.* What has been said regarding the numerous positions common to most departments applies pretty much to the numerous positions in a single agency. In this latter class of positions, however, the administrator has the opportunity to work directly with the civil service commission in improving the tests, if the civil service commission will let him. At times friction may develop for the administrator may be dissatisfied with the quality of the recruits being certified, while the civil service commission for one reason or another resists any proposal for changes in its procedure. Or it may be the other way round; the commission's examiners may be convinced that some new testing device will give better results and the administrator may be against it. Usually the commission has the upper hand legally but the administrator may have it politically.

*Distinctive positions peculiar to certain agencies.* In the federal civil service and in some of the state civil services, the major difficulties between the administrators and the central control agency arise over special examinations for positions that are peculiar to a particular agency or occur only in a very small number of agencies. Such positions are generally technical, scientific, or professional. The administrator or some of his subordinate officers are themselves specialists in the science or profession and they have very definite ideas as to what they want and the standards they wish applied. They are generally familiar with the schools where the workers are educated and the agencies in which valuable experience may be attained. They often know well the teachers and workers in the field and often the particular individual whom they want to get into the service. The

civil service examiners on the other hand are ordinarily at best good all-round men in a very broad field. They are not specialists in any one rather narrow field. Sometimes they know very little at first hand regarding the nature of the positions to be filled and the qualifications required. They do not know the educational institutions, the agencies where experience may be attained, nor the workers in the field. They are instinctively skeptical of high standards in a field they do not know, because they are inclined to suspect that the whole argument is part of a neat little scheme to get certain individuals over the civil service barriers by the simple device of keeping other competitors out.<sup>8</sup>

Civil service and the merit system were, of course, designed to prevent political administrators from making partisan appointments; and hence the advocates of civil service reform and some of the good examiners of the commissions adopted as a canon of good civil service administration that no administrative officer should actively participate in the examining process. When administrators were generally partisan politicians the canon was well justified by the facts; but in many instances the facts have changed. Today at the head of many agencies both of the national and of the state governments are administrators who are as strong for the merit system and the prevention of any political appointments as the best civil service commissions, and in addition they are better qualified in their special fields than are the civil service examiners although not so well qualified perhaps in the techniques of civil service examining.

True, the leaders in the scientific, technical, and professional agencies may often seek the appointment of a

<sup>8</sup> Was it Bernard Shaw who said, "When we are not up on a subject, we are usually down on it"?

particular individual, but generally they do it not because they want him to have a job on the public payroll, but because of his rank and standing in the profession or his potentialities. They know his record and his achievements and believe he is the best man in the country for the job. Some civil service examiners take the view that the efforts of the operating officers to get the desired man are nothing short of immoral. Others take the view that the administrators are entitled to get the desired man unless the civil service commission through its wide advertising and other efforts to tap sources of supply can turn up a better man. Under the federal practice the administrator can get his man unless three others outrank him on the register, but unfortunately some of them may outrank him because of veterans' preference or the state apportionment provision of the national law. These broader-minded federal examiners will not let the administrator unfairly narrow the competition by requiring that all candidates shall precisely match the qualifications of the desired one but they will provide that all candidates must possess his essential qualifications, so that, barring veterans' preference and the apportionment, all candidates certified will be practically as good as or better than the person whom the administrator would select if he had free choice.

Since few civil service commissions are equipped independently to devise and give examinations in highly specialized technical and professional fields, three courses are open to them: (1) they may blunder through, doing the best they can with their own staff; (2) if they have available funds, they may retain well-equipped special examiners for the particular tests, drawing them from outside the government the commission serves; or (3) they may permit qualified specialists from

the operating agencies to participate in drafting the tests and in grading the papers. In this connection it should be pointed out that few civil service commissions have sufficient funds to do a thorough job on the highly specialized examinations, for appropriating bodies generally fail to see the extreme importance of initial selection. The successful candidates will at once go on the payroll, drawing the salaries of professional and technical workers; they may continue in the service for the rest of their working lives; and they may influence, control, or direct expenditures far in excess of the salaries of themselves and their assistants, as is the case with engineers on construction projects or social workers administering relief or institutional care. Despite these facts the civil service commissions frequently must hold their expenditures, per candidate examined, down to a few dollars. The result necessarily is that the work must be done rapidly, and, in many instances, superficially.<sup>4</sup>

So long as funds appropriated for civil service commissions remain so limited, the common sense course appears to be to call on the specialists from the operating

<sup>4</sup> Recently at a public meeting an administrator from a welfare agency criticised a civil service commission for certifying for appointment in the welfare agency persons who were not especially qualified for the work of that agency. The commission in question had been for years short of funds. It did not have the money to give a special examination for the welfare agency to get candidates possessed of the precise qualifications required for the work. It did what a department store might do under like circumstances: it attempted to sell the welfare administrator what the commission already had on hand on other registers. In other words, it tried to substitute. It tried to substitute entire registers that might possibly do and then it combed certain other registers to find on them persons who might do. Naturally the welfare administrator, knowing that hundreds of qualified persons of the type required were available, was disgusted at the eligibles submitted and was critical of civil service. If free from political pressure, the administrator could have done a far better job without the commission. Given adequate appropriations the commission itself could have done an excellent job.

agencies for assistance both in designing and grading technical, professional, and scientific tests. Rendering such assistance for positions in their own agencies is properly part of their work for their agency and generally their time is charged to their own appropriation. The responsible administrator of an agency employing scientific, professional, or technical specialists generally appreciates the necessity for thorough work in the initial testing, for it means so much to the success of his agency. He often deems it not only expedient but necessary to spend more money for his appropriations than the commission can afford to spend.

For technical, scientific, and professional positions, it is generally necessary to require certain minima in respect to education and experience for entrance into the examination and actually to grade education and experience as part of the competition. For the lower ordinary entrance positions the candidates may be assembled for certain written tests. If the commission is largely testing knowledge in these written tests, it may use the short answer form which can be graded by use of a schedule showing the correct answers. If it is testing not only for knowledge, but also for skill in the organization and presentation of material and for familiarity with methods and their application, it may have to use the essay type of questions or the involved problem type. For the higher posts the entire test may be non-assembled and be based on education, experience, and professional, scientific, or technical publications or work of the candidate. Oral examinations may be given to the successful candidates.

The drafting of short answer questions in a professional, scientific, or technical field calls for real knowledge of that field, although after the questions and the



schedule of correct answers have been prepared almost anyone can grade the papers. The essay type of questions and the problem type require a high degree of professional competence not only in devising the questions but also in grading them.

Grading education, experience, and publications also requires special knowledge if a really thorough job is to be done. Probably no country in the world has a more diverse system of higher education than that which prevails in the United States and it is particularly diverse in the professional, scientific, and technical fields. The graders need to know the courses offered by the various schools and preferably a good deal about the teachers who give them. Courses in two different institutions may have almost identical names but one may be given by the leading teacher in the field whereas the other is given by a man so overburdened with teaching assignments that in this particular subject he is little more than a fair referee between the student and the textbook. The star pupil of the great authority is entitled to a higher grade than is the student who got just enough out of the textbook to pass the course.

Unfortunately civil service commissions are often so hard pressed for money and hence for time that they grade education without getting from the educational institutions a transcript of the candidate's academic record. The candidate may not even be asked to give his course grades in his application; and he might well be excused if he could not remember them all. In an extreme case a candidate may honestly state that he took a given course necessary for entrance into the competition, say statistics, but he may not feel called upon to disclose that, as a matter of fact, he flunked it. His competitor for entrance into the civil service may have passed

that same course with an A. Both may have A.B. or B.S. degrees from the same institution. One graduated near the head of his class, the other near the foot. To save time and money the civil service commission may give them both the same grade on education, despite the well-established fact that the graduates from the upper section of the class have much the better chance of success, especially in scientific, technical, or professional positions. The specialists from the operating agencies have in some instances rebelled against the decision of a commission not to get academic records. In one instance a commission gave in when the representative of the operating department said that if the commission did not get transcripts, the operating agency would do so and would reject for cause any eligible certified by the commission who did not have a good general academic record and really good grades in the special field.

Really selective grading of experience calls for real work by specialists who know the field. Unless experience is well graded, the results may be more misleading than helpful. The dangerous element in the situation is that experience has one factor that is easily and accurately measured, namely, its length or duration; yet length of experience apart from its quality and the success of the applicant during that experience means absolutely nothing.

Two types of long experience are red flags to a professional, scientific, or technical office that is doing its own recruiting. The first is long experience in an entrance position in a single agency, and the second is a long aggregate, made up of shorter periods in the entrance positions of many different agencies. For some reason the candidate has not advanced. That may be the fault of the candidate or it may just have been the candi-

date's hard luck. It is incumbent on those who use rating of experience for determining the ranking of candidates to find out the facts. If the fact that the candidate did not progress was due to lack of ability, then the long experience is an accurate danger signal to the recruiting agency.

If the long service without advancement was due primarily to the candidate's hard luck and does not reflect lack of qualifications, the raters are up against this question: Is the longer experience worth one bit more than a shorter experience of similar quality? In many positions there is a learning period, shorter for the very able, longer for the slow but still having fairly definite limits. Within this period the employee learns the work, if he is ever going to learn it, and demonstrates his capacity for it. After this period has passed, the subsequent performance of the duties becomes more or less routine and the employee does not get much development out of the work unless promotion to higher duties or responsibilities follows. Is experience beyond the longer limit of the learning period worth anything at all in the development of a candidate? Some observation suggests that the answer is "no." If a central recruiting agency assumes that the answer is "yes" it may establish a register which brings to the top the fair to mediocre with long service and leaves the more brilliant promising youngsters toward the bottom. The administrator might well prefer to have the register reversed.

Long experience, to count, must be both successful and progressive. Successful means that the candidate must have demonstrated his own personal qualifications for the work; progressive that he has advanced with reasonable rapidity through a series of positions each involving more difficult duties and greater responsibilities. The

two requirements of "successful" and "progressive" are of course interrelated and the evidence to support them is often the same. It takes knowledge and skill to get the evidence and to evaluate it. Unless one knows the field fairly intimately it is difficult to distinguish the factors that mean success and progress. Advance in pay rates or earnings may show a good deal in private business enterprise, but absence of rapid advance in pay is not so significant in the public service, in educational institutions, or in quasi-public philanthropic institutions. In dealing with candidates from such agencies—and they are the ones from which recruits are often drawn—there appears to be no substitute for knowledge and skill in the field on the part of the examiners.

The requirements for experience established by civil service commissions generally specify, very properly, that the experience must have been "in an agency or agencies of recognized standing" or other words to that effect.<sup>5</sup> What constitutes an agency of recognized standing? The directing personnel must be professionally and scientifically competent, the work standards must be reasonably high and ethical, the equipment must be satisfactory, and high standards must be maintained for en-

<sup>5</sup>To qualify for entrance into an examination for special agent or field investigator in the United States Children's Bureau a candidate swore that for seven years she had been head resident of a certain settlement house. As the name of that settlement house had no familiar ring to the examiners, the members of the staff of the Children's Bureau were consulted. None of them had ever heard of it. The chief of the Bureau wrote to a competent investigator in the city where the so-called settlement house was located. "Settlement House" proved to be a rather respectable name for an ordinary boarding house located in a poor, low-rent neighborhood. It did no neighborhood work whatsoever. The head resident was just a landlady who took no special interest in her boarders. These facts were entirely consistent with the record of education and prior experience of the candidate. The candidate could not qualify although she could have qualified had she been for seven years head resident of a real settlement house doing effective work.

trance into the agency. Unless an agency fulfils all these requirements, it is dangerous for a civil service commission to permit experience in it to count. True, occasionally through necessity or through lack of good advice, a really competent youngster finds his way into a sub-standard agency and turns to the civil service examinations as an avenue of escape. In the individual case it may seem unfair to bar him and not permit his experience to count. But if experience in such an agency is permitted to count for him, it must in fairness be permitted to count for others, and thus the bars are down for persons who were below standard at entrance, who have not been "in-service trained" under competent direction, and who may have acquired "sloppy" work standards. Experience in such an agency is in no sense comparable with experience in the outstanding agencies in the field. This statement is true of educational institutions, research agencies, hospitals, scientific laboratories, social welfare agencies, and many others.

In grading experience it follows therefore that the examiners must know the agencies in the field and be able at least to divide them into the acceptable and the unacceptable. It would seem that they should go further than that and give a higher rating to candidates who have made a fine record in an outstanding agency under leaders in the profession than to one who has made a fine record in an agency which is itself just passable and whose directing personnel is not at all distinguished. Both candidates should of course pass and receive credit for their fine record, but it would seem that the one who made his record in an outstanding agency should be given a higher grade. To grade the institutions obviously requires specialized knowledge of the field.

Grading publications and other evidence of the candi-

dates' professional and scientific competence likewise requires specialized knowledge of the field, especially of the literature in that field. The examiners should be able to distinguish between an excellent job of compiling information from secondary sources and an excellent job that shows original thought and research and reflects creative ability. Particularly should they be able to detect unacknowledged borrowing from other workers. Some candidates are unquestionably entitled to a passing mark even if their writings are in the main quotations from authorities, rearranged to make a valuable compilation; but the candidate who forgets to make any acknowledgments for borrowed thoughts and language ought to be disqualified.<sup>6</sup> Examiners who have only a general familiarity with a subject can scarcely be expected to do more than very roughly evaluate the past publications and other work of a candidate.

Practical civil service people will generally admit the theoretical validity of much that the professional, scientific, and technical administrators or specialists say ought to be done in thorough grading in their fields, but they contend that the commissions cannot afford to spend the time and effort. It is true that since the onset of the great depression, civil service commissions have been swamped

- <sup>6</sup> A story is current in Washington that is in point. A Civil Service Commission examiner had already read the publications and theses submitted by the candidates and was going over other parts of the test while a representative of a scientific bureau of the Department of Agriculture, himself the author of several authoritative reports in the field, worked at the other end of the table on the publications and theses already read by the Commission's man. Suddenly the silence was broken by an exclamation of "Great Scott" from the Agriculture man. The Commission examiner asked "What's the matter?" "This thesis here," said the specialist, and he read its title. The Commission examiner said, "Yes, it is by all odds the best of the lot." The Department of Agriculture man bowed and said, "Thanks for the compliment. I wrote it and this — cribbed it."

by the number of candidates. Thousands of candidates have to be examined, hundreds get on registers, and only a few are appointed. Just recently the writer listened with great interest to a candidate who had taken and passed several different national civil service examinations without getting any appointment despite the fact that his rating was generally good. He must represent a veritable army who have taken the examinations as they came along and therefore his views are of interest.

This particular visitor suggests that:

1. Commissions should always include in their announcement such data as may be available as to the number of appointments likely to be made from a register. He thinks that many who now enter the competition would not do so if they knew how small the number of appointments would be and that those who can barely qualify would be the ones who would be discouraged. He would not object to a statement that the resulting register might be used by other agencies, thereby increasing the number of appointments above the estimated number.

2. The commissions should invariably place the requirements for entrance into the formal tests at the highest practicable point, so that as many of the lower group of applicants as possible could be excluded on the basis of the data on their application forms and not waste their time in taking formal tests and the commission's time in grading the tests when as a matter of fact the candidate has no real chance of appointment.

3. The announcements should clearly state that all candidates to be eligible to a place on the register must make a passing grade of at least 70 or 75 as the case may be but that the number of names placed on the register

as eligible for appointment will not exceed a specified number, arrived at by multiplying the prospective appointments by a suitable factor such as ten or twenty in the case of examinations for a single appointment and tapering down to three or four for the numerous entrance positions. Thus the commissions would arrange those who made the necessary passing grades in the order of their grades and put on the eligible register only those who fell within the charmed number, counting down from the top. Thus the chances of getting on a register would be materially decreased whereas the chances of appointment if one were successful in getting on a register would be materially increased. He believes that this device again would be fairer to prospective candidates and would hold down the number of applicants.

The interesting point is that these suggestions come not from administrators who prefer short registers of highly competent persons to long registers which are pretty unsatisfactory toward their lower limits, but from a candidate who has been doing a good deal of thinking especially since he has learned that he is one of several thousand in a recent competition.

When applications come in by the hundreds and even thousands, the practical course seems to be to put the entrance requirements at the highest possible point and then to arrange the tests in a series whereby those that are easiest to grade rapidly and cheaply are graded first. Those candidates who do not make a passing grade in the test graded first are thus eliminated entirely. The same process is used on the second test and so on. The test hardest to grade would be graded last and only the candidates who had passed all the preceding tests would be considered. Conceivably the tests might be given at different times—a qualifying test in a form easily graded



and later a final for those who did excellent work in the qualifying round.

Some politicians and groups of citizens have opposed the establishment of high requirements for entrance into the competitive tests, especially high educational requirements. At times, therefore, civil service commissions have placed the requirements very low, for example admitting high school graduates with some experience to tests for positions for which college training with specialization in a particular field is highly desirable if not absolutely necessary. They have done this despite the fact that the labor market has been such that candidates with the desirable university education and successful practical experience are so numerous as to be almost embarrassing. Unless, in a competitive examination to determine qualifications for the job, desirable education above a low minimum is given no weight at all, the candidates with no education above the minimum come out near the bottom in the rating of education. Most of them are at a distinct disadvantage in written tests of knowledge and ability to handle the mental tools of the job. They may have had longer experience in practical work than their university trained competitors, but often part of this experience has been in routine entrance positions that cannot count very much. An occasional exceptional person without university training may do so well that he secures a high enough position on the register to be within reach for appointment, but the bulk of such candidates are low on the register and have no chance for appointment unless such factors as veterans' preference, residence requirements, or political influence come to their aid. Administrators who are trying to develop a strong staff naturally are opposed to these factors that work counter to a sound employment system. The

result of the use of this practice is that hundreds of candidates may spend time and effort in taking examinations and that the civil service commissions have so much work to do that they must often do it superficially only to place on eligible registers hundreds who will never get a job as the result of all the effort.

From the standpoint of responsible administrators the job of a civil service commission is to recruit for them first class employees, the best the market affords. The competitive test is a device to achieve this end; it is not an object in itself. From their point of view a thoroughgoing, searching test of a limited number of the best qualified candidates is far more productive of good results than a hurried superficial test of hundreds of applicants, many of whom they would give no consideration whatsoever. When administrators are doing their own recruiting they are likely to reject very promptly all but the few that appear to be the very best and then devote a good deal of time to the careful investigation of them. As a matter of fact such a procedure honestly and efficiently carried out is a competitive merit system. If all possessed of the requisite qualifications are permitted to apply, the competition is open, even if only the best of those who apply are put through the final competitive tests.

This recital of the cost and difficulties of giving competitive civil service examinations for highly specialized technical, professional, or scientific positions, especially when they necessitate the grading of education and experience, supports the point previously made that whenever possible higher positions should be filled by promotion from within the organization and that recruits should be brought in at the lowest professional, scientific, or technical grade. In competitive tests for the

lowest grade, maximum weight may be given to comprehensive written examinations that test the knowledge of the candidate in the broad background of his calling. The necessary specialization he may generally secure within the service itself. Recruiting from outside the service for upper positions is not a simple matter and should come only as a last resort.

## CHAPTER III

### CIVIL SERVICE TESTS

Administrators in a merit system jurisdiction do not as a rule themselves devise and give civil service tests nor do their personnel officers. The devising and giving of tests is ordinarily the function of the central controlling personnel agency. The administrator in a civil service jurisdiction, if he is to cooperate intelligently with the central control agency, does, however, require some familiarity with the types of tests and methods used by that agency. An attempt will therefore be made briefly to outline the broad aspects of test making and giving.

*Performance tests.* The administrator wants a person capable of doing a particular piece of work that requires a particular skill or combination of skills. He wants, for example, a stenographer who can take dictation of reasonable difficulty at a rate of eighty words a minute and transcribe it accurately and rapidly on the typewriter. He wants a cabinet maker who can make shelves, cabinets, and stands, and keep the furniture and special equipment of the office in condition. He will be entirely satisfied if the person sent him is of good character, free from serious personality defects, and possessed to a marked degree of the skills required in his work. In some cases it is entirely practicable for the central personnel agency in the course of its examinations actually to test the candidate's ability to do practically the precise things he or she will have to do on the job. The candidate for the position of stenographer can in the examination room be given dictation of reasonable difficulty at the rate of eighty words per minute and be required to

transcribe her notes, and her work can be measured and evaluated accurately and with a high degree of objectivity. Under certain circumstances cabinet makers can be put into a shop equipped with the proper tools and required to make and finish, from blue prints and specifications, an article which calls for the exercise and display of all the major required skills. The several candidates may be graded on the basis of their product and the time required to complete it. Here we have one of the most convincing of all tests, "the actual performance test."

Obviously it is not always practical to bring the machines and equipment necessary for a test into the examination room nor to send perhaps hundreds of candidates into the shops or the laboratories to demonstrate their skills. Hence some other devices have to be used either as a substitute for an actual performance test or to reduce very materially the number who are ultimately given the shop or laboratory test. The shop or laboratory test may actually be deferred to the probationary period when the candidate is given say six months to demonstrate that he actually possesses the requisite skills. The probationary period is properly a part of the examination and should be so regarded and administered.<sup>1</sup>

Establishing the fact that a candidate has had successful practical experience is one of the oldest devices for determining the possession of the requisite skills. The fact that a man has worked for several years as a journeyman plumber for a plumbing contractor, has received union wages, and carries a union card is pretty

<sup>1</sup> To make the probationary test a definite part of the tests, the law or the rules may well require that no probationary appointment shall become permanent unless the appointing officer positively certifies that the probationer has demonstrated on the job the possession of the requisite qualifications for the efficient performance of the duties of the position.

good evidence that he has the requisite skills. Interviews with his former employers or letters from them may indicate how good a plumber he is. This evidence in combination with other factors may warrant grading. The best candidate may then be sent into the job to demonstrate his skill while on a probationary appointment.

In the World War it was discovered that not every man who called himself an automobile mechanic and who had worked in factories or garages was in fact an automobile mechanic of the type required. His job in the automobile factory may have been merely to tighten bolt number 99 as the car passed him on the assembly line, like Charlie Chaplin in "City Lights." To overcome the resulting difficulties and to separate the real automobile mechanics from the pseudo-automobile mechanics the Army and the Federal Board for Vocational Education developed trade tests. Often these tests consisted of pictures of tools and processes in the several trades and the candidates were required to name the tools or describe the processes and explain the objectives. Specific questions bearing on the work were included. Great care was exercised to test the candidate's knowledge of his calling and not his literary ability. These tests furnished a basis for grading and for sending the best for trials on the job.

*Aptitude tests.* At times the government requires persons for a job that does not exist outside its own service or for which the supply of skilled experienced workers is entirely inadequate. The government must therefore recruit workers and train them on the job. It wants persons possessed of those qualities which will make them learn quickly to be proficient operators. Here the skilled examiners are called upon to utilize or develop tests

to be given in the examination room that will test the employee's aptitude for acquiring this skill. The job requires, for example, close coordination between hand and eye. The testers have several neat devices for measuring that coordination. Perhaps ability to memorize quickly is involved and the testers can make the candidates do things which will measure the degree to which they possess this ability. If the testers are skilful, they will develop, or redesign, these aptitude tests so that they seem to be directly related to the work of the job and do not seem like funny little childish games or puzzles. But even the little childish games or puzzles may accurately reflect the degree to which the candidate possesses the required ability. To dump before a candidate a whole box full of brightly colored bits of yarn of widely different colors and tell him to sort them may seem to most of them kindergarten play. But it is not kindergarten play in its objective, for it eliminates the color blind, and may be used when instant ability to distinguish red from green is essential on the job.

*Intelligence tests.* During the World War tests for general intelligence or native ability as distinguished from acquired knowledge or skill were taken from the psychological laboratory and a few progressive agencies, and applied widely to the men drafted for the Army. Such tests have a real place in civil testing, particularly as eliminators and as indicators of good material for training. Here again the examiners have to be skilled adapters. A perfectly good general intelligence test may seem to the candidates, to the legislators, and to the press puerile nonsense, despite statistical demonstration that the puerile nonsense does the job of getting persons who make good in the service. The skilful examiner appreciates that the principle of the test is sound and that the

criticism results from the media used in giving it. He accordingly preserves the principle and develops media that bear fairly directly on the work in hand.

*Achievement tests.* An old form of test is that which measures the candidate's achievements. Thus in England the candidates for the administrative class are examined in the subjects they studied at their universities. They are measured on the basis of what they have achieved with their native ability plus their education. Some of our own earlier civil service tests were of this general type. They were sometimes called academic or scholastic tests, but they were measuring what the candidate had achieved with his native ability plus his education. Unquestionably time after time such tests eliminated the inferior and advanced the superior. It is true however that some of the academic achievement tests given seem to the candidates, the legislators, and the press extremely remote from the job for which the employee is being examined.<sup>2</sup> Marked proficiency in ancient Greek for example undoubtedly does reflect in some respects a superior mind. If a candidate at the university has devoted himself to ancient Greek, much is to be said in favor of letting him demonstrate the fact that he has a superior mind by showing his achievement in that field. He cannot display his superior achievements except in fields to which he has devoted his mind.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> An old scholastic civil service test asked the competitors the distance from the earth to the sun. A candidate answered: "Not so far that I can't see to do the work if I get the job."

<sup>3</sup> A newspaper reporter once remarked that to him most men were bores when they were talking in the fields in which they had concentrated. They were just parroting what they had learned from books or from their own experience. "Now," he exclaimed, "if you want to learn the real qualities of a man's mind you will interview him on a subject about which he knows little or nothing. Then you will get at the true quality of his mind." Perhaps the reporter was in a rough way making the distinction between native intelligence and achievement.



If, however, the duties of the positions require achievement in a particular field of learning, it is possible to kill two birds with one stone: (1) to get superior minds that have demonstrated their superiority in the particular field required and (2) to secure employees who have already a broad foundation in that field. Hence in the United States with its great diversity in higher education, achievement tests are often given in the particular fields of concentration required for the work. This procedure has four great advantages: (1) the candidates, the press, the legislators, and the public deem these tests practical, because the relationship between the duties of the position and the tests is obvious; (2) the competition is narrowed to those who have devoted themselves to the particular fields; (3) the problem of attempting to examine in unrelated subjects and to weight unrelated subjects is eliminated; and (4) the candidates secured already have the basic foundation required for the work in hand. Experience suggests that minds may be superior in different fields. The literary genius may be weak in arithmetic; the brilliant engineer or chemist may be weak in literary accomplishments; the eminent lawyer may lack aptitude for the natural sciences. The American practice seeks to secure the mind that has demonstrated its superiority or its prospective superiority in the field in which it is to be engaged in the public service.

Achievements may be tested either through written examinations of one kind or another or through an evaluation of the candidate's education, experience, and accomplishments to date, or through a combination of the two.

*The distinction between knowledge and skill.* At this point a distinction should be drawn between knowledge

and skill. The successful scientific, technical, and professional workers generally have both knowledge and skill, but it is possible for a person to have knowledge in his field and yet lack the skill effectively to apply that knowledge. In some cases it is possible for a person to have considerable skill but little knowledge. For example, the art of influencing persons through the spoken word is a skill that may have a real place in the public service, even in the administrative branches of it, yet one occasionally encounters a person who has no little skill as an orator but lacks solid substantial knowledge. In the field of social service case work the practitioner must not only have the knowledge that will permit of determining the relevant facts in the case and of working out a sound program but also the skill in human relationships that will permit of securing the necessary facts and of enlisting the cooperation of the persons involved in carrying out the program based on the study of the facts. Occasionally one encounters persons possessed of the requisite knowledge of social case work who lack the essential skills and on the other hand persons possessing to a high degree the requisite skills but almost totally devoid of the requisite knowledge, so that their power to deal with and influence people may be entirely misdirected.

- Possession of requisite knowledge can, as a rule, be determined through tests given in the examination room. In some cases the possession of skill can be similarly demonstrated, particularly where the skill is in organizing and presenting written material. Certain skills can be demonstrated with apparatus that may be brought into the examination room or candidates may be placed in a laboratory to demonstrate their skills. Some skills such as those required in human relationships cannot

be accurately determined by written tests or in any ordinary laboratory. A candidate may be able to answer perfectly every question asking what he would do in a given human situation and yet placed in that actual situation prove incompetent to do any of those things, perhaps because of an inability to analyze the situation and recognize its elements, which are already outlined for him in the written tests, or perhaps because of something in his make-up that prevents him from getting the response from others that a really skilful person would get. Thus examiners have to be constantly on their guard when skills are involved.

*The battery of tests.* The examiners are not dependent on any one form of examination. Different forms may be combined into what is called a battery of tests. As in a track meet, the competitors may be required to compete in a number of different events and their final score may be the total number of points they make in all events. Different events may have different weights in arriving at the final score. In some cases failure in any one event may disqualify the competitor from further participation.

*The scientific development of tests.* Prior to the World War the designing of tests and batteries of tests was largely a matter of judgment and experience. In recent years a much more scientific procedure has been introduced. The research organizations engaged in the development of tests, after studying the work of the positions for which tests are to be given, develop a tentative series of tests in the light of their knowledge and past experience. Then they give these tests to a group of employees already in the service whose efficiency in performing the required duties is reasonably well known and measured. A test is good when the

marks made in it tend to arrange the employees of known efficiency in the order of their efficiency, or in other words when there is a high degree of correlation between the grades on the test and the efficiency ratings of the employee. A test which is so easy that all the employees pass it with a high rating is obviously of not much value, because it does not discriminate between the excellent and the mediocre. A test that is so hard that not even the excellent employees can pass it is obviously a waste of time and effort, if the present excellent employees meet all the requirements of the service. Its introduction is only warranted when the administrators believe that even their best employees are deficient in certain qualities and they want to bring in new employees with these higher qualifications. By the use of these newer scientific methods the competent research workers in the field can develop not only better but shorter tests.

With the data in hand the research workers can also experiment with the development of the best combination of tests for the battery. Persons who wear glasses prescribed by an oculist or an optician recall that the eye examiner puts certain lenses in the test frames that give pretty good results. Then successively he tries certain other lenses in front of the basic ones asking in each case, "Is this better or worse?" He may rotate the lenses asking the same question. Finally he gets the combination that gives the best results. Research men in developing tests have a somewhat similar procedure. In some cases the addition of a certain test to the best basic ones makes no practical difference: the results with it are no better than the results without it. That does not necessarily prove that the additional test, in and of itself, is

of no value but merely perhaps that it is measuring the same quality that the other test has already measured. It would be a sheer waste of time and effort to add that test to the battery. Other tests may make a distinct improvement in getting a higher correlation between the results of the test and the actual efficiency of the employees. Thus the research workers can tell whether the introduction of an intelligence test or some one of the tricky looking special aptitude tests does or does not improve the selectivity of the tests. Perhaps the intelligence test or the special aptitude test will prove the best basic test. Obviously such procedures cost money but they lay the foundation for advance.

Fortunately, after the basic principles of a test have been established variants in form may be introduced. For example, stenographers must spell correctly. Research workers can make up a list of say fifty words that will effectively arrange candidates in the approximate order of their practical spelling ability. If a civil service commission regularly and habitually used this list of fifty words it would not be long before all the schools that cram candidates for examinations would have that list and drill students on it until they were perfect. Then the examination would be useless. The research unit therefore develops a progressive series of groups of words so that the words in each group are of equal difficulty. When spelling ability must be tested, it selects the words to be used from each of the several groups. If any candidate could spell all the words in every group, that candidate would be a good speller.

In designing a battery of tests, moreover, it is possible to weave the spelling test into the other tests in such a way that there is no longer a distinctive spell-

ing test any more than there is a distinctive intelligence test. The test becomes a composite that does the job effectively.<sup>4</sup>

*The short answer form.* In modern testing wide use has been made of the so-called "short answer tests." In one form a series of statements is made and after each statement the candidate has to indicate, by placing a check mark in the appropriate column, whether the statement is true or false, hence the name "true-false." In another form, after the question there are a number of possible answers, one right and all the rest wrong. The candidate is asked to underscore or check the answer which he regards as correct. In other words, the candidate has "multiple choice," the name of that type of test. "Completion tests" are a third common form. In them certain sentences are written with blanks in the place of key words. The candidate is required to insert the proper key word in each blank. Spelling may be tested by giving the candidates printed text in which certain words are misspelled and requiring the candidates to underscore or list the misspelled words. Arithmetical ability may be tested by a series of short problems arranged in the order of difficulty with the easiest at the top and the hardest at the bottom. The candidate writes the answer to each short question in the column at the right. To keep the competition fair, the time allowed for the test is strictly limited. Ability to complete the test within the time allowed is one of the qualities being tested. In some instances the amount done correctly within the allotted time is a major factor.

These short answer tests have certain marked advantages.

<sup>4</sup>The Research Division of the United States Civil Service Commission, under the direction of Dr. L. J. O'Rourke, has done some outstanding work of this type.

Since the candidate can indicate the answer with a check mark, a line, a word, or a few figures it is possible within a reasonable time to cover a wide area fully. There is less chance that a candidate will be lucky in having the examiner ask just the question to which he knows the answer or unlucky by the exact reverse. The short form permits the test to be comprehensive.

Since the correct answer is so simple and definite, a scale of correct answers can be drawn up and applied by almost any one. The simple answer is either right or wrong. Thus the judgment of the rater does not come into the picture. The rating is entirely objective.

The whole process of rating is so simple that it can be done relatively quickly even by one person. Since grading is uniform and standardized, the work of grading can be distributed among many employees, almost regardless of their knowledge of the subject being graded. All they have to do is to apply the scale of correct answers with which they are supplied.

For classes of positions that require little literary ability beyond capacity to read and write, this form eliminates the factor of capacity to organize thoughts into words that is involved in forming answers to ordinary questions. Wide use too may be made of pictures and drawings further to eliminate the factor of literary ability, for tests where that quality is not required.

Because of the entire objectivity of the tests and their simplicity they yield readily to statistical treatment in research to perfect the tests.

Short answer tests are not, however, without their defects or limitations.

Naturally some candidates in such tests will guess at the answers when they do not know them. In some instances it may be a pure guess, and in the case of a single true-false question the candidate has a fifty-fifty

chance of guessing right. This difficulty is overcome by attaching extra weight to wrong answers so that a candidate has practically no chance of making a good grade on pure guessing on any number of questions; and a short answer test has a great many items.

There is, however, the informed or intelligent guess which approaches real knowledge.<sup>5</sup> A person who has once studied a subject or read about it might find it impossible to call to mind the correct answer to an ordinary question, but faced with true-false or multiple choice questions his memory is sufficiently refreshed so that he can give the correct answer. To a lesser degree perhaps completion questions jog the fading memory and enable the really intelligent guesser to do passably well. The tests may therefore not discriminate sufficiently between the excellently informed and the able and intelligent person whose mind is refreshed by the questions.

Real skill is required in devising the short answer questions. One answer and only one should be correct. In multiple choice questions care must be taken not to

<sup>5</sup> One of the writer's colleagues questioned the term "an intelligent or informed guess." That brought to mind a performance of the late W. J. Spillman of the Department of Agriculture. In his early days he had had little experience with beef cattle. At one time, with two experts on beef cattle, he was examining a particularly fine steer when the proposal was made that they guess its weight. Dr. Spillman, being the novice, was to guess first. He did not have in mind any data on the weight of steers, but he took his time, walking round the steer apparently examining all its points minutely but actually using his marked ability in mental arithmetic to figure its cubic content. Arriving at an estimate of its cubic content, he multiplied that figure by the weight of water, and announced his guess of the steer's weight. The two experts then promptly announced their guesses, which were so close to Dr. Spillman's that all his fear of displaying his ignorance evaporated. When the contest was finally settled by actually weighing the steer, Dr. Spillman was the winner. Such a performance would, it would seem, deserve the term "an intelligent or informed guess." Possibly a man who can make such a guess is really abler than the man who has the data in mind.



have a second choice that under certain circumstances may be correct,<sup>6</sup> and likewise not to have the other choices so palpably absurd that the intelligent guesser finds little difficulty in arriving at a correct answer by quick elimination. Advanced students at times are troubled by true-false questions, because they know of exceptions to the elementary rule stated in the question. The advanced student may know that generally speaking the statement is true but under certain circumstances it is not, or vice versa. It irritates him to have to mark the answer on the basis of what he knows the examiner had in mind and he feels that the test is not getting at real knowledge of the field. Obviously questions on which experts differ are ruled out because it is impossible to say which group is right. To the person well up in his field, these frontier or controversial questions may be the most interesting and they may be the ones that distinguish the most competent from the general run.

In some instances short answer questions test knowledge over a wide field but they do not test skill, even the kinds of skill that may be demonstrated on paper in the examination room. Thus the ability to organize one's knowledge and thought and to present that knowledge and thought clearly and briefly is not tested through short answers and yet that ability may be the one really required to do the job. In certain positions the employee actually on the job has immediate access to the leading standard texts and reference books in his field and does

<sup>6</sup> In some instances certain questions given on short answer tests have to be eliminated from the scoring because it is discovered in grading that the preferred answer is not the only one supported by authority and that one of the others is also correct. Under such circumstances the question has either to be eliminated or else either of the two possible answers scored as correct.

not have to depend on his memory; he might, as a matter of fact, be subject to serious criticism if he depended on his memory and did not verify his facts, his figures, or his law at their source. His real value to the office depends not on his ability to carry facts in his mind, but first on his knowledge of primary sources and then on his ability to organize and present material. Care has to be exercised to see that the tests do not relate to mere knowledge, especially ephemeral knowledge,<sup>7</sup> and

<sup>7</sup> A law student in a code state felt that it was a waste of time to study common law. Knowledge of the code was the only practical knowledge. When he took the bar examination he flunked, because so many questions could not be answered from the code. He protested to the chairman of the examining board, who answered, "Young man, the next session of the legislature may repeal all the law you know." Civil service examinations that stress memory of current minutiae, like college courses that bristle with detailed current facts to be remembered, may give to mere memory a weight that it does not deserve.

Another type of question calls upon the candidates to connect views with authors who expressed those views, or titles of books with the authors who wrote those books. A certain type of student has a ready memory for this kind of thing, yet little ability to apply what he has learned from the authorities in the field to a concrete problem. Another type of student has excellent ability to bring to bear on an issue all he has learned and thought but he has difficulty in recalling where the ideas come from because they are the product of all his reading and thinking. A law school examination may call upon the student to give the facts and the decision in a certain named case or it may give a moot case involving the same point of law as that case and ask the student for a decision. It has always seemed to the writer that for public positions tests designed to show ability to think, to organize, and to apply are more useful than questions which call only for ability to remember. Of course some legal cases and some works are so outstanding that it is fair to assume that every qualified person in the field has read them, and certain books or reports are major sources. On the other hand there are many cases and books that are less important, though they may be the pets of certain examiners or college professors. The demand that civil service competitors shall know these lesser books or cases seems to the writer to detract from the proper selectivity of the examination and perhaps to favor students who have taken their work at colleges where this type of teaching prevails. Examinations should not encourage persons who try to argue by authority, neglecting facts and reasoning. For many public positions ability to discriminate, to organize, and to apply is more important than the ability to quote.

that the requisite skills are tested. This difficulty does not rule out the short answer test, because it may have a real place in the battery of tests, but it does indicate the necessity for other forms of tests.

True, other forms of tests such as the essay or the involved problem may not be so objective and may require judgment and skill on the part of the examiners. Unfortunately the employees in many positions cannot be rated entirely objectively. Whether a candidate has the qualifications for such work cannot be determined without the use of judgment—as objective judgment as is available, but still judgment.

*Assembled and non-assembled.* Tests may be entirely written, or to use a broader term assembled; they may be based entirely on the record of education and experience of the candidate, or non-assembled; or they may be a combination of the two. Weights given to the different parts may be based on the judgment of the examiners or determined in a large measure through scientific procedures.

*Interviews or oral examination.* Part of the examination may consist of an interview or an oral examination. In some instances the interview is held primarily to determine whether the candidate has such a personality as the position requires, and it is operated on a simple pass or reject basis. No grades are given as the result of the interview. In other instances the oral examination enters directly into the rating scheme. The candidates are graded on the oral and that grade has a definite weight in the total. Failure to pass the oral may disqualify regardless of grades made in other parts of the examination.

Where skill in human relationships and personality play an important part in the positions to be filled, the

oral examination, despite its difficulties, seems to be essential. Since, as is often the case, these qualities and skills cannot be tested in the written examinations, the examiners have to have recourse principally to education and experience and to orals. The collection of reliable evidence regarding education and, more especially, experience and the evaluation of that evidence presents great difficulties.<sup>8</sup> Some of these difficulties are in part overcome if the candidates, at least the more promising ones, appear before a board of examiners themselves competent in the field. Questions relating to the candidate's training and experience bring out additional evidence and clear up some points, at the same time giving the examiners opportunity to see how the candidate meets the situation presented by the examination. He may moreover be asked to give an account of the work he has done or cases he has handled that are similar to those that will be involved in the position he seeks. Thus the examiners have opportunity, limited it is true, to see the prospective candidates in action.

Obviously an oral examination cannot be as objective as a true-false examination, but if the examination is given by a board made up of persons selected because of their judicial temperament and their knowledge of the field, it can be a sound instrument for use in selection. In some instances the several characteristics required for the work are differentiated and a scale prepared on which each examiner indicates the degree to which he thinks the candidate possesses each of the particular characteristics. Each examiner, either during the examination or at its close, independently and secretly marks the scale. Then the scales of the several examiners

<sup>8</sup> Some of these difficulties have been considered more at length in the preceding chapter.

are compared, characteristic by characteristic, and points of difference are discussed. A tentative rating may then be agreed upon, possibly by a majority vote if necessary. Final rating may be deferred until the various candidates can be compared. The danger of subjective ratings is of course present but that danger may be less than the danger of failing to check on personality, ability to handle personal relations, and the statements of experience.

Oral examinations of such a type take time not only of a single examiner but of a group of competent examiners, and they cost money. For certain classes of positions, however, they do what no other form of test will do. They get at some of the things which it is often said civil service tests cannot take into consideration. Properly organized and staffed they are well worth what they cost.

*Character examination.* Character is another thing that writers often say cannot be determined through civil service tests. If by that they mean that character cannot be tested in an examination room through written tests, short answer or otherwise, the allegation is of course largely true. But it is not true that civil service commissions have no technique for getting at character. The same information and evidence regarding the character of an applicant are available to a civil service commission that are available to any individual or other employer, if the government is willing to spend the time and money to get them. To be exact perhaps we should say that what investigators get is not the character of a candidate but his reputation for character and his acts and activities that perhaps reflect character.\* This kind

\* In the early 1900's there was a fad for short, pithy sayings printed in illuminated type and attractively framed. One is perhaps in point: "My character is my own. My reputation belongs to the village gov-

of information is available to the skilled investigator who visits the place where the employee lives and the places where he has lived and gets the records and the opinions of persons who have known the candidate and his activities. Such investigation is of course expensive. Taking the fingerprints of the candidate and clearing them through the identification files of the police and investigational agencies, local, state, or national, will of course catch persons who have been arrested on charges involving offenses that resulted in fingerprinting. That step is not very expensive, but it costs money to get more general character information. Such information is, however, highly important in selecting law enforcement officers and other persons who may be subjected in official positions to a high degree of temptation.

*Medical and physical examination.* Medical and physical examinations of the pass-fail type have long been used in the so-called uniformed or athletic services. With the introduction of disability insurance features in retirement systems, they have become common in the sedentary services. Regarding their use in the clerical and professional services more will be said in the pages dealing with retirement systems. If they include strength tests, medical and physical examinations may be a major factor in selecting persons for labor positions requiring mainly physical strength and willingness to use it.

Considering testing as a whole one may say that the technique has already advanced far enough so that any government can do an eminently respectable job in prac-

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sips." In the public service, however, reputation may be almost as important as genuine character. The trained investigator dealing with acts and activities can pretty well weed out sheer gossip and judge character by the actions and activities that reflect character.

tically any field if it is willing to pay the price; and expressed in terms of a percentage of the total payroll the price is not unreasonable. That statement should not be construed to mean that testing techniques are perfect. They are far from it in some instances, but they are developed to the point where better work can be done with them than without them. The truth is that a civil service commission, properly financed, can use all the old methods, plus the new, and can combine them in effective batteries. "Civil service can't test" is not a reason; it is an alibi.

## CHAPTER IV

### SALARIES AND SALARY FIXING

No natural or economic law actually fixes or determines salaries or wages in a public service. Salary and wage levels have to be fixed by some one. The person or body that fixes them must however be guided by certain economic factors if satisfactory results are to be secured, for although natural or economic laws will not of themselves fix or determine the exact wage, they will influence, if not actually determine, what quality of employees will be secured for the wages paid, and often what quality of services the government will get for its money. If the wages are relatively high for a given class of work, persons well qualified for that work will seek employment in the agency and they will try to remain in the agency by meeting in full its requirements, because they generally cannot better themselves by leaving. If the wages are relatively low, on the other hand, the best qualified workers will not be attracted so long as opportunities are available elsewhere and often the best of the employees in the service will be constantly on the lookout for chances elsewhere. Thus although natural and economic laws will not determine for the legislative body or for the administrator the exact salary or wage that he should pay, the legislature or the administrator must consider economic factors in reaching a decision as to salary or wage that shall be offered or paid. The final decision will have to be based on judgment, after due consideration of all the factors.

What are the factors that must be given consideration?

The orthodox first answer is supply and demand, but



those words are too general for practical application in administration in fixing salary levels in the public service. It is necessary to be much more specific and concrete, to get down to factors in the problem that can be at least specifically stated, if not statistically measured.

#### QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

In buying services, just as in buying commodities, it is essential to have specifications of quality. Just as there are different grades of cotton, wheat, or lumber, there are different grades of typists and stenographers. Just as the supply of low grade cotton is far greater than the supply of the highest grade, so the supply of routine typists is far greater than the supply of expert typists. If the work of a particular office is routine typing, such as addressing envelopes or filling out forms from plain copy, the routine typist is good enough provided she has the requisite speed and accuracy, but if the work is intricate tabular work with large sheets and many carbons, the typist must be an expert, a master of her machine. In that kind of work the well paid expert typist gives far lower cost of production than the routine typist who wastes time, money, and materials and often in the end does not produce a satisfactory product. Thus in attempting practically to apply the law of supply and demand it is necessary to define accurately and in detail the thing that is wanted. In personnel administration that means having specifications that define accurately the duties of the positions for which the compensation is being fixed and the minimum qualifications necessary for entrance into those positions.

Once those specifications have been prepared, it becomes possible to gather concrete data to aid the salary fixers in the exercise of their judgment. Two sets of sta-

tistics may be collected to throw light on supply and demand, the first showing what the employing government is now paying for positions of this class, and the second what other employers are paying for like work. Each of these statistical devices will be considered in turn.

#### WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW PAYING

When the positions in a public service have been properly classified according to duties, responsibilities, and minimum qualifications, it is an extremely simple matter to prepare the desired statistics, or in a government where the number of employees of a given class is too small to require statistics, to prepare an adequate descriptive list. The data presented show not only the number employed at the several salary rates but the various offices in which they are employed so that differences between the various offices can be seen. If both men and women are employed in the class, separate figures for the two sexes will disclose any differences due to the sex factor. If the class is a numerous one, the employees in it may be classified also by age and by length of service in the class or in the service of the particular agency so that these factors may likewise be considered. In dealing with a large service mechanical methods of tabulation may be used and comprehensive statistics presented at relatively small cost. In a small government the employees may be simply listed with the essential facts regarding office in which employed, sex, age, length of service, and so on.

Statistics regarding what the government is now paying do not prove that what the government is paying is correct. They give the starting point for further study, and later serve as a basis for estimating what any proposed change in salary levels will cost if the adjustment is upward, or what it will save if the adjustment is down-

ward. In the upward swing of the business cycle adjustments may be upward; in the down swing it may be a question of salary cuts.

*Data on turnover and applicants.* Some specific statistical data to determine the adequacy of the existing pay levels may be secured for certain numerous classes of government employees by collecting figures on turnover in the service and the number of applicants who have recently applied for and passed open competitive examinations for positions in the class. If the statistics on turnover show that in that class or series of related classes few die and none resign, and if the civil service records show a large number of successful applicants for the entrance class, the conclusion is warranted that the prevailing salaries are not too low. On the other hand, if the turnover figures show that the government is losing its experienced employees and that really qualified people are not applying in reasonable numbers, it is a fairly safe conclusion that some upward adjustment is needed.

Occasionally the figures will show that private industry is draining off good employees from the service and yet the supply of qualified applicants is abundant. Such a situation may mean that for the particular class or series of classes involved the government service is an excellent training school for private enterprise. The candidates know that if they can get into the service and stay for a few years, they can get good jobs in private enterprise. The United States Patent Office and the Bureau of Internal Revenue are classic examples of agencies that have had to meet that kind of competition in periods of prosperity. The salary fixing authorities then have to face the question of whether they will permit the drain to continue or whether they will attempt to meet it by raising salary levels for the upper classes in the particular

services. It costs the government a considerable sum to train people for the patent work and income tax work, and sometimes considerable actual loss results when an income tax examiner resigns before the completion of his work on an intricate case so that a new man has to start it all over again; but it does not necessarily follow that higher salaries will stop the practice. Raising the government's bid may only serve to force private enterprise to raise its bid and thus enhance the attractiveness of the particular agency as a training school.

The analysis of the statistics of present pay, turnover, and number of successful applicants thus points the way for certain qualitative studies of which those just cited are examples. With the leads which the statistics give it is possible to get evidence, either through investigators or through hearings, that will throw further light on the subject and help the salary fixers in arriving at a wise decision.

#### WHAT OTHER EMPLOYERS PAY FOR LIKE WORK

Getting really significant data on what other employers pay for like work is no child's play. The data may be almost worthless, or even worse than useless, unless the positions are really comparable in respect not only to duties, responsibilities, and qualifications, but also in respect to conditions of employment, such as hours of work; regularity of employment; allowances such as quarters, meals, travel expenses; leave privileges; retirement allowances; and gifts and bonuses. Occasionally in private enterprise one will encounter a situation in which the contractual salary is relatively modest but becomes liberal to high when gifts, bonuses, and other privileges are included. Unless comparisons are made on the basis of the entire compensation, the results may be distinctly misleading.

Experience has demonstrated that efforts to get comparable data regarding what other employers pay are best confined to a relatively small number of so-called key classes, classes that are commonly found in government agencies and private enterprise. Even then it is essential to be reasonably sure the duties and responsibilities of the positions compared are as a matter of fact comparable. The only really satisfactory course appears to be to have ascertained and recorded the duties, responsibilities, qualifications, hours, pay, and other conditions of employment of positions in private industry that are believed comparable and then have the schedules or questionnaires examined and classified by the same classifiers who have classified the government positions. If an employee in private industry gets a considerable part of his pay in uncertain things like bonuses, gifts, commissions, or share in the profits, or if he gets allowances the value of which cannot be determined with reasonable accuracy, it is sound practice to omit the case from the comparison. If only the actual contractual money wage is included the pay shown is too low whereas if the bonuses and value of other privileges are estimated the results may be greatly affected by the accuracy of the estimates.

#### THE PROBLEM OF SALARIES FOR UPPER POSITIONS

Some investigators have attempted the difficult task of comparing the salaries of executives in private enterprise with those of executives in the public service, or the slightly less difficult task of comparing the salaries of upper scientific and technical workers in the two fields. Such studies ordinarily confirm what is a matter of common knowledge, that the executives and the leading scientific and technical workers in private enterprise are much more highly paid than are the men in the public

service. Any investigator can demonstrate that fact by using the available figures published from time to time now by the Securities and Exchange Commission, formerly by the Federal Trade Commission. Available income tax data demonstrate the same thing. The existence of the fact can be abundantly demonstrated but it is extremely difficult to get a precise measurement of it, because the conditions of employment are so radically different. The validity of the comparison is always open to attack on that score.

In the public service salary levels are fixed either by the legislative, appropriating body, or by administrative officers who are in last analysis answerable to the appropriating body. Experience in working with congressional committees and commissions indicates that they are not impressed by statistics showing how small are the salaries of government executives and experts as compared with comparable employees in private enterprise. In fact they sometimes display impatience with the comparison, because in their judgment the conditions of employment are not comparable. They see the comparability of data regarding key classes, such as unskilled labor, junior typist, junior stenographer, junior bookkeeper, and so on, but they increasingly doubt the comparability as the comparison moves up into the higher levels. They feel that in private enterprise the high salaries are affected by ability to make profits, by risks and risk bearing, and even, in some instances, by the fact that managers of a great private corporation are in a position to fix their own salaries, uncontrolled by any public legislative or appropriating body. These high salaries are paid out of gross receipts of the business and not out of taxes, and the legislators feel, probably not without cause, that the taxpaying public, particularly in rural communities, would rebel

if the government paid any such salaries as do many private enterprises.

Congressmen see, on the other hand, the intangible rewards of the public servants in the upper technical, scientific, and administrative positions. These servants are largely free from the highly competitive struggle; they do not have to show a profit; they are working in a somewhat sheltered berth; they are in the public service; they have the opportunity to advance the public service in their chosen field and to gain recognition and standing. The members of Congress know that many of their outstanding public servants are in the work because they love it, and that they regard their compensation as a sort of honorarium. These public servants are human enough to want the honorarium to be as large as possible but with them the size of the honorarium is rarely a factor determining their course of action.

If human beings should be classified according to the degree of their acquisitiveness, it would probably be found that many leaders in private enterprise are drawn from the group who possess this quality in high degree, whereas the leading men in the public service possess it in a comparatively slight degree. Possession of the qualities of aggressiveness and combativeness in furthering one's own financial interests would show similar differences. The relatively few aggressive and combative public servants are engaged not in adding to their own financial resources but in furthering the cause in which their enthusiasm has been enlisted. Many members of Congress have somewhat similar motives and interests. They regard their own salaries as an honorarium and are not drawn out of the public service by offers of higher salaries in private enterprise. The result of all these forces is that the upper salaries in the federal service tend to be

at or below the honorarium for members of Congress. The rare position may go higher but the great bulk falls below. In Washington slang, the salary fixed for a member of Congress is often referred to as "the ceiling."

The public administrator who has power to fix the salaries in his organization but must defend his action before appropriation committees, the administrator who operates under a salary control law which fixes the salary level and who thus can only make recommendations to the legislative body for changes in that level, and the various research workers in the service or outside who occasionally advise the legislative body on salary levels, will generally find that elaborate and fairly expensive studies of comparative salaries for the high professional, technical, and administrative positions do not produce results commensurate with their cost. In several instances administrators who, being free themselves to determine salary levels, have pitched them relatively high, have found themselves in one way or another deprived of the power, either by being subjected to legislative provisions controlling all their salaries or having the legislative bodies prescribe limits above which they cannot go either in amount or number of positions.

In the work done in connection with the development and consideration of the salary levels for the Classification Act of 1923, it was found, however, that members of Congress regarded as eminently sound and fair comparisons between the salaries paid for technical, professional, and scientific workers in the national service and those paid university teachers and administrators. As a matter of fact the scientific, professional, and technical workers in the national service are in many respects like the teachers and research workers in American universities. How far back the practice may go is not known, but for years



there has been a good deal of movement of this type of workers between the national service and the universities. The influx of university teachers into the national service during the World War and the great depression was striking.

In 1931 a conference on university training for the scientific, technical, and professional services in the national government was held at the University of Minnesota and to it were invited representatives of the universities in the area and representatives of the different professional callings in the national service.<sup>1</sup> That an observer could not tell government man from university man was not surprising, for many of the government men had at one time or another been on the faculty of a university and many of the university men had at one time or another been in the national government service. Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Phi Beta Kappa keys are almost as common among the scientific and professional staff of the national service as they are on a university faculty. Most members of Congress will recognize the validity of a comparison between the two groups and even that the salaries in the national service should be comparable, if not with the highest paying universities, at least with the upper quartile. Fortunately the United States Office of Education periodically col-

<sup>1</sup> The report of this conference, *University Training for the National Service* (University of Minnesota Press, 1932), is worthy of close study for two reasons: the excellence of the material it contains, and the exceptional skill with which the conference was planned, organized, and conducted. The writer's work has necessitated attending, it seems, almost innumerable conferences and committee meetings. Never has he attended a better planned and operated conference, and he feels under a deep debt of gratitude to Professors William Anderson and Morris B. Lambie for demonstrating what a round table conference may be made by skilful planning and by securing in advance the basic factual material essential for sound objective deliberation.

lects the data regarding university salaries and thus such a comparison may be made without much cost.

This comparison has, however, one defect that should be noted. A salary distribution diagram in a public service, with the commonly developed hierarchy, tends strongly toward the pyramid with the very numerous rank and file of lower paid at the bottom and a very small body of executives at the apex. The university diagram resembles more an hour glass except that it has on top a little ornament. The ornament consists of the president, the deans, the department heads, and the holders of a few specially endowed chairs. The lower part of the hour glass is made up of student assistants, research assistants, and part-time instructors who are still carrying on their own studies for degrees and are temporary employees. Then come in ascending order the full-time instructors, assistant professors, associate professors, full professors. In the universities a man may move up in the service in accordance with his achievements without necessarily waiting for a vacancy in the grade above him. The number of full professors may be not far different from the number of associate professors or assistant professors. The chances for advancement to the rank of full professor in the college or university world are fairly good, especially since a teacher may move easily from one university to another. In the national government service the ratio of higher positions to lower positions is much smaller and in many instances promotion is contingent on a vacancy in the grade above. Often, moreover, the nature of the public work is such that the government is a monopolistic employer, and hence the employee cannot secure advancement by going to another institution doing similar work. Thus although the two salary scales appear very similar, the government man has a poorer chance to advance to the higher levels.

In part the Congressional Joint Commission on Re-classification of Salaries and the Congress itself recognized this fact and made better provision for scientific, professional, and technical workers who had no large supervisory, directing positions and had few if any people working specifically for them. In public administration the principle is generally recognized that the direction of a unit or a project must be assigned to one person and that the other employees in the unit or on the project must be subordinate, although some of the subordinates may be almost as capable as their chief in administrative matters and actually his superior in certain branches of scientific and professional work. The salary differential in favor of the supervisor over the supervised has in such cases often been too great. Although the supervisor should generally get at least as much as any of those supervised, it does not necessarily follow that the difference should always be at least one whole grade in the salary scale. If the height of the top general grade must be below the congressional ceiling, and if the best of the supervised must always be one grade below his supervisor, the system seriously depresses the salary for the journeyman worker who has not advanced to a supervisory position. In a highly organized structure, as the public service must be, supervisory positions are necessarily limited in number and hence many able employees must of necessity spend the better part of their lives in the journeyman grade; and often the success of the government work turns in no small measure on these journeymen. These journeymen workers in the national service are the ones who now have the hardest time.

This system has had one disastrous effect in the national service. A vacancy occurs in a supervisory position in a technical agency—and most federal agencies are technical. The appointing officer has to make a choice be-

tween two men: *A*, who is outstanding for his technical and scientific ability but is not an executive, and *B*, who is distinctly inferior in technical and scientific capacity but is a good executive. If he selects *B* the executive, he denies financial reward to *A* the scientist, who has contributed largely to the reputation and professional standing of the agency. If he selects *A* the scientist, he knows the old Washington saying, "Spoiling a good scientist to make a poor administrator." Under the prevailing system *A* may really want the place because it is the only way his compensation may be increased, but he may not want to perform the administrative duties of the position. Washington affords examples of both solutions: excellent technical men making poor administrators, and outstanding professional men of international reputation receiving salaries considerably lower than those paid their superiors who are good administrators but indifferent technical men. Fortunate indeed is the appointing officer who is forced to make no such choice, but who has on his staff a man who is at once a first class scientist and a first class administrator; and there are many such.

Much has been written regarding establishing a career service in the administrative branch of the government. Unfortunately some of the writers think of the executive and administrative positions as constituting the career positions, ignoring three factors: (1) that in an administrative hierarchy the number of executive and administrative positions is extremely small; (2) that the administration of a technical service generally requires technical competence; and (3) that the bulk of the work of the service is done by the journeymen. The further development of a career service in the national government—for it has had its career services for many, many years, several of them antedating the passage of the Civil Service

Act of 1883—would seem to lie along either one of two lines: (1) raising the upper salary levels to free the journeyman levels from the pressure they are now under, or (2) permitting the journeyman of outstanding achievements to receive a salary at least equal to that of his immediate administrative superior; in other words, to lessen the weight attached to supervisory managerial work and increase the weight attached to outstanding individual performance. Such a change would increase the resemblance of the scientific, technical, and professional services to the universities, for the competent man could look forward to advancement to the full professor salary rank whether he was or was not selected for an administrative supervisory position. If he were without special competence or interest in administration, he could stick to his professional work without serious financial loss. Supervisors not of outstanding scientific capacity would become more administrative chairmen of their groups and less directors of professional work. The real career service will come when competent men are reasonably assured of advancement to the full professor level regardless of luck, and when competent young men do not feel under financial pressure to resign for other employment because their avenues of advancement are blocked by men above them in the hierarchy who will probably be there for years. Many of them would feel that they could afford to remain if advancement to the equivalent pay of a full professor depended almost solely upon competency and that the element of luck did not come into play so early in the service.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The resignation of the younger promising men because their avenues of advancement are cut off has been in no small measure responsible for the deterioration of some of the older establishments. This subject was discussed in Chap. III.

## COST OF LIVING

Persons responsible for salary fixing will find that cost of living comes into their problem usually in two ways, one static and the other dynamic. The static form involves the question of whether any government should pay a regular full-time employee who has no other work less than the amount necessary to provide him with a living according to a minimum health and decency standard. This question applies of course to the employees in the low salary brackets. The dynamic form involves the question of the extent to which the entire salary scale from top to bottom shall be adjusted from time to time to meet changes in the general cost of living. These two distinct questions will be considered in turn.

*Cost of living as a factor determining minimum wage.* Labor economists and social investigators can determine with substantial accuracy the amount of money which a single person must have in a given community at a given time to live in that community according to a minimum standard of health and decency. One may quibble a bit over the precise elements which should enter into the standard, whether the items of clothing are just right, and whether clothes should be replaced more frequently or less frequently than the standard provides; but the computations do give a measure accurate enough for practical use. Generally studies of actual budgets of workers will show that workers below this standard are going without necessities, getting into debt, or securing income from other sources.

In the case of young women workers, and to a lesser extent of boy workers, that item of income from other sources is the one that causes the controversies. The conservative advocates of low salaries "at the market rate" will point out the fact that many of the young people live

at home with their parents and actually have a decent standard of living because they do not pay commercial rates for board and room. Their wages go for clothes and amusement and they have a good time. If the government pays them the minimum standard, they will spend it all on clothes and amusements and the government will be in unfair competition with private employers who cannot afford to pay any such wages and still do business at a profit. The liberal advocates of the minimum wage, although admitting the existence of the living-at-home-having-a-good-time group, maintain that many do not live at home, and that many who do live at home are helping to support their families and do pay board and lodging. In a few instances they may be the major breadwinners of their families. The financial pressure on the young people for larger earnings may lead them into delinquencies of one kind or another, larceny, embezzlement, and prostitution. This group will maintain that private employers who pay less than the minimum are securing an indirect subsidy from the community or from the families of their employees. Thus the whole arguments for and against the minimum wage are presented to the salary fixers.

What has just been said relates to the unmarried worker. The problem becomes much more complicated when the positions for which salaries are being fixed are filled in part by married adult breadwinners with young children to support. Competent labor economists can supply reasonably accurate data regarding the cost of supporting the typical family of husband, wife, and three young children according to a minimum health and decency standard, and it will be argued that for such classes of positions this family wage should be the minimum.

The conservatives in many instances have a strong factual argument against this standard, because it is based on a theoretical typical family. For many classes of positions, analysis of the actual facts will disclose that although some of the employees are the sole breadwinners supporting a wife and three small children, others are single men or single women; some are married and are supporting a wife but have less than three children, often no children; and in still other cases both husband and wife are working and there are no children. When both husband and wife are working, their combined earnings may already have carried them so far above the minimum health and decency standard that they not only have a nice little apartment but also a car. The conservative salary fixer sees no reason whatever for paying a family wage when there is no family or when both husband and wife are working and there are no children. Liberals may reply that so many are single, so many married couples are childless, so many husbands and wives are both working, because the government does not pay a wage that will permit the maintenance of wife and children on the man's earnings. The single women will maintain that many of them have dependents, perhaps more dependents than some of the married employees.

In our American practice, the family cost of living thus becomes just one of the arguments pro and con that the salary fixers must take into consideration. In some foreign countries the authorities see no particular reason why the government as an employer should not fix salaries and wages according to such principles as it sees fit without much reference to the principles and practices of private employers. Government service is regarded as something so distinctive and apart that a system of wage or salary fixing may be used which could not be adopted by competitive private industry without some govern-



mental cooperation.<sup>3</sup> Thus some countries provide for their lower positions a base rate which approximates the minimum health and decency standard for a single person and then give additional specified allowances, on the basis of actual facts, for a wife and for each child. Thus the actual pay received by the employees on the same job performing precisely the same duties will vary not on the basis of their efficiency or length of service, but on the basis of the number and type of their dependents. The single man can get his pay increased by taking unto himself a wife, and the married man can do likewise by begetting a baby or another baby. Thus the pay rates are based not on purely competitive economic factors but on broad social policy.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> In the case of the Army and the Navy and certain other so-called "commissioned services," the United States has adopted rather elaborate specialized pay systems that resemble the distinctive foreign systems rather than common American commercial practices. In the Army and Navy systems, allowances in addition to base pay play an important part; and in certain instances the amount of the allowances is determined on dependents. The fact is recognized that the officer normally has a family which must be provided for at his post of duty if he is at a military station or a shore naval station. If suitable quarters are not provided at his post of duty, he gets an allowance in lieu thereof and this allowance is based in part on dependents. Certain privileges such as medical and hospital care and purchasing at quartermaster stores are available not only to the officer but also to all members of his family.

<sup>4</sup> An interesting case developed in the Board of Charities of the District of Columbia under the Classification Act of 1923 and the mothers' assistance or mothers' pension act. The salary for the Board's ambulance drivers was fixed under the Classification Act by the central salary fixing agency at a maximum of \$100 a month. An ambulance driver died, leaving a widow and many small children. The widow had to apply for assistance under the mothers' pension act, administered by the same board that had employed her late husband. The Board's social workers made a thorough investigation and reported that \$125 a month was the absolute minimum required for that family. Mr. George S. Wilson, then the executive officer of the Board, was so disturbed by the report that he personally reinvestigated the case and reached the conclusion that \$125 was the correct minimum. When all the facts were laid before the Board, it voted the widow an allowance exceeding by \$25 the maximum salary it had ever paid the father of that family. The Board fixed the assistance gratuity; it did not fix the salaries of its own employees.

*Cost of living as a factor in the general level of pay.*  
From about 1855 down to the time of the World War the national government of the United States made no effort systematically to adjust its salaries and wages to the changes in the cost of living and the changes in price level. Thus the long-run trend of the real wages of federal government employees was downward. Since government service was relatively stable it presented this paradox, that government employees were comparatively well off in times of depression and very hard pressed in times of prosperity. In that period the Congress had no uniform salary fixing system. When a new agency was established, the Congress either fixed salaries for it or gave the administrator power to fix salaries. Generally the salaries for the new agencies were fixed according to the conditions prevailing at the time the agency was established. Thus salaries in new agencies were usually higher than in old agencies, because they were fixed with some consideration of prevailing price levels whereas old salaries were not adjusted to these new price levels.

When the World War sent the cost of living skyrocketing, especially in Washington, Congress had to do something about the salaries in the old establishments. For several years it used the cost of living bonus system, whereby a certain amount (at first a percentage) was added to salaries in the lower brackets in the older establishments to offset the change in the cost of living. Then in 1923 it passed the Classification Act which standardized the salaries for most positions in the District of Columbia.

Since the passage of the Classification Act, the Congress has had a relatively simple systematic device for adjusting salaries for positions in the District of Columbia. Twice it raised them by amending the salary levels fixed

in the Classification Act. In the depression it reduced them by authorizing the President to cut them by an amount not to exceed fifteen per cent. It further authorized him to restore that cut if such restoration was indicated by the cost of living. Fifteen per cent reductions were actually made and later ten per cent was restored by the President on the basis of the cost of living studies made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Subsequently the Congress itself restored the remaining five per cent, bringing the salaries and wages back to the 1929 level.

Saint Paul, Minnesota, has a standing salary ordinance which provides that each year the standard salary levels shall be adjusted up or down automatically in accordance with the cost of living index.

In some of the foreign countries the salary consists of two parts, a standard base pay which remains fixed and a cost of living bonus which is adjusted annually in accordance with the index.

Following the passage of the federal Economy Acts of 1932 and 1933 the Scripps-Howard *Washington Daily News* offered a prize for the government employee or member of his family who should write the best letter regarding the effect of the pay cuts. As a member of the board of judges the writer read every letter submitted. From the economic standpoint the most significant fact was that many thrifty government employees were in serious difficulty because before the depression they had entered into long-time contracts calling for fixed money payments year after year. In some instances they were long-lease contracts, but in general they were house purchase agreements or life insurance contracts. In Washington a government employee could buy a house with a small down payment and fairly large monthly payments over a long period. Often these monthly payments were

fully as large as rent payments would have been. In some cases short term second trusts were used with high monthly payments. Of course the purchaser had to pay the taxes. When the cuts came, many owners could not meet their contractual obligations and were sold out on a rapidly falling real estate market. They were really fortunate if the foreclosure sale brought the amount of the mortgage, and freed them from any further liability on their notes. In some instances they had lost all their equity in their houses and were still liable on such of their notes as had not been satisfied by the sales.<sup>9</sup>

These employees had taken with too much faith the common statements about the security of government employment and had committed too high a percentage of their salary. It would seem as if a pay system of base pay plus a cost of living bonus would lead to better management. The employee would hesitate to enter into long-time contracts that could not be met out of his base pay. Expenditures for clothing and food are quickly responsive to price changes whereas expenditures for shelter, heat, light, and taxes are rather irresponsive. It would seem therefore that the base pay plus cost of living bonus has much to commend it.

<sup>9</sup> An added factor was the so-called "married women" clause of the Economy Act which provided that in case of reduction in force in a government agency, the first to be dismissed were to be persons who had a spouse also on the government payroll. Usually the woman elected to withdraw, leaving her husband on the payroll. Since the World War, it had become the common practice, when two young government employees married, for the woman to keep on working, "at least until we pay for the house and the furniture." Often the woman earned almost as much as her husband. Their combined earnings carried them at least to a necessary minimum if not comfortably above it. Many of these couples took a cut from about \$3,000 down to \$1,500. No economies such as firing the colored woman who came one or two days a week could meet the situation, although of course the colored women lost their jobs and went on relief. The house and the furniture generally had to go on a market with no bottom.

Some economists have opposed the idea of a close connection between government salaries and cost of living on the ground that it tends to petrify the employee's real wage and his standard of living. They maintain that with increasing general economic productivity the standard of living of the government employee should advance. In commending the base pay plus cost of living bonus system, it is not intended to imply that the base pay should never be adjusted to meet advancing standards of living of the people as a whole. All that is suggested is that the cost of living bonus should provide a device for adjusting compensation annually to current fluctuations in the price levels according to the indexes. It would work almost automatically and require no great amount of legislative time. Readjustments of base pay would require thorough legislative action.

The general public rarely gets excited if the legislative body fails to advance government salaries to meet increases in the cost of living, but it does protest if in a period of depression government salaries are not cut. In municipal and state governments during a depression it has proved difficult to raise the money for public salaries. The introduction of a more or less automatic cost of living adjustment feature in public salaries would, it would seem, improve the public relations side of the service.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS IN LIVING COSTS

Legislators and administrators, particularly in the national and the state governments, frequently call attention to variations between communities in respect to the cost of living and maintain that salaries and wages should be lower in places where the cost of living is low. As an economist would express the idea, salary and wage standards should be based on real wages, or on the pur-

chasing power of the wages, and not on money wages; and hence employees living in a low cost community would receive a smaller money wage than employees performing like duties in a high cost community.

From a theoretical standpoint, much is to be said in support of this contention but its application presents great practical difficulties, especially in the national service, both administrative and political. These difficulties merit consideration.

A major element in the cost of living is shelter. The cost of shelter in a community depends less on the geographic location of the community than upon the local supply of and demand for housing at any given time. Washington, D.C., and Baltimore are, for example, both within the South Atlantic geographic division, only about forty miles apart, and yet for years rentals in Washington have been materially higher than in Baltimore. Recently the national Social Security Board has located a large force in Baltimore and it is said that the influx of new residents has forced up rents for the classes of accommodations sought by these employees. Washington itself furnishes an excellent illustration of the rapidity with which rents go up with a sudden expansion of population. As a general rule it may be said that rents are higher in a community growing rapidly than in one whose population is stationary or declining. It follows, therefore, that to apply a real cost of living standard for salaries, the national government would have to keep abreast of the real estate market in every community where its employees were stationed and be prepared to make adjustments as conditions change.

The rent item in a cost of living study is moreover in the nature of a statistical abstraction, an average. Neither houses nor apartments come in standard units. The gov-

ernment employee, newly assigned to a community, must select from what is available. He may find a suitable house that conforms closely to the average or he may be forced to take one considerably better and more expensive or considerably worse and less expensive. Again the situation for a single person may be materially different from that for a married employee with a large family. An employee who has lived for a long time in the community may live in his own home purchased some years ago in a favorable market, whereas his new associate may be quite unable to get housing equal to it for anything like the same figure. Thus it is much more difficult to use the big item of shelter in the actual determination of salaries or wages than in making a statistical cost of living study.

Food and clothing constitute the other two big items in the cost of living. Prices for identical articles of food and clothing probably do not vary from community to community as widely as do rents. Wide variations as between different sections of the country in the expenditures of families for these items may be due much more largely to differences in living standards than to differences in price for identical articles. Administratively it would be extremely complex either to have different standards of living for employees in the several sections of the country or to use a uniform average standard for an assumed average family in determining what the differentials should be. The practicability of standardization of salaries on the basis of purchasing power is therefore open to serious question.

In the national service, the political difficulties of administering a differential wage system would be very great unless it could be based on clear, conclusive, standardized data. Employees and administrators in an area

classified as very low cost would naturally seek to have that classification changed. They would normally appeal to their representatives in Congress for assistance, and the Congressman would feel under some obligation to inquire as to why the employees in his district were getting less money for the same work than the employees in another district where conditions were very similar. In all classifications of this type the upper part of one class closely resembles the lowest part of the class above and the dividing line is almost arbitrary. Both administrators in Washington and the members of Congress would have difficulty in applying a salary standardization law based on equal purchasing power. Perhaps this difficulty explains why in the nationwide postal service, salary standards are based on money wages and not on real wages.

If in special circumstances living costs are so high in a given community or area that some adjustments seem essential, the practicable course would appear to be to make special allowances to the employees stationed in that area. The basic standard wage or salary would then be alike for all on a money basis but for employees in a specifically designated area there would be a high cost of living addition of a given amount or a given percentage of base pay. Such a system would not be without its political difficulties but it would be administratively more practicable than any attempt to have a cost of living standard which would involve hundreds of variations in money wages.

#### ALLOWANCES

Most governments operate some institutions or stations where employees must live in quarters furnished by the government or at least take some of their meals at the institution. Thus in standardizing salaries, consideration



has to be given to the question of the value of quarters and meals. Heat, light, fuel, laundry, medical care, milk and vegetables from the institutional farm, privileges of purchasing from the government commissary, uniforms supplied by the government, and use of government automobiles are among the many other items included under the broad term "allowances." When one studies in detail the positions in a government that operates institutions or remote stations or has uniformed services, one is confounded by the almost infinite variety of combinations of the various items of allowance.

In a few cases, all employees of a given class work under practically identical conditions and receive almost precisely the same allowances; hence it is possible after studying the conditions and the allowances to arrive at a standard salary rate for the class that is both sound and fair. Hospital nurses who live in a dormitory and get precisely the same allowances would be an example of such a class.

Often, however, the situation is far more complicated because of variations not only in the items of allowance but also in working conditions. Perhaps some concrete examples from the United States Indian Service will be helpful.\*

On many reservations the employees live in government-owned quarters. The unmarried employees take their meals at the employees' mess, and pay for them by the month. A stenographer working in the office may have her room at the employees' club where the meals

\* Lewis Meriam, Ray A. Brown, Henry Roe Cloud, Edward Everett Dale, Emma Duke, Herbert R. Edwards, Fayette Avery McKenzie, Mary Louise Mark, W. Carson Ryan, Jr., William J. Spillman, *The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey Made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him, February 21, 1928.*

are served. After regular working hours she is off duty and her room is her private retreat. A girls' matron in a dormitory has her room adjacent to the girls' room and it may be no retreat. She is subject to call at any hour of the night if any child is taken sick, has a bad dream, or sleep walks, or if anything else happens to disturb the peace and quiet of the dormitory. At small hospitals the nurses, and even the doctor, may be quartered in the building so that they are immediately available in case of need, and of course a small hospital cannot have so adequate a staff as a larger one.

Ordinarily the married employees have family quarters, often separate houses. The largest house naturally goes to the superintendent. He, too, is subject to call at any hour, and if the guest's room at the club is already occupied, he is the one who is expected to entertain official guests. Extending this hospitality may involve giving the visitors their meals. Often the superintendent's house is far larger than his family requires or really wants, and his wife has to run a big establishment instead of a little one. Allotting quarters to married employees where size of family, rank in the official hierarchy, seniority, and other factors have to be considered is one of the trials and tribulations of personnel administration at an Indian agency.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> On one reservation there was a house officially described as the farmer's cottage. The farmer on that reservation was a bachelor from Holland, an expert dairyman and cheese and butter maker. The spotless kitchen and several other rooms served as the butter and cheese factory; he reserved only one room and the bath for his personal use. On that reservation the boarding school children were plentifully supplied with milk, butter, and cheese because of this fine man's love of his art and the Indian children. He and some of the other employees were interested in bees and the children were also furnished all the honey they could eat. Many of the hives were located around the farmer's cottage. Later, according to hearsay, pressure for quarters for married employees with

These situations have been briefly described to show the fallacy of attempting to develop a simple schedule of uniform deductions to be made from the standard salary scales to allow for the value of each item of allowances furnished. The names of the several items may be identical, such as a single room with the use of bath, but the nature of the actual room, and more particularly of the bath, may be very different. Even more important the duties that go with the occupancy of the room may be radically different. In some instances the fact that an employee must live on his job in a room supplied by the government should mean not a deduction from the standard money wage but an addition to it. Keepers of light houses must often be quartered at the light. If the light, or the light ship, is located offshore so that a visit to the mainland is a fair weather event, the employees so stationed are entitled to an isolation bonus and should not be subject to a deduction for quarters.

Central control agencies, either in the fields of personnel or budgetary administration, have a tendency to adopt rules and regulations that are at best right on the average. They may be very wrong in situations where wide deviations from the average are common. Wide deviations are peculiarly common in this matter of allowances. Deductions for allowances should be made, if at all, after full investigation of all the facts in individual cases. Legislatures and control agencies may perhaps, after a full complete survey, be able to work out detailed descriptive classifications of allowances, coupled with duties, and establish governing principles, but until this has been done they should provide for a reasonable degree of flexibility, and should approve deviations from

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children necessitated putting the farmer into a single room in a dormitory where he could no longer make butter and cheese.

the average rule when administrative officers make a good case for them.<sup>8</sup>

#### SALARY RANGES FOR THE CLASS AND SALARY ADVANCES

A common practice among American legislative bodies has been to fix for each position created a single, flat salary, as, for example, "one stenographer at \$1,500." Often, especially in governments not possessing a merit system, the entire thought is directed toward the position as a government job and little or no attention is given to the qualifications and the value of the employee who is to fill the position. The salary fixed may be high for an employee whose main qualification is pull enough to get the appointment, and it may be unfairly low for the thoroughly competent employee who is the complete master of all her duties.

Administrative officers, under a well-operated merit system that protects them from the incompetent and the mediocre, generally dislike the flat, fixed salary for three main reasons: (1) it does not distinguish between the inexperienced new entrant, and the employee who has mastered the position in all its branches; (2) if several like positions exist in the agency it does not permit of recognizing distinctions between the capacity of the em-

<sup>8</sup> At the time of the Indian survey a rule of the central control agency provided for a deduction, as the writer recalls it, of fifteen dollars per month for a single room with use of bath. At one hospital the doctor and the head nurse were husband and wife. They occupied one room in the hospital which was so small that the bed took up most of the floor space. The room contained no easy chair, no good place to read, no place to write. Their bath room was shared by the ambulatory patients in the hospital. The fact that the standard deduction for the use of the room and bath was made from both their salaries seemed to them ground for complaint. That together they paid more for the one room in the hospital than the superintendent paid for an altogether unnecessarily big house seemed to them a trifle unfair. The superintendent agreed cordially, but there was nothing much he could do about it, for the rules were made by a central control agency on the other side of the continent.

ployees; and (3) it does not provide for any tangible reward for increased efficiency in the performance of the duties of the position. Each of these objections merits further consideration.

Most positions have a learning period. Even a stenographer who has abundantly demonstrated her capacity as a stenographer in the competitive tests for entrance requires some time to become familiar with the work of the office and get to the point where she can do many things on her own initiative and responsibility without either direction or close supervision. In many positions the actual work must be learned almost entirely on the job, for persons experienced in that type of work cannot be recruited from outside the service. Civil service commissions can recruit persons with the required basic education or aptitudes but the real duties must be learned on the job. Two very different examples may be given: filing clerks who operate a subject classification file peculiar to the individual agency, and examiners in the United States Patent Office. The filing clerks require no further discussion. For patent examiners the Civil Service Commission has long recruited graduates of leading engineering and technical schools, qualified in physics, chemistry, mathematics, mechanical engineering, mechanical drawing, French, and German. The Commission cannot, however, recruit men who already know patent law and procedure and the inevitably elaborate classification of all the arts in which inventions may be made, and who are already masters of the particular category of arts in which their first assignments will lie. The most that the Civil Service Commission can do is to select candidates eminently well qualified to learn on the job.

In the United States Census Bureau whole classes of new entrants are brought in for work on the decennial

census. The writer followed statistically the work of one such class engaged in fairly simple routine work. For the first six months each succeeding report showed a marked improvement in average production, until at the end of six months the output was practically double the initial output, and the work was of materially better quality. After the first six months there was little improvement. The class had learned its duties and had become really proficient in them; but even in that fairly routine work it had taken them six months under experienced section chiefs to master the classifications and procedures and to acquire speed and accuracy in applying them. In scientific and professional positions this learning period is often at least one year and may be even two or three years. It is over when the work of the new entrant does not have to be reviewed carefully and checked by an older, more experienced employee, or when the new employee no longer has to come to his supervisor for suggestions, advice, or directions as to how certain situations, not unique, but a little out of the ordinary, are to be met.

Experienced administrators are familiar with the wide variations between the experienced employee who is just a few shades too good to fire and the star performer. Studies made according to the Taylor System have disclosed and even measured this variation in industry and the same thing is found in routine, measurable activities of government. In one of the Census units the best employee was about fifty per cent more productive than the average of the group, and about seventy-five per cent more productive than the least efficient who were a few shades too good to fire. These comparisons are based on employees who are all faithful, conscientious, and loyal. The outstanding employees are just naturally endowed for their particular job. In the case of the star performer

just mentioned, eye, hand, and mind seemed perfectly coordinated so that the work moved across her desk with a speed and accuracy that no other employee in the unit could even approach. In another unit the two best employees were closely matched and when, as was often the case in that unit, duplicate independent computing was required in a hurry, there was often a real race, establishing speed records that no other employees could approach. Both these fast workers were almost infallibly accurate and hundreds of computations would be turned out without a single error. Yet in those days before the passage of the Classification Act these two real speed artists received exactly the same pay as hundreds of others in the Census Bureau who could not approach them in quantity and quality of work and to whom one would never assign the more intricate computations. Their reward was intangible: the reputation in an organization of about eight hundred of being the best statistical clerks in a picked unit.

Even in higher technical and professional positions the same wide variation is found. The writer has occasionally been associated with one man who has an almost uncannily rapid reading rate, coupled with a retentive memory and an orderly mind. Watching him flip the pages of a manuscript one would swear he was skipping until one saw the editorial pencil dart out to make necessary corrections—corrections in spelling, punctuation, choice of words, or even sentence structure. Plodding through the manuscript afterward, at what seemed by comparison snail's pace, the writer would not find a single thing that called for correction. It thus became possible to understand how this associate could have read everything in his own field, much in adjacent fields, and still have time for the best in current fiction and biography.

Differences such as these just mentioned mean that employees performing like duties are not equally valuable to the organization. Progressive governments are therefore providing for most classes of positions a salary range, with a minimum, a maximum, and generally several intermediate steps. In no case, so far as is known to the writer, have the minimum and the maximum been determined mathematically on the basis of actual data of productivity except in those instances where an unmodified piece work system is used. Generally the rates have been fixed on a judgment basis. In manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, where principles of scientific management have been applied, it is generally true that the employees who receive the highest wages because of their efficiency give the employer his lowest cost of production per unit, and that the employees who receive the lowest wages usually are responsible for the highest cost of production per unit. Observation suggests that the same thing is true in the public service, and that a government could get the lowest cost per unit of product, if all its employees were as good as the best and thus were entitled to the maximum return. Neither governments nor private industry can, however, operate practically on that basis, because human beings are not built that way. Variations are inevitable. Practically every agency has its marginal men, men who are just good enough to keep.

*Control of salary advances within the range.* The introduction of ranges of pay for a class gives rise to the question of how advancement within the range shall be administered or controlled. Two extremes are often suggested: (1) that advances shall be automatic according to length of service, and (2) that advances shall depend solely upon efficiency. Between these two extremes are many combinations of length of service and efficiency.



Under the British system advances are automatic in the absence of an adverse report on the efficiency of the employee. The employee gets his advance at the end of the year unless his superior recommends that it be withheld. Other systems provide that an employee's pay may be advanced once a year and then only to the next higher rate within the range, provided he has attained the prescribed degree of efficiency.

As has been seen, we are here concerned with two different although often related things. One arises from the fact that a certain more or less definite learning period is associated with many jobs, which means that the older employees who have completed this period are on the average more efficient than the newer employees who have not completed the period. The other is that certain employees have greater inherent aptitude for a given class of work than others. After any particular period of service, they will out-perform others of equal length of service and generally others of longer service. Sometimes they are called "naturals" because of their approach to perfection. Their perfection at times seems almost effortless; they may be personally light-hearted and at times flippant; and they may excel persons who are earnest, conscientious, and serious minded.\* They may be the de-

\* The Children's Bureau once had a young temporary male stenographer who could not be given a permanent appointment, despite his very high rating in the competitive examination, because he was a resident of the District of Columbia. In business high school, from which he had just been graduated, he had been short stop on the ball team, a basketball player, and an expert tumbler on the gymnasium team. He had an amazing capacity for "wise cracking chatter," which led one to wonder whether he ever had a really serious moment. Being a temporary, he was on the flying squadron that helped out on emergency jobs, among which were occasionally assembling many pages of mimeographed material. On such an assignment he would play around, experimenting with the arrangement of the several piles for some little time after the others had settled down to steady work. Then, getting just the arrangement

spair of the strict disciplinarian. Because these two different but related things, length of service and individual proficiency, are involved, opinions regarding the course that should be followed often differ according to the emphasis placed on one factor or the other.

Authorities also differ as to the practicability of controlling advances through efficiency rating systems, a subject which has already been discussed. Persons who are highly skeptical of efficiency rating and who fear favoritism and partiality are inclined toward salary advances on the basis of length of service, provided a reasonable degree of efficiency is maintained. Those who have faith in efficiency rating tend to make efficiency the determining factor, as it logically should be if efficiency rating is reliable.

To the writer, it has long seemed impracticable for the legislative body to prescribe a single system which would square with all the diverse facts and conditions that prevail in a heterogeneous public service. The best results would probably be secured if administrative officers could, perhaps subject to the approval of the salary

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he wanted, he would tilt back his chair and bring into play his ambidextrous speed and, although keeping up an almost continuous stream of good-natured chaffing of his fellow workers, he would get more done than any two of the others. Since the employees never liked that type of routine work, which today would be done by machines, they were always glad to have him on the assignment.

Later he was appointed to a stenographic position in a private agency, where the writer was then working, and again displayed unusual speed and accuracy, coupled with an amusing ability to evaluate, confidentially and off the record, the literary and scientific value of the material on which he was working, an evaluation which later would be confirmed by the director and the staff.

Alert minded, intelligent lay employees in a professional, scientific, or technical organization are often valuable critics of the work done by their official scientific and professional superiors, particularly if it is designed for popular use. They are often far better judges of clarity than is the superior, and they can tell how a presentation that is designed to be persuasive will strike the ordinary reader.

standardizing control agency, adopt for each class regulations governing salary advances within that class. Thus for classes in which the work is measurable as to both quantity and quality, salary rates could be based on efficiency regardless of length of service, while for classes where the work is non-measurable and where the employee works alone, as in the case of an information clerk, salaries could be advanced on a pure length of service basis. Administrators could adopt various combinations of length of service and efficiency as the actual facts warrant.

To meet the demand for legislative supervision and control over salary advances within the class, it is practicable to follow the British method of showing the amount required for salary increments as a separate item for each agency in the budget estimates. An extra column for the increments can easily be inserted in the tabular statement giving the details for personal services. With such information before it the legislative body can (1) appropriate the entire sum requested for salary increments, earmarked for that purpose in the appropriation act; (2) refuse to appropriate anything for salary increments and thus prevent them from being made; or (3) appropriate only a part of the sum requested, thus forcing the administrator to be more selective in distributing increments. The administrator under such a system would justify his recommendations for salary increments as he justifies other recommendations for appropriations. He would set forth the methods he was using for the various classes and thus he would report in each budget estimate on his personnel methods for securing efficiency. It seems probable that such a system would go far toward stimulating real development of sound systems for dealing with different types of situations.

## CHAPTER V

### HOURS OF WORK, VACATION LEAVE, AND HOLIDAYS

Under the spoils system the tendency is to regard appointment to a public position as a chance for one of the faithful to feed at the public trough. Just as little consideration is given to the duties of the position and the qualifications necessary to perform these duties, so little attention is paid to hours of work, leave privileges, and holidays. The laws may even ignore these important questions entirely, thus putting decisions regarding them wholly within the discretion of the politically appointed administrative officers. Sometimes there are laws but no adequate methods for their enforcement, so that the political administrators are still free to do pretty much as they please. In one state studied by the writer, hours, leave, and holidays actually depended entirely on the attitude of the administrative officers. Three departments under competent professional heads<sup>1</sup> had established standards comparable with those in private business enterprises at the capital city. Another department really opened at ten in the morning, took an hour off at noon, and closed for the day at three. On any semblance of a holiday, legal, historical, or religious, the office would close. Attendance when the office was open appeared to be largely voluntary.

In another state, in an office which had a real service to perform for certain classes of citizens, attendance depended on the conscience of the employees and the extent of their political influence. Some of them came

<sup>1</sup> Highways, Education, and Health.

promptly and worked hard all day, but one young woman regarded as her major duty the entertainment of her "influence." If she arrived in time to lunch with him, that was all that could be asked. The writer never saw the young woman, for at no time when he visited the office was she at her desk. The head of the section in which she was supposed to work felt powerless to take any action because the young woman's influence was far more powerful than her own. In fact that section chief had forebodings, which subsequently proved to be well grounded, that her own influence was not strong enough to enable her to hold her job, despite the fact that she had a conscience and was a hard and efficient worker.

In the state first mentioned, the legislature at the request of the governor had passed a law for salary standardization. Salary standardization cannot be made effective without standardization of hours of work, leave, and holidays, because salary standardization means like pay for like work under like conditions. Junior stenographers in an office working thirty-nine hours a week are not directly comparable with junior stenographers who are playing round an office which is really operating less than twenty hours a week. Thus to give effect to the salary standardization law in this particular state it was necessary to take administrative action with respect to hours, leave, and holidays.

When a merit system is installed and, in theory at least, persons are appointed to public positions to perform certain necessary work because of their qualifications to perform that work, legislators are ordinarily quick to see that standards must be set up with respect to hours, leave, and holidays. In the national government, at least, the effect of the introduction of the merit system was to increase the length of the working day for

office employees by creating a philosophy favorable to establishing minimum standards enforced through the customary methods of financial control.

#### HOURS OF WORK

Federal experience leads one to the conclusion that standardization of working hours cannot mean absolute uniformity throughout the service. Absolute uniformity may conceivably be the ideal, but a good many practical difficulties stand in the way of its achievement. Seven working hours may be made the standard working day for clerical employees engaged in office work, but a seven-hour day is not adaptable to certain other employees such as those who are responsible for running the plants to heat the offices. In the winter in many parts of the country the heating plants must be run twenty-four hours a day, seven days in the week. A common old practice was to have two shifts each working twelve hours a day. The more modern practice is three shifts, each working an eight-hour day with perhaps rather elaborate provisions for days off. Police departments, fire departments, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions necessarily have to have their own special provisions with respect to hours of labor, leave, and holidays and in many cases the rules must provide for change without notice, as during a recent crime wave in Washington when police who had been on duty all day were ordered back for special night duty.

Conditions such as these mean that there must be classification according to the conditions of work before there can be standardization. The standards for office workers will naturally be very different from the standards for policemen, firemen, institutional workers, and custodial workers. These differences constitute differ-

ences in working conditions and should be taken into account in salary fixing and in making laws or rules governing hours of work, leave, and holidays.

In studying laws governing hours of work, leave, and holidays one will ordinarily find distinctive provisions for certain great groups such as teachers, policemen and firemen and, in the national service, postal employees, army and navy officers, and enlisted men and employees in the foreign service or at stations outside continental United States. Variations such as these may irritate persons with a passion for uniformity and a desire to have everything streamlined; but from the standpoint of administrators who are responsible for getting work done and of the employees who are engaged in the particular classes of work, the ideal is to develop rules and regulations governing hours, leave, and holidays that are adaptable to the conditions under which they work. In fact the introduction of progressive personnel practices not infrequently tends not toward uniformity but toward variations—standardized variations—that make the rules in a given instance fit that peculiar situation.

#### OVERTIME

Certain offices have a fairly constant load so that with the correct number of employees working a seven-hour day, the mill grinds steadily and satisfactorily. When the closing bell rings, the employees very properly leave for the day. Other offices have a cyclical load with a peak falling once a week, twice a month, once a month, or once a year. When the peak comes, the employees may have a good deal of overtime work, spending long evenings and perhaps Saturday afternoons and Sundays at the office, getting out payrolls, getting out tax bills, issuing automobile license plates, keeping the books cur-

rent, or whatever else the job may be. Even if temporary clerks, or a flying squadron,<sup>2</sup> are used the regular employees cannot confine themselves to a seven-hour day. With temporary clerks or a flying squadron, they may devote seven hours to immediate close supervision and then work evenings and Sundays doing those things that require skill and experience or involve great responsibility. When the peak is passed, the regular employees may run into a lull where they are at least under no pressure and may not have even enough work to fill a day. If the administrators are operating under a law that requires seven hours' service each day from Monday to Friday and four hours' work on Saturday, they must keep the employees around the office even if it is hard to find worth-while assignments for them. Some of the employees will contend that they should be paid for overtime, because the work requires overtime. A far more rational provision is to keep an accurate record of overtime done in the rush period and then to allow compensating special time off in the dull period so that the employee works the required number of hours within a month or a year but does not distribute that work evenly by days as the law may at present require.

Certain offices operate in part at least on an assignment or project basis. When a big project is in the mill every hand is needed. If the law or the administrative situation requires completion of the assignment by a set date, overtime becomes the rule and not the exception, particularly for the upper responsible officers and their principal assistants. Often these employees find that things which require uninterrupted concentration can

<sup>2</sup> A group of employees, preferably under their own immediate supervisor, who are detailed from office to office as peak loads may require.



be done effectively only after the official closing hours and hence in an emergency many of the responsible officers with their immediate assistants will be on duty in the evening. For the upper officers the overtime may be almost purely voluntary but for some of the assistants it is practically compulsory. They can be compensated under a law that permits granting time off equivalent to the overtime actually worked.

Some organizations, notably the United States Civil Service Commission, have a duty to perform that meets with little more than lip support from politicians, whether they are in the legislature or in upper administrative positions. Such organizations may be chronically understaffed and have inadequate appropriations to do a thorough job. In the case of the United States Civil Service Commission there has been over the years, on the part of many members of the staff and of the commissioners themselves, an almost pathetic loyalty to the objectives of the organization. Kicked around by appropriating agencies and abused by the experts for not making bricks without straw or for using techniques that are cheap in preference to better techniques which cost too much to use, the staff has plugged away, putting in overtime consistently. No proposal to allow compensating time off for overtime would remedy this situation, nor would a proposal to allow pay for overtime, so long as overtime must be paid for from the appropriation for the agency. The staff of such an agency faces the alternatives of working overtime or permitting the objectives of the agency to be defeated through the starvation process, a process well known to the politicians and available when popular sentiment would make unsafe the repeal of the substantive law which the agency is to enforce.

## VACATION LEAVE

These variations in the nature of the office load just discussed affect not only the regular working hours, but also the granting or taking of leave for vacations or for other purely personal purposes. The law or the regulations providing for such leave may be drafted in such a way (1) that the granting of the leave is purely discretionary with the administrative officer or (2) that the leave is due the employee as a matter of right. Even when the laws or the regulations are so drafted that lawyers will construe them as granting leave as a matter of right, there is apt to be a provision giving the administrator some authority as to the time when the right shall be exercised. Such a provision is, of course, eminently sound, for an office would be in a bad way if an employee in the middle of an important assignment could announce that he was leaving on his vacation and would not be back for two or three weeks. The fact seems to be that the advantage of vacation leave as a right is mainly psychological, creating on the part of the administrator a moral obligation to grant the leave at some time and not to deprive the employee of it. Few permanent employees who are subordinate to an administrator and thus dependent on him in many ways are going to insist upon their right to vacation leave when they know directly or indirectly that the chief is opposed to their taking it at some particular time. Many of them know perfectly well when the state of the work in their office is such that they cannot get away.

The right to vacation leave is greatly strengthened by a provision that such leave as is not taken in the year in which it is earned shall accumulate and be available in the following years. Under the present law permanent federal employees in most of the agencies are entitled to

annual leave at the rate of twenty-six days per calendar year, "provided that the part unused in any year shall be accumulated for succeeding years until it totals not exceeding sixty days."

An administrative difficulty in recognizing vacation leave as a right and especially in operating a cumulative leave system, is that ordinarily there is no special fund from which payments are made for leave. The pay for leave generally comes out of the current appropriation available for personal services. Hence when employees are on leave, the amount of money available for effective time is reduced by the sum paid for leave. The administrator who is hard pressed to keep the work of his office current knows that if the employees take little leave, the amount of funds available for work will be larger. He may be distinctly embarrassed on the financial side if in any one year several employees seek the privilege of using their vacation leave accumulated from previous years. He is in the position of having let his leave bills accumulate, under a system that does not permit of accumulating any reserve to pay them, and naturally he is in difficulty if the employees to whom the leave is due ask that the bills be paid.

This system often bears rather heavily on the administrator's best and most loyal employees, especially those to whom he has delegated a large measure of responsibility. In many government offices are employees who regularly and consistently apply for their leave, without a great deal of regard for the immediate needs of the office. They may know, and the administrator may know, that as a matter of fact one time for leave taking is about as bad as another and therefore they go when they are ready. On the other hand are employees who at times tell their families and even their doctors that the situa-

tion at the office is such that they cannot possibly get away. The administrator regards them as good responsible employees and tends to increase their responsibilities. In a constant load agency they get into the key positions. In a project or assignment office they are put on the important rush jobs, because the administrator knows that in the absence of illness they will see the job through. One of the factors that leads to their advancement may be that they take little leave and put in a lot of overtime, and, from one point of view, such devotion to duty is a proper reason for promotion. Anyone familiar with the departments at Washington knows the men who are too busy to take leave and who have not had a real vacation in years. The employees who regard leave as an absolute right and vacations as necessary for the maintenance of mental and physical health often regard these persons who rarely take vacations as engaged in unfair competition.<sup>3</sup>

*Reserve funds for leave.* Much is to be said therefore in favor of the compulsory establishment of financial reserves for vacation leave. Under such a system the appropriation for personal service would be divided into two parts: a large one to be used for the payment of salaries and wages for employees on actual duty, and a much smaller one for the payment of employees on vacation leave. Administrators would have very strictly limited authority to spend the vacation leave reserve for anything except vacations. Under a cumulative leave

<sup>3</sup> One physician with an extensive practice in Washington maintains that the government in its own interests should make vacation leave compulsory and that for at least two weeks a year each employee should be required to drop all his official duties or turn them over to an assistant or associate. This particular physician belongs to a group which itself attempts to follow this rule. Another physician in his practice has had difficulties with the type of man who always places his work ahead of his health and is too busy to take a vacation.

system any balance remaining in the leave reserve fund would not revert to the general fund of the government at the expiration of the fiscal year but would remain appropriated for the payment of leave. All the administrator would have to work with, under such discretionary control as he has over expenditures for personal services, would be the fund for the payment of employees on actual duty.

Under such a system when an employee asks for leave the administrator need give no thought to the question of how his appropriation stands, because the leave will not be paid for from his working appropriation. It will be paid from the leave reserve he cannot touch except by granting leave. Under a leave reserve system, the granting of sixty days' leave transfers the charge for the employee's salary from the working fund to the leave reserve fund, thereby releasing the working fund from the encumbrance. In certain circumstances this might provide the necessary money for the employment of temporary assistance to replace the employee who is entitled to leave with pay accumulated from prior years.

In the government departments at Washington, moreover, an employee's resignation ordinarily takes effect not on the day he actually stops work but at the expiration of his accrued earned leave. Thus although an employee may actually stop work on October first his accumulated leave may carry him on the payroll until around the first of December, and the administrator may not have the funds to employ his successor until he goes off the rolls. Under a special leave reserve system the new employee would report for duty as soon as the old employee began to use leave accumulated from prior years, for the old employee's leave accumulated from prior years would be paid from the leave reserve.

In some instances accumulated leave acts as something of a barrier to the transfer of an employee from one agency to another. The administrator, for example, has before him the papers of two possible candidates for a vacancy. One is an employee from another agency who has accumulated the right to sixty days' leave. The other is either outside the service and hence has no accumulated leave or a present employee who has taken all his leave. If the administrator takes the employee with the sixty day accumulation he must be prepared to pay for that accumulated leave out of his own appropriation despite the fact that none of that leave was earned by work for his unit. He knows too that the employee having accumulated the maximum allowable under the law is at the point where he must either take current accruing leave or lose it, for he cannot under the law accumulate more than sixty days. A new employee from the outside may seem a lesser financial liability. If a service operated under a leave reserve fund system, a sufficient sum to meet the accumulated leave could be transferred with the old employee to the new agency so that the new agency would not have to pay for leave earned in another agency.

The device of a leave reserve would at times, it is true, put the administrator under pressure, not, as at present, to withhold vacation leave, but to grant it. If he withheld leave consistently during the early part of the year he would use up too rapidly his working fund while scarcely touching the leave reserve. Later his working fund would be approaching exhaustion and his only recourse would be to grant leave so that his employees would be carried on the reserve fund. Under an accumulated reserve system it would be necessary, at the outset, for the appropriating body to appropriate a sum sufficient

to pay for the leave already accumulated and carried over from previous years. Without such an appropriation the leave fund would be insufficient to carry the load of leave earned in earlier years. The working fund should then be freed from all demands for such leave. Over the years the administrator would on the average have to grant in each year the amount of leave earned in that year, although the cumulative system would permit of some compensating deviations from the average. Under strict administrative regulations certain agencies might be permitted to borrow from the leave reserve for active work in one year upon condition that they would repay the reserve fund in the ensuing year from the work fund. This provision would permit project agencies which are under great pressure in certain years to keep their forces at work during those years and grant the leave in subsequent years when the pressure is off.

Such a leave fund would of course increase the bookkeeping, but this increase in bookkeeping would not be without its compensating advantages. It would make all the facts regarding leave immediately available both to the administrators and to those who are required to review the work of administrators.

#### SPECIAL LEAVE

The establishment of a distinct leave reserve to which under certain circumstances the legislative body could make specific appropriations would solve one personnel problem which is of growing importance. In many of the technical, professional, and scientific fields of government work, the rate of progress is such that it is difficult for the employees in the service to keep abreast of developments. In the field of education, where relatively long summer vacations are the rule, this difficulty is overcome

through the common practice of teachers' attending summer schools. By making summer school attendance compulsory for continued employment, some school superintendents have over the years raised their personnel standards without wholesale dismissals of employees who at the outset were below the desired grade. The desired standards were applied at once to new entrants. Employees already on the rolls were given necessary time to make up deficiencies. Through this system the old employees who had had valuable experience were able, without loss of position, to get what the universities had to offer. What the experienced workers got was often familiarity with new methods, a reorientation, a broader culture, and perhaps a refreshing of interests.

The introduction of a similar system of refreshing and reorienting in agencies which operate continuously presents real difficulties. Both the administrator and the employee may appreciate that it would be to their mutual advantage to have the employee return to the university or professional school for advanced work or to visit certain agencies in this country or abroad to familiarize himself with their methods. The employee frequently would be glad to accumulate his vacation leave with this objective, because such a vacation would bring to him the recreation and refreshment he seeks. In some cases it would free him from a sense of inferiority or inadequacy, for often an employee overvalues that which he has not. The value of what he gets from the university may be largely in the removal of this sense of inferiority. The administrator may agree that such a vacation would do the employee a world of good; but how can he spare the employee? He would lose his services for the period and have no money to hire additional help. With a leave reserve, money to pay the employee while away would



come from the reserve and some money for temporary substitute assistance might be released in the working fund.

In cases where the legislative appropriating body deems special leave of one kind or another to be in the public interest, it could appropriate the cost of that leave to the special leave reserve, thus freeing the administrators from some of their difficulties. For example, the legislature appreciates that many of its civilian engineers and other technical workers would be needed in the armed forces in time of war. It therefore provides special military leave with pay to enable employees to attend military encampments, officers' training schools, and so on. Orders come and the employee goes, cutting down the administrator's working staff without making available any money for additional temporary assistance. Naturally the administrator may feel that having on his staff a number of young engineers active in the National Guard or the Officers Reserve Corps is a liability rather than an asset. The cost of such special leave, from the standpoint of sound accounting, should not be charged to the regular appropriation of the civilian agency to which the employee is attached.

Legislatures may to an increasing degree see the value of the further extra-mural training of its public employees. An agency like the Army or the Navy sends its men to school as part of its normal operation, for these agencies are primarily engaged in training men for the next war. Civilian agencies generally cannot do the same thing, in the absence of specific authorization and specific appropriation, because they are primarily engaged in day-to-day service. Training is at present regarded only as an incident. If a separate leave reserve were set up, the legislature could provide for desirable special leave,

either by making specific appropriations for it or by permitting greater accumulations for such purposes, or both. The sixty days' leave which may be accumulated under the present federal law is not enough for a university semester. If this limit were removed or materially increased for objectives of value both to the employee and the service, it would facilitate the interrelationships between the public service and the universities. Conceivably if the granting of leave to a professional, scientific, or technical employee automatically made available, for the period of the employee's absence, money from the working fund of the agency, the administrator might bring into the service temporarily a well-qualified man on leave from some one of the universities or professional schools. So used, the device would permit of cross-fertilization both ways. Experience suggests that the university men have much to give the government men and likewise that the government men have much to give the university men.

*Administrative control over vacation.* Nothing which has been said should be construed as meaning that administrative officers should not have a considerable measure of control over the time at which employees may take vacation leave. Although the employees have under the law a legal right to the leave, they have, as the great majority of them appreciate, a moral obligation to take it at a time when they can best be spared. In a constant load unit in which throughout the year one month is much like another, a common practice is to make up a leave schedule. Employees are asked early in the year to indicate their leave choices, first, second, and perhaps third. On the basis of these preferences a schedule is prepared giving the employees as far as possible their

choices but at the same time keeping an adequate or nearly adequate staff on duty. Of course things happen to upset the schedule but often the employees themselves will work out the necessary adjustments by swapping. In the agencies that have seasonal peaks neither the administrator nor the fellow employees will look with the least favor on the employee who thinks the rush season the ideal time for a vacation. Only a real emergency excuses the employee who does not share in carrying the heavy load. When the dull season comes in such an office, there may very properly be a general exodus that leaves only a skeleton force on duty. The growing popularity of winter vacations in Florida or in the snow country is a god-send to administrators whose offices are necessarily busy in the summer time. The skilful scheduling of leave is one of the ways in which the administrators can keep a balance between load and staff.

In dealing with vacation leave or any other device for furthering recreation, administrators know that one man's meat is another man's poison and therefore to the maximum possible extent, they permit the employees to use their vacation leave as they will. Some offices have their baseball fans who like to spend a large part of their leave allowance in the bleachers when the team is at home. Some of the women employees may have a passion for afternoon concerts. An occasional employee is a gardener and wants a week off when the ground is ready to work in the spring and the rest of his allowance a day or so at a time, with a preference for weekends. Employees going to night school want to get off "to plug for examinations." Occasionally the administrator has on his staff a hunter or a fisherman to whom a vacation "in season" is the only thing worth while. In the public service where almost all absence, except that due to sickness,

is charged to vacation leave or annual leave, generally in fractions of an hour, the supervisors get all sorts of requests for approval, for every absence must be accounted for, even the little ones.

The employee who wants to take his leave in driblets may be a distinct asset to his organization. True, during the season he may be slipping off to the ball game pretty regularly, but he is at least around during the morning keeping his priority cases up to date. In some offices it is far easier for administrators to let certain employees off for a few hours at a time than to spare them for long absences. Occasionally one encounters a new executive drawn from private enterprise who regards the employee who frequently gets off for a few hours at a time as a trifle not to be compared with the employee who works his full hours every day and then like a gentleman takes his leave in a block for what the executive thinks is a worthy purpose. Closer examination may reveal that the trifle never permits his work to get in arrears and takes his leave the way he does not only because he likes to take it that way but because it is to the best interests of the office to have him do so. Employees must in no small measure be the slaves of the system. To the greatest possible extent vacation leave should be their own to do with as they will.

## CHAPTER VI

### SICKNESS AND SICK LEAVE

The extent to which sickness or the possibility of sickness constitutes a serious problem for administrative officers naturally varies fairly widely according to the nature of the work done.

At a certain lumber mill power to run the dynamos was generated in steam boilers. Mill waste, brought to the boiler room and fed to the fires by automatic conveyors, supplied the fuel for the boilers. Electrical controls connected with the gauges automatically kept every essential detail of operation practically constant. A very slight deviation from the ideal was sufficient to actuate the mechanisms which supplied the necessary corrections. Two operating engineers, who made one think of engineer officers on a high grade ocean liner, sat at highly polished desks in the cool, sunny, immaculate control room watching the highly polished gauges. On rare occasions there was something for them to do. Ordinarily they just sat, or moved about the control room, always watching the gauges. Obviously such employees cost money. The natural question was, "Why two?" The answer was simply, "One might get sick." Always on the job must be one man who knew all the details of that completely automatic system; and the only way to achieve that requirement was to have two men possessed of the requisite qualifications constantly on duty.

In the United States postal service the mails must move practically on schedule, and hence the service must have a highly developed system of substitutes whereby fairly well trained persons are on call and report at once

for duty. Hospitals may find it necessary to have a similar system for its nursing service. Large public school organizations may likewise have a thoroughly developed system for the immediate supply of substitutes. Such systems ordinarily mean that the budgets of the agency make provision for the pay of substitutes. Sickness therefore costs the amount of pay allowed to employees on sick leave plus the costs of employing substitutes.

A good many public agencies have no funds available for the employment of substitutes, and hence when an employee is ill the administrator has to take action between two extremes: letting the work the employee has been doing ride until the employee returns, or trying to make the remaining employees take up his duties in such a way that the work continues on schedule. One of the common middle courses is the understudy system, whereby if the employee who is ill occupies any sort of a key position requiring special knowledge or skill, another employee already at least partially trained for the position steps into it and thus the resulting lost time is transferred down into the lower duties or into a job where delays are not so serious.

This understudy system works reasonably well in fairly large agencies operating in accordance with a standardized practice and procedure. In such agencies it is possible to train the understudies and even to have a force large enough to take care of a normal amount of absence on account of sickness. Unfortunately it often cannot be used in agencies where the employees are assigned to individual projects or individual cases that are of considerable duration and require the employee to carry in his head a mass of detail and to do a good deal of thinking on the basis of the details. Lawyers handling legal cases, research workers on projects, social workers

doing constructive work with clients, income tax men on intricate returns, and many investigators belong to this group. If an employee on such an individual assignment is ill, the administrator often has no recourse but must accept the embarrassment of the delay. If the assignment is so important that a substitute must be assigned, the substitute often has to start almost from the beginning. Occasionally illness means the actual loss of a large amount of labor already spent because the project cannot be completed within the time schedule.

The large office operating in accordance with a standard practice and procedure can, as has been said, have a staff big enough to take care of what may be called normal or average illness, but unfortunately there are occasional epidemics. During the World War, when the government offices were at high tension, an epidemic of influenza resulted in absences in the neighborhood of fifty per cent. A supervisor with a rush job on his hands is almost helpless when even a quarter of the places in the work rooms are vacant because of illness. There is always the temptation to turn on the forced drafts and work those who are present to the limit, but unfortunately administrators may not know precisely where that limit is. The structural steel workers have a rule that if a man is killed on the job the gang quits for the day. If a girl faints at her desk in a government work room, the supervisor is lucky if several others do not promptly follow her example. Instances are fairly common in which employees crack up attempting to carry the load resulting from the illness of other workers. An experienced supervisor knows that it is his responsibility to look out for the employees who are at work to see that they do not overdo, and possibly order someone to go to the rest-room or to go home for the day.

## THE AMOUNT OF SICK LEAVE

Occasionally someone who does not know the national civil service well thinks that a supervisor's main job is to prevent employees from abusing their sick leave privileges. On rare occasions it is true that some one employee will not play fair. Perhaps more frequent are the employees who insist upon coming to work when for their own sake and the sake of their fellow employees they should be at home in bed. Whenever statistics regarding sick leave in the offices at Washington have been compiled they have refuted the charge of general abuse of sick leave. For example, a study made by the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries for the period 1914-18, covering representative branches of the service in Washington, showed that on the average 48.9 per cent of the employees took no sick leave; 32.9 per cent took 10 days or less; and only 3.45 per cent were granted the full thirty days then allowed by law.

In both government and private offices most employees work along year after year with very little sick leave and that little largely accounted for by colds and other minor ailments. The longer periods are generally accounted for by fairly serious illnesses or accidents which may occur only a few times in an employee's whole term of service. Most administrators are familiar with cases in which employees cite with a good deal of pride the fact that they have gone for years without losing a day on account of sickness. Sometimes as these employees reach more advanced age their splendid records are broken by some one of the so-called degenerative diseases that mean long absences if not retirement.

A relatively high measure of economic security is one of the major inducements governments may offer to per-



suade good employees to enter and remain in its service. In European countries, where careers in the public service have been more highly developed than in the United States and where conditions of employment in the public service are frequently quite unlike conditions of employment in private enterprise, one will often find elaborate provisions for sick leave with pay. A relatively long period of leave with full pay will be followed by an even longer period on part pay. Accompanied by provisions for permanent retirement on account of disability, these sick leave provisions approach complete economic protection on a modest scale.

In the United States the public and the legislators have been far more inclined to think of a position in the civil service as a temporary job which the employee will hold only for a short time, perhaps at most for a political administration. Holding the public position is an episode in the employee's life and not an opportunity for a career. Thus frequently in America provisions with respect to sick leave will be confined to a limitation of the number of days of sick leave with pay which may be granted to an employee in any one year.

That the provision of a fixed number of days' sick leave a year does not meet the needs of the salaried workers and wage earners is obvious to every one who is in that class or has ever been in it. That is not to say that it is not highly advantageous to the workers to receive full pay despite a few days' absence because of sickness during a year. It is reassuring to them to know that if perchance they are seriously ill they will be paid for the full number of days specified in the law, although they may go for years without having to take advantage of that provision. The real defects of the system only become apparent when the employee is really ill for a

period that carries him beyond the legal limits prescribed in the law and he finds himself off the payroll at a time when doctors' bills and hospital bills are cutting his savings to the vanishing point, if not actually running him into debt. Then naturally he wishes that the provisions regarding sickness were arranged more largely on the basis of insurance so that while he was in good health he could have made more provision for possible prolonged illness.

Material improvement has been made in some American jurisdictions by the introduction of provisions for accumulating sick leave. Thus for the positions in the federal government one and one-fourth days' sick leave with pay is allowable each month, with the provision that any balance unused at the end of that month shall accumulate and be available for future use, with the limitation, however, that not more than ninety days will be allowed in any one year. Thus an employee who has served for six years without losing time for sickness may be paid for ninety days of sickness in his seventh year of service should he be ill that long. An employee who has gone ten years without sickness would have accumulated one hundred and fifty days but he could not be paid for more than ninety days. Such provisions represent a great step forward, especially since the law provides that "administrative officers may advance thirty days' sick leave with pay beyond accrued sick leave in case of serious disability or ailments and when required by the exigencies of the situation."<sup>1</sup>

#### INSURANCE AGAINST COSTS OF ILLNESS

That an employee generally requires far more money when he is ill than when he is well is, of course, a matter

<sup>1</sup> 49 Stat. L. 1162.

of common knowledge. Ordinarily his earnings are pretty thoroughly committed or budgeted and he has not built up a sufficient free reserve to meet hospital and doctors' bills. In illness he finds expenses running way beyond income and therefore he has either to go into debt or borrow on his life insurance, his house, or other property. The situation is about the same if someone dependent on him is ill. Among public employees there is a growing appreciation that the needs of salaried workers and wage earners could be better met by a system under which they could pay small regular premiums on pay day, and in event of personal illness or illness of a dependent be assured adequate hospital and medical care without further cost. Thus they could budget adequate care and purchase it on the instalment plan, as they purchase their houses, their life insurance, and possibly their automobiles and their furniture. Today many governments are finding that the instalment system for property taxes is advantageous because it fits into the way of life of salaried workers and wage earners. The public utilities very wisely have almost universally adopted the practice of rendering their bills monthly. Such systems enable the employees to adjust outgo to income. Thus among public employees a strong sentiment is developing in favor of insurance to meet the costs of medical care.

#### GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN MEDICAL CARE

A serious question is: To what extent should a government as an employer participate in health insurance and provision of medical care for its employees? That a government has a real stake in the health of its employees has already been shown. In the federal departments in Washington something like two per cent of the

payroll goes for sick leave, but that is not necessarily a measure of the government's loss from sickness of its workers. The variables in that equation are probably too numerous to permit of anything approaching a statistical answer. The government has of course both an interest in and a responsibility for the safety of its employees and for the maintenance of sanitary and hygienic working conditions. It has a great financial interest in any preventive medical work which will reduce time lost through accident and disease. The introduction of employees' compensation for accidents and diseases resulting from employment has led to no little direct medical service by the employer, and governments are no exception to this rule. Today both in public and in private employments strict rules require any employee injured while on duty, even slightly injured, to report at once to the emergency room where a doctor or a nurse immediately takes charge of the case at least partially in the interests of the employer.

In certain services, notably in the national army and navy and the police and the fire departments in large municipalities, provision of more or less medical care has long been regarded as an integral part of the contract of employment. National, state, and municipal governments generally are engaged in rendering medical care to certain classes of the population, and often it is the rule that the employees in such organizations are entitled to free medical care whether the illness or accident necessitating it was or was not of service origin. Thus in most governments one will find some employees who are receiving medical care either because of the nature of the government agency for which they work or because of employers' liability laws.

Partly because of the passage of employees' compen-

sation laws and partly because of higher standards in employer-employee relationships public organizations now frequently maintain emergency rooms or first aid rooms often connected with the rest-rooms. A nurse may be in constant attendance and a doctor subject to call. The primary object may be to render immediate attention in case of accidents but naturally the emergency room is used for any employee who may be taken ill. The nurse renders immediate service, even calling the doctor if such a course seems to her desirable. Today the rendering of such professional service seems a minimum essential.

Suppose that a supervisor in starting the work for the day discovers that an employee has reported for duty despite the fact that the employee is obviously in the act of "catching a cold." It is entirely practicable for the nurse in the emergency room to be equipped to give treatments designed to prevent the cold from getting a real hold, treatments that have been worked out, for example, by the physicians of the United States Public Health Service. Incidentally before giving the treatments, the nurse will take the employee's pulse and temperature and make reasonably sure that nothing more serious than a common cold is indicated. The nurse is, of course, rendering a medical service. Should that service be rendered? Should the supervisor be authorized to require the employee to report to the nurse for examination? Should the nurse be authorized to send the employee home in the rare event that the employee does not welcome the chance to get prompt, simple treatment?

The familiar old alternative is to have the employee sniffing and sneezing around the office during the morning. At noontime he or she may go to the drugstore to

get "something for my cold." The next day or two the employee may be absent on sick leave or may be around the office "all stopped up." Supervisors may hesitate to order the employee to take sick leave and go home, for the employees ordinarily do not want to waste their sick leave. Much less do the supervisors feel justified in ordering an employee to see a doctor. They may say "If I were you I'd see a doctor about that cold." But if the employee answers, "Oh, I'll be all right tomorrow," or "I'll take some medicine tonight," there is not much the supervisor can do about it. True, the supervisor as the person responsible for getting the work out may have a real interest in getting that cold cut short and preventing possible contagion, but it is one thing to proffer a free service made available by the government and quite a different thing to order the employee to purchase private service.

The existence of an emergency room with a nurse in attendance and a doctor subject to call has one great advantage from the standpoint of the administrator. Sooner or later the administrator working with a large force will find cases where he suspects, or fellow employees suspect, mental or contagious physical disease. Some employees are quick to suspect that an associate may have tuberculosis or venereal disease and those suspicions may be brought to the attention of the supervisor even if he himself has had no grounds for suspicion. At times the complainant gets a bit militant about the situation. If the organization has its own medical service it is a comparatively simple matter for the supervisor to get professional advice and assistance and to arrange for a medical examination if that course seems desirable. Since the service doctor is ethically the professional adviser of the organization whose duty it is to protect the

public health of the employees, he can make a frank report to the administrators. If this report frees the employee from all suspicion the other employees will probably accept it.

The lay supervisor without medical advice and assistance who has to get a suspected employee medically examined for any such mental or physical disease is, to say the least, embarrassed. Naturally, perhaps, he is inclined to delay until he gets enough evidence to feel that action on his part is imperative or until the militant complainants force his hand. Then very properly, since the employee is paying for the examination, the employee selects his own physician and ethically the physician is medical confidante of the employee. The administrator must accept the employee's selection of a doctor and he cannot very well go behind the doctor's certificate. Anyone who has ever sat through a contested employee's compensation hearing in a private case and has listened to the conflicting testimony of the claimant's physician and the physician for the insurance company will understand why at times an administrator may lack complete confidence in a medical certificate presented by an employee from the physician of his own selection and why in the administration of the United States Civil Service Act of 1883 and of the United States Employees' Compensation Act medical examinations are now made by government doctors.

From the standpoint of operating efficiency the case is strong for the maintenance of a medical and nursing service in connection with government agencies, and it would seem that this service should be used for preventive activities designed to reduce the amount of sick leave taken.

## ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS OR DEATH IN FAMILY

Sickness or death in the family of the employee may result in absence of the employee. If the illness in the family causes a quarantine, the employee has no discretion in the matter. He has to stay away from work at least until he can make other living arrangements and comply with the quarantine regulations. Thus absence on account of quarantine is ordinarily chargeable to sick leave.

If the illness or death in the employee's family does not result in quarantine, some organizations take the position that the employee's absence is entirely voluntary and therefore should be charged to his vacation leave, or annual leave as it is called in the national government. The difficulty with this arrangement is that often the illness or the death is something entirely unexpected and comes after the employee has used up his vacation leave for the year. Under the law the administrator may find that he has no discretion in the case. The most he can do is to permit the employee to take leave without pay, although he knows perfectly well that because of illness the employee has need of his pay. Some of the more progressive employers provide emergency leave to cover such cases, or so define sick leave that it may be granted in such emergencies. In this connection it should be pointed out that few public administrators are vested with the discretion possessed by many a private employer. Learning of serious illness or death in the family of an employee the humane private employer can put his hand on the shoulder of the worried or bereaved one and tell him to take time off. In the government service administrators may be no less sympathetic but they are bound by law. Only by falsifying a payroll can the administrator grant legally unauthorized leave and even the most sympathetic administrator will not ordinarily do that.



## CHAPTER VII

### SAFETY

Safety is not a thing apart: it is interwoven with almost every activity. Problems of safety are found to a marked degree in each of the following fields:

1. Structures and their appurtenances.
2. Machinery, equipment, and supplies.
3. Processes and practices in production.
4. The selection of qualified personnel.
5. Supervision of operation and maintenance.
6. The skill, work habits, carefulness, and foresight of the individual employee on the job.

#### AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH SAFETY

Before any discussion of these several fields is attempted, it should be pointed out, as a corollary, that responsibility for safety is not centralized in one agency but is necessarily distributed throughout the governmental structure, in fact, distributed in such a way that real responsibility for accidents, fatal or maiming, may rest not on the immediate parties but on some much more remote agency. The principal agencies concerned are:

1. The appropriating body, which reviews the recommendations of the administrative branch of the government, supplies the funds, and establishes the conditions governing the expenditure of funds.
2. The chief executive and, if he has one, the executive budget agency, if the executive or his budget agency reviews the estimates of the operating officers and determines what recommendations for funds shall be sub-

mitted to the appropriating body and to what extent the pressure of the administration shall be put behind the requests.

3. The chief operating officers of departments who determine what requests for funds shall be submitted to the executive or to the appropriating body.

4. The line officers from top to bottom of the hierarchy whose duty is to report to their superiors the conditions in their units that are inimical to safety and health and can only be corrected by additional appropriations or by changes in the laws governing expenditures.

5. The agencies of government that are concerned with the design, construction, and maintenance of public structures and their appurtenances.

6. The agencies of government that are concerned with the selection and purchase of machinery, equipment, and supplies.

7. The agencies of government whose duty it is to select employees qualified for duties the performance of which may involve the safety and health of themselves, their fellow employees, the general public, or all of them combined.

8. The agencies of government which administer the workmen's compensation act applicable to government employees; and the acts providing for the retirement of government employees because of disability resulting from accidents occurring in, or diseases resulting from, the actual performance of duty.

9. The agencies of government specially charged with the duty of ministering to the health needs of a particular public service or group of public employees.

10. The line officers and their subordinates who are performing or supervising the performance of duties

that involve the health and safety of themselves or others.

The two catalogues just given may strike a reader as long, but experience suggests that no one of them can be omitted in an effort to enumerate the fields of activities and the agencies that play a vital part in maintaining and promoting safety. In the subsequent discussion in which illustrative cases will be used to some extent, no effort will be made to separate the fields of activity from the agencies responsible for them because real cases demonstrate not separation but interrelationships.

#### PERSONNEL SELECTION AND SAFETY

In a book on personnel administration it may be appropriate to discuss first the relationship between safety and the selection of qualified employees. Every informed American citizen is aware of the fact that automotive equipment is dangerous, and that its operation should be entrusted only to skilled, temperate, and cautious employees. Recently a social worker visiting a relief applicant for the first time learned that he had previously been employed as a truck driver by one of the government agencies which had been exempted from the merit system laws. Naturally one of her first moves was to visit the applicant's former supervisor to see if the client could be reemployed. She learned that in his brief period of employment he had been involved in two accidents, in both of which, fortunately, damage was confined to the truck and to trees and posts. The government supervisor very properly declined to give him another trial as a truck operator.

In an earlier administration a powerful politician had a candidate for the position of engine man to help run the heating plant of a large public building housing

hundreds of employees. The Civil Service Commission refused to pass him for employment because he lacked the necessary training and experience. His influence was sufficiently strong to enable him to get the position by an executive order waiving the civil service rules, an action that required the specific approval of the President. The head of the department believed that anyone could run a furnace, and that the Civil Service Commission was being arbitrary in demanding training and experience for so simple a job. The man's incompetence resulted in an explosion in the heating plant of the department. Fortunately the explosion occurred at night and nobody was hurt. The property damage was only a few hundred dollars. A Civil Service commissioner remarked that the accident was well worth a few hundred dollars to the government, because it made the head of that department a staunch supporter of the merit system. The department head appreciated that had anyone been killed in the accident, both he and the President, who had signed the executive order, would properly have been held responsible. He realized that it was a good plan to shift that responsibility to a central personnel agency using sound tests of qualifications.

In one spoils system state the head of the department in charge of safety work in private enterprise, although an elected official, set high standards and operated his organization on a non-competitive merit basis. On his staff was one veteran inspector who had gained a national reputation for his contributions to safety in an important specialized industry. His detailed simple bulletin on the subject seemed to the writer a model document, and he was not surprised when told that the United States Department of Labor officials had particularly commended it and that it was widely used in other states.

Its author had risen to the highest inspectorial job in the state. A legislator, needing a job for a camp follower, told the elected department head to discharge the brilliant experienced inspector to make room for his candidate. In answer to the department head's remonstrance that the candidate had neither training nor experience in safety work and that none of his former jobs had been anywhere near the field, the legislator assured him that his man was a bright fellow and could learn fast. When the department head refused to yield, the legislator warned him to look out for his appropriations: he could not expect favors if he did not grant favors.

Some central personnel agencies have had arguments with the politicians regarding qualifications for certain classes of inspectorial positions. For example, should building inspectors be qualified in construction engineering or is a requirement for such training just a device to limit competition and make it harder for political followers to get jobs? When the roof of a crowded theater gives way under the weight of accumulated snow and scores of persons in the audience are killed or maimed and the subsequent inquests disclose faulty construction, the public very properly asks, "What was the matter with the building inspectors?" If the public is to have a strict building code rigidly enforced without favoritism it must have qualified inspectors not beholden to any politician or any political party for their jobs.

A distinguished civil service reformer once told of an experience he had had as a member of a civil service commission. At a public hospital several patients died from a disease that should not have proved fatal had the civil service doctors promptly administered the proper serum. Charges of criminal negligence were therefore preferred against the physicians and they were

brought to trial. They produced evidence that immediately upon the admission of the patients, throat cultures had been sent to the laboratory. When, after long delay, the laboratory reported a positive reaction, the serum had been administered, but then it was too late. As the serum could not be given safely in the absence of a positive report, the doctors were acquitted. The laboratory technicians were then brought to trial on a criminal negligence charge. In their defense they produced in evidence a statement of the number of microscopes in the laboratory and their repeated requests for funds for the purchase of additional microscopes. They had supported these requests by evidence that the present equipment was inadequate to carry the normal load, much less the peak loads, and had even predicted that the inadequacy of the equipment might, in the event of an epidemic, result in unnecessary fatalities. The commission therefore acquitted the laboratory men. The budget investigator in that jurisdiction was not a civil service employee and the commission could not put him or the finance committee of the legislative body on trial. The attitude of the financial administrative group apparently had been that these scientific fellows are always asking for a whole lot of new costly scientific equipment and that the financial control agency must put its foot down somewhere.

#### BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

Buildings and their equipment play an important part in the health and safety of the employees. The design and construction of the building have much to do with heat, light, ventilation, and sanitation and in no small measure design and structure determine the degree of fire hazard. The water supply for fire protection, freight

and passenger elevators, the electrical wiring, the staircases, and the flooring may be selected and installed with particular consideration of safety or each of them may constitute a danger. If a government owns and operates a building, it has invested a good deal of capital in it and frequently this capital has been directly voted by the appropriating body. In some instances the building is for the general use of many different agencies and the operating officers whose units are quartered in it have little to do with design, structure, or maintenance. They are merely assigned space in it and must do the best they can with the space and facilities allotted to them. In other instances the buildings are designed and built for the use of a particular agency and often for a specialized use. Sometimes they are built from the regular funds appropriated to the agency. Under these circumstances the officer in charge of the particular agency and his assistants often have more voice in the design and structure of the building and are ordinarily directly responsible for its maintenance. If quarters are rented, the administrators must frequently do the best they can with what is available.

If a government owns buildings it faces that bugbear, obsolescence. A building reasonably safe when first built may not remain safe indefinitely. Advances in standards for fire-proofing, electric wiring, heating, sanitary facilities, and elevator equipment may make a building almost obsolete although the structure is in good condition and reasonably well maintained. Many governments have made their public buildings monuments, constructed to endure for ages. When an attempt is made to modernize one of these old monuments, it is discovered that the very massiveness of the basic structure necessitates the adoption of practices that would be rejected as inad-

visible from the standpoint of safety in a new structure. For example it may be impossible, because of massive construction, to make an elevator shaft entirely independent of the stair shaft and hence the elevator shaft is run up the stair well. Any fire that cut off the stairs would likewise cut off the elevator. The electricians cannot run conduits through solid stone masonry and hence exposed wiring is used where concealed wiring would be standard. The governments generally can ill afford to scrap these old buildings, particularly the monumental ones, and they are continued in use despite the fact that the passage of time has made them substandard.

One state had built a capital building with rather majestic halls. Becoming pressed for office space, it provided some by partitioning off rooms on either side of a great hall. The rooms had neither natural light nor ventilation. The clerks, engaged mainly in bookkeeping, worked all day by artificial light, and got such ventilation as they could by leaving the doors to the hall open and running electric fans. Even a visitor who had to stay only an hour or so found the atmosphere trying. The state factory inspector, in response to questions, said that he was familiar with the situation, that if it prevailed in any manufacturing plant to which the state laws applied he would order the rooms cleared of workers; the space was only fit for storage. The chief of the unit shrugged his shoulders and said he had done everything he could. He remarked that he suffered less than his subordinates because his work was largely on outside contacts and he could get away from his desk. He was certain that his employees were taking more sick leave than those in better offices, but in that state there were no statistics of sick leave to prove it. One able stenographer whom he wanted to get accepted another posi-



tion, partly at least because she could not work all day in those offices. The governor and some members of the legislature knew that fairly soon the state would have to build a new office building. Some discussion was already on between the advocates of a monumental structure and those who thought major consideration should be given to economy and the provision of proper working conditions for employees. Often an ornate exterior with magnificent columns makes interiors dark and unsatisfactory for workers.

In that same city the newspapers were carrying stories regarding a safe on the top floor of a building rented by the municipal government. The safe was much too heavy for the frame structure and the floor was sagging. That situation reminded the writer of a period during which his unit was quartered in a condemned building owned by the government. The floors would not carry the weight of the schedule files which had therefore to be placed in the basement, necessitating a messenger force to carry the material to and from the work rooms on the fourth and fifth floors. The authoritative reports were that the building was perfectly safe for the employees but not for the files. The bureau officer in charge of buildings and the writer sometimes together, but often separately, made frequent inspection trips to see that the heavy schedules were not permitted to accumulate in the work rooms. The fact that the building was materially below standard was, of course, known to the employees. Cracks in the exterior walls, uneven settling of different parts of the structure, and floors off level were too obvious to escape notice and comment. Naturally everyone was a bit nervous, and all were relieved when finally we were moved out. From the decision of the top agency that the quarters were reasonably safe

and should be used, neither department nor bureau officers had any appeal.<sup>1</sup>

A syndicate, not without political connections, erected an office building for the specific purpose of renting it to a government. Later an addition was built that greatly increased the floor space. No additional elevators or toilet facilities were included nor was the water supply increased. Although the equipment in the toilets would pass inspection, the lack of an adequate water supply frequently made them offensive. The lack of sufficient elevator equipment created daily jams during the rush

<sup>1</sup> This old building had one antiquated elevator of limited capacity that moved at snails' pace. The stairs were broad, but because of the settling of the walls there was a noticeable gap between the stair-treads and the balustrade. One afternoon a violent electrical storm struck that section of the city. The clerks became nervous and a few at a time they left their desks and leisurely started downstairs. Pretty soon most of the hundred and fifty employees in the building were either on the ground floor or scattered along the four flights of stairs. A few of them gathered in two's or three's at the windows on the stairs that looked out on the back of adjoining buildings. Suddenly came a vivid flash, a sharp splitting noise, and then vibrating thunder. Those employees who had been looking out the stair windows had seen the lightning splinter the flag pole on the adjoining building.

At the beginning of the storm the writer's principal assistant and two of the section chiefs reported the great nervousness and asked for instructions. The clerks had already begun to go downstairs. The only possible instructions seemed to be to let those who felt so inclined go down a few at a time—naturally those who were most nervous went first—and not to let any considerable number gather on any one staircase. If there was any large gathering let it be in front of the big outside doors in the first floor vestibule. The only preventable danger was apparently that of over-excitement, and it seemed as if that could best be avoided by letting those who were so inclined get downstairs. Fire drills were, of course, part of the routine, but it seemed as if an order for a fire drill would only add to the tension and put more weight on the stairs.

The newspapers the next day reported that several windows had been blown out of one of the monumental government buildings not far from our condemned quarters. Fortunately we lost no windows and when the storm blew over, the employees came back apparently having rather enjoyed the thrill.

hours and many employees walked up several flights of stairs—the building was eight stories high—rather than wait for a chance to crowd into the elevators.<sup>2</sup> Clearing the building in case of fire would have been a relatively slow process.

#### SPECIAL WATER SUPPLIES AND SAFETY

In the field establishments of the national government and at some institutions operated by state or municipal governments, no regular municipal water supply is available and the institution or agency has to have its own water and sewer systems. A pure water supply is necessary for health and an adequate water supply may be necessary for fire protection. Securing an adequate supply of safe water may involve fairly heavy outlay. The necessity for a proper sewage disposal system is obvious.

At an Indian boarding school the intake for the water supply was downstream from a sewer outlet. The superintendent was asked how regularly he tested the water. The reply was, "Not often"; and then by way of explanation, "We have never tested the water when it did not show pollution. Why test it oftener?" Then he went on to explain that year after year an item to correct the situation had been included in the estimates but thus far it had always been turned down by the budget authori-

<sup>2</sup> One high ranking political officer when in charge of the department quartered in that building frequently personally assumed the duties of elevator dispatcher. Neither his temperament nor his manner was phlegmatic; quite the contrary. He would select the individual employees who were to ride next, not without occasionally changing his mind, and he would give instructions to the elevator operators, who were a bit upset to be working under the direct and immediate supervision of a nervous department head. Observers derived real enjoyment from the performance, but they reported that the service was better if the distinguished elevator dispatcher arrived after the rush period.

ties. At this same school the visitor, a layman, was disturbed by a distinct pound in the big electric water pump on the school grounds. He asked the engineer if that pound was all right. The answer was "no." The engineer then invited the visitor to a point where he stood facing the big fly wheel and could see that it was badly off center. "Sometime," the engineer remarked gloomily, "that fly wheel is going through the wall behind you, and all I can hope is that it won't hit anyone when it does." Asked to explain further, he pointed out that the pump was originally designed with a sort of universal joint between the pump and the fly wheel to allow some play. That part had failed and they had made a temporary repair which was rigid—all they could do with materials at hand. The superintendent said that repeated requests either for new parts or a new pump had been ignored, possibly because Washington thought them fussy.

#### NECESSITY FOR EMPLOYEE COOPERATION TO SECURE SAFETY

Persons familiar with public offices will appreciate that frequently line operating officers and their subordinates have little chance really to control such major factors as quarters, permanent equipment, and water supply. They are largely forced to take structures and major equipment as they are and to get along as well as possible. Naturally cleanliness, sanitation, and safety are far more difficult to achieve with bad structures and equipment than with good; and that may explain why frequently poor facilities are badly maintained. But it also seems as if the psychological effect of bad structures and equipment is to make most of those who use them indifferent to proper operation and maintenance. Somehow the effect

is cumulative and one comes to associate poor facilities with bad maintenance.

Individual employees and their immediate supervisors must of course cooperate to secure safety and sanitation because they are the ones who use quarters, equipment, and machinery. Almost every observant person has seen instances where employees have deliberately neglected to use the safety devices supplied or to take the precautions required by the regulations. Familiarity with the hazard often seems to breed contempt for it. Perhaps more frequent are the instances where mechanical devices or equipment, relatively safe when in good condition, become dangerous when out of repair. Employees, under pressure to get the work out, often continue to run equipment when it should be stopped for repairs.<sup>3</sup>

Many employees have read little about accident prevention and safety promotion and thus do not see hazards that are not only obvious but easily corrected. To give a simple illustration: An employee stumbled on the turn of a stairway. Startled rather than hurt he went on without asking himself why he had stumbled. An observer looked at the stairs and noted that the turn in the black iron treads was in a deep shadow. The building

<sup>3</sup> A field nurse at an Indian agency reported to the superintendent that the transmission bands on her government-owned Model T Ford were not holding and asked the use of another car for a trip that could not be postponed. The superintendent, not able to arrange for another car without considerable inconvenience, told her to use hers that day and have it fixed the next day. On the ascent of a rocky winding mountain road the bands slipped and the car started down hill backward, gathering momentum. The nurse took a chance on the holding and cushioning power of a long three-strand barbed wire fence, despite the fairly steep drop a little beyond it. The post she actually hit snapped, but the wires stopped the car within inches of the sharp drop. Then the nurse was able to turn the car and go down the balance of the road head on, at only a little greater speed than was reasonably safe.

superintendent said he had never noticed that shadow before but a little white paint would remedy the situation; he did not think a light would be necessary.<sup>4</sup> Carelessness in obstructing passageways with low lying obstacles that easily escape the vision is a common cause of falls.<sup>5</sup> Slippery floors are generally the fault of operators.

#### AGENCIES WITH SPECIAL SAFETY PROBLEMS

Many government offices have their peculiar safety problems arising from their specialized mechanical equipment or from their specialized processes. In a municipal service, for example, the fire department, the street cleaning department, the water department, the department of public works, and the health department have distinctive problems. The highway departments and the departments running charitable and correctional institutions in state governments have special problems. In the national government are many agencies involving special hazards, notably the railway mail service, the arsenals and gun factories, the chemical and physical laboratories,

<sup>4</sup> A family was once blessed with an almost perfect negro house servant. Having had some difficulty in securing a place because of her advancing age, she exerted all her many domestic arts to please. Her one failing was that she did not wash the dishes clean. Without mention of this shortcoming to her, a high candle power bulb was put in the kitchen lighting fixture. That brilliant light solved the problem. Often it will be found that inadequate lighting increases hazards or results in errors on fine work or in fatigue.

<sup>5</sup> In the Census Bureau many cheap wire waste baskets were used which had so wide a mesh that they were, when empty, scarcely visible. The Bureau had one petite woman employee reputed to be unusually talented but unquestionably extremely temperamental. Leading a southern gentleman from another division down the rather narrow passage way between the rows of desks while she continued an animated, even heated, discussion of a controversial technical point, she almost fell over one of those wire waste baskets. Recovering her balance and uttering an exclamation she gave that waste basket a kick that sent it arching fifteen feet across the office. With a courtly bow her visitor said, "Pray, Miss—, permit me to do that for you."

and the hospitals dealing with infectious and dangerous diseases. Such agencies require their own men specially trained to provide safe equipment and instruct employees in its use. Here safety engineering is an integral part of the job itself.

In the national government especially and in some of the state governments are agencies particularly concerned with the promotion of health and safety not only in the public service but in private industry and the country at large. The Public Health Service is concerned with the prevention of disease and with sanitary engineering and the provision of safe water supplies. The Bureau of Standards does notable work in many fields, including electricity, light, and optics. The Bureau of Mines is the authority on mine gases, dust, and explosives used in mining; and its work is applicable in many other fields, as was the case in dealing with automobile exhaust gases in the Holland Tunnel. The Interstate Commerce Commission is charged with locomotive inspection and with the maintenance of safety on railways and certain other common carriers. The Bureau of Navigation, the Steamboat Inspection Service, and the Bureau of Air Commerce each have the promotion of safety as a major objective. The safety work of the Bureau of Public Roads and of the state highway departments is well known. When a government has within its structure leading authorities on different aspects of safety it seems that the administrative problem is not to attempt to centralize responsibilities for safety but to bring to bear through a coordinate program activities for the promotion of safety.

The agency of government that deals with the compensation of employees for service accidents and diseases is of course in a particularly advantageous position to

stimulate safety campaigns, because naturally it gets the facts regarding each case that results in a claim and it makes investigations. Equipped with a competent staff of investigators and qualified safety engineers, it is in a position forcefully to call to the attention of all other agencies and officers conditions which in its judgment demand correction. But responsibility for safety is naturally diversified and apparently it cannot be successfully centralized.

#### FATIGUE AS A FACTOR IN SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY

The subject of fatigue deserves brief mention at this point, for fatigue undoubtedly increases hazards. It may also explain bad work. Even in office work not involving overtime the fatigue element may be present. For example, it is rather simple to measure both quantity and quality of work in the punching of cards in a mechanical tabulation system. Studies of the records have demonstrated that the output of correctly punched cards is increased by the introduction of rest periods in the middle of the forenoon and in the middle of the afternoon, and this practice is generally recommended by the manufacturers of this equipment.<sup>6</sup> During the World War in one class of computing the large Thacher slide rules were found to be faster than the ordinary machines, but

<sup>6</sup> On one occasion an irate commissioner came into the writer's office. He had had distinguished visitors who had never seen mechanical tabulation equipment in operation and so he had taken them on a tour of inspection. To his infinite disgust he had found over a hundred employees, mostly girls but with a fair sprinkling of boys, "talking, laughing, and chewing gum right in office hours." "I tell you," he continued, "I looked carefully and not a single employee in that whole crowd was doing a lick of work." The writer offered his apologies for having forgotten in recommending the introduction of the machines to call attention to the fact that two rest periods were part of the standard procedure to secure maximum daily output.



even with good light the clerks could not work on them all day because of eye fatigue. In this instance the slide rule work was so distributed that no one had to work on it more than a few hours a day. When employees are engaged in distinctly hazardous occupations, such as the operation of motorized equipment, supervisors are taking real chances when they order men to drive for long hours without rest. Supervisors have to keep in mind this element of fatigue as a possible explanation of faults and even of accidents.

The supervisor must also bear in mind that his own fatigue and nervous and physical condition are major elements in the problem. When he is harassed and tired, worried as to how an assignment is to be put through on time, and an employee reports that a piece of needed equipment, though still running, is not in condition for safe operation, he has a natural impulse to take a chance and to defer repairs to a more opportune moment. He is unusually wise if he does not vent his irritation on the employee who has had the temerity to report bad equipment in the middle of a rush job. Cases have even been known where automatic safety devices have been disconnected so that defective apparatus could temporarily be kept in use. Unfortunately the immediate supervisor may know that his superior up the administrative line is a man whose motto is "No excuses." On one occasion when this motto was bellowed, an intrepid subordinate asked, "What is the difference between an excuse and a reason?" The superior, rather taken aback, said, "What is the difference? You tell me." The intrepid one replied, "When I give it, it is an excuse. When you give it, it is a reason."

All up the line, supervisors must try to take the attitude that the delays due to insistence upon safe opera-

tion are reasons and not excuses. That does not mean that the administrative superior should not make or have made a thorough investigation to determine why the necessary equipment became unsafe at that particular time. He may find it due to "the total depravity of inanimate objects," to the fault of the operator in neglecting proper inspection and maintenance, or to his own personal fault in previously dismissing the reports and recommendations of his subordinates regarding needed repairs or replacements. Budget agencies and upper administrative officers assume a great responsibility whenever without thorough, competent investigation they turn down requests for funds alleged to be necessary for the safe and healthful operation of public activities. That does not mean that every request for new equipment must be granted, for subordinate supervisors naturally like new and up-to-the-minute equipment, and the safety argument is always a good one. But to assume, without investigation, that supervisors' reports of hazards can safely be ignored because all call "wolf" is unsafe administration. Safety in the public service requires that all branches of each government cooperate actively and with determination to secure it.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RETIREMENT

Today it is generally recognized that reasonable permanency of tenure, essential for an efficient service in these technological times, makes a retirement system a necessary feature of the personnel administration of any continuing organization. The nation, moreover, as a matter of public policy has determined that, in a modern industrial civilization, systematic provision for the maintenance of many classes of employees after their effective working years have passed is an economic and social necessity. No attempt will be made here to review the facts and the arguments that lead to these conclusions. The present discussion will be confined to the essential features which a retirement system must contain if it is to prove effective, and to the major questions that today remain for consideration.<sup>1</sup>

#### OBJECTIVES OF A RETIREMENT SYSTEM FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR'S STANDPOINT

Administrative officers in a permanent organization will ordinarily sooner or later encounter three types of personnel cases which can only be met satisfactorily through an adequate retirement system.

*The superannuated employee.* In many cases, although by no means in all, advancing age brings a general slowing down of mental and physical processes. The

<sup>1</sup>In 1918 the Institute for Government Research published *Principles Governing the Retirement of Public Employees*, prepared by the writer. Chapter I deals with "The Objects Sought in Establishing a Retirement System." It was written before the national government adopted a retirement system and contains the analysis that led to the conclusion that an adequate system is essential in the interests of the government, the employees, and the taxpayers.

time may come when the elderly employee is no longer able to carry on with any reasonable degree of efficiency or when he is far less valuable than other employees doing like work or even much less valuable than younger men below him in the official hierarchy. The retirement system is designed to permit the retirement of such an employee without undue hardship.

*The disabled employee.* In certain cases accident or disease renders an employee incapable of the further performance of his duties either permanently or for so long a period that the situation cannot be met through sick leave or other leave with pay for a reasonable period. The accident or disease may be the direct result of his official work, that is, "service connected," or it may have no direct relationship to his service. To meet such cases adequately the retirement system must make provision for them. The distinction between service connected disability and non-service connected is of chief importance in considering amount of benefits and the distribution of their cost.

*The employee made superfluous through reorganization.* In rather unusual cases, new methods, inventions, or situations will develop which will make an old position no longer necessary or which will compel a radical change in the duties of the position. The incumbent of the position has been doing satisfactory work but there is no place for him in the new set up, either because his skills and abilities are no longer required or because he lacks the ability to meet the new requirements within a reasonable time. He is neither superannuated nor disabled in the narrow sense and yet the agency cannot use him satisfactorily nor can it find him a suitable position anywhere in the service. Unless the retirement system makes some provision for such a case one of three things

may happen: (1) in order to keep the man in the service the changes needed for efficiency in operation may be delayed, causing losses greater than the amount of the employee's salary; (2) the changes may be carried out and the man kept on at full salary on a make-work assignment or on a job that is not worth what he is paid; or (3) the man may be dismissed without provision for his future, regardless of his need and regardless of his opportunity to find other employment where he can utilize his skills and abilities. He may have given much of his working life and abilities to acquiring skills that are, through change, now obsolete and he may have neither the time nor the elasticity to make the new adjustments necessary for continued employment.

#### OBJECTIVES OF A RETIREMENT SYSTEM FROM THE EMPLOYEES' STANDPOINT

The existence of the superannuated, the disabled, and the superfluous makes a retirement system an essential part of a personnel program from the narrow standpoint of business efficiency of the organization, yet such a system cannot be successfully operated without due consideration of the interests of the employees. The nature of the retirement system may be such as either to attract or repel employees. Benefits under that system, moreover, tend to become part of the compensation for services rendered. The employees therefore almost invariably take the position, very properly, that their interests must be considered when a retirement system is established. They are interested in certain types of benefits that are of no particular concern to the administrator who considers solely the narrow efficiency of his own organization. Some of these benefits he may even regard as contrary to the interests of his own organization. Im-

portant among these benefits of interest to the employees are:

*Disability and superannuation benefits for employees so completely incapacitated that they would have to stop work whether there was or was not a retirement system.* Such employees leave the service anyway and are not a continuing problem for the administrative officer. Naturally the employees want the risks of such incapacity carried by the system. Most administrators favor benefits under these circumstances because the provision of such benefits take care of border line cases and are humane.

*Benefits in event of death in the active service.* Death in the active service removes the employee from the organization, and the administrator, from the narrow standpoint of efficient management, has only to fill the resulting vacancy. The employees reason that the retirement system is part of their compensation, whether or not they have directly contributed to it through deductions from salary or wages; that it is considered in fixing compensation and is a factor with them in entering and continuing in the service. Hence they believe that on the death of an employee, his dependents or his estate are entitled to some benefits from the system. The humanitarian administrator naturally agrees with the employees on this point, especially if the employee leaves dependents. If death results from a service accident or disease, present-day public opinion generally recognizes the responsibility of the government to the dependents of the employee.

*Benefits in the event of voluntary withdrawal from the service.* Many administrators, both public and private, long believed that a retirement system should be used in part to tie an employee to the particular employer and to increase the disciplinary authority management

had over the worker. From their standpoint benefits in event of voluntary withdrawal were directly contrary to the interests of organization efficiency. The employees, on the other hand, believed that the retirement system should not be used to restrict their freedom and mobility and that as part of the system of compensation, it should not include forfeitures on voluntary withdrawal. The employee earned his retirement rights each day as he worked and on voluntary withdrawal he was entitled to the value of what he had already earned.

*Benefits in event of involuntary separation because of reduction of force.* Some public administrators have believed that a benefit paid on an involuntary separation because of reduction in force is in the interests of organization efficiency, because it would help to reduce the tendency to continue employees on the active payroll when they were no longer needed. Often administrative officers have no little discretion in the matter of holding an employee on, but in many cases reduction in appropriations leave the public administrator no discretion and cuts in force are imperative. The employees naturally take the position that when they are involuntarily separated from the service through no fault of their own, they are peculiarly entitled to benefits under the retirement system. Many of them believe that they should receive not only the value of the accrued reserves for other benefits, but in addition a distinct dismissal wage. That retirement systems should include a reasonable amount of unemployment insurance or a dismissal wage is entirely logical in a country that requires unemployment insurance for workers in private enterprise.

*Benefits in event of dismissal for cause.* Many administrators believe that when an employee is fired he should sacrifice all his rights and interests under the re-

tirement system. The administrator who does the actual firing naturally believes that the dismissal has been for good and sufficient reasons. The employee himself and some of his associates may take a very different view. Causes may vary all the way from inefficiency or unsatisfactory conduct, very indefinite things, hard to prove, up to serious offenses involving moral turpitude. Within the range are union or other organization activities, radicalism, and so on. Employees who hold strongly to the view that retirement benefits are deferred wages do not believe in forfeitures even when dismissal is for cause, and they particularly resent forfeitures when there is no judicial or quasi-judicial review of dismissals.

*Benefits for dependents.* From the narrow standpoint of organization efficiency, the dependents of an employee are of no concern to the administrator. They have no place in the organization or on the payroll. Provision for them is the private responsibility of the employee. To the more responsible employees provision for their dependents is one of their major concerns, if not their greatest concern. Thus they want their benefits available to meet their responsibilities even after their death. Thus in connection with practically every type of benefit will arise this question of the interests of the dependents in the deferred wages.

#### OBJECTIVES OF A RETIREMENT SYSTEM FROM THE PUBLIC STANDPOINT

American public opinion as expressed through recent social security legislation now favors practically all the benefits that are of particular interest to the employees. It may be fairly said that the objective of social security has been placed above the interests of any particular employer, public or private. Public service retirement



systems must now be recognized frankly as having a dual purpose: (1) the maintenance of the operating efficiency of the public service and (2) the provision of social security for the employees. When the two objectives seem more or less to conflict the decision today should be based primarily on the broad grounds of public policy.

*Forfeitures contrary to public interest.* Some public service retirement systems are today deficient from this broad standpoint of social security in that they involve a forfeiture on separation from the service of a particular government. Thus, in the case of the national government, an employee who voluntarily resigns from the service before he has both attained the age of forty-five years and rendered fifteen years of service, forfeits all that the government has contributed toward the retirement fund on his behalf. The employee gets back his own contributions to the fund with interest, but he loses what the government has put in. Under the Social Security Act, private employers are taxed to provide old age annuities for their employees and these taxes become on payment public funds to which the employee on whose behalf they are paid has a vested right which is not lost if he leaves the service of that employer. Complete mobility is thus provided by law for private employment, yet the national government itself in its own retirement system preserves a forfeiture. Many other public retirement systems have similar features. All the systems that provide a forfeiture of the government's contribution on separation need re-examination.

Under the old age annuity system of the Social Security Act, moreover, both the contributions of the employer and of the employee are definitely committed to old age protection and so long as an employee lives, the funds cannot be used for other purposes. Under the

national retirement system, when an employee withdraws, he is generally given in cash the amount of his own contributions toward the old age benefits of the retirement system. What he does with the accumulation is his own business. It need not be reserved for old age security and it probably rarely is, especially if the employee has a period of unemployment following his service with the national government. If the withdrawing employee uses his accumulated reserve for other purposes, he has to start over again, when re-employed, to build his old age reserve.

The amount of reserve thus drawn, and possibly spent, may be a relatively small sum; but it must be remembered that the payments made toward old age security during the earlier years of service are the ones that are multiplied by compound interest over a long period. In an old age reserve fund operating on a four per cent basis, one dollar paid at the beginning of the year in which retirement takes place amounts to \$1.04 when the annuity is purchased at the end of that year; whereas one dollar paid into the same fund at the beginning of service forty years earlier amounts to over \$4.00 when the annuity is purchased. If the early contributions toward old age security are dissipated, the accumulation of an adequate reserve for old age becomes far more difficult. To meet the public policy of old age security as established under the Social Security Act, it would seem that the employee's contribution toward old age should be reserved for old age, and that if employees are separated involuntarily and need funds to carry them, such funds should be provided through a distinct provision of a dismissal wage or unemployment insurance, entirely separate from the old age provision.

In a later discussion of that popular term "careers in

the public service" a necessary distinction will be drawn between (1) careers in the service of a particular government, and (2) careers in a particular profession, during which the individual may serve several different governments and possibly some private employers. In many important types of public service, satisfactory careers can only be developed under a system that permits, even encourages, free movement of the individual from one public employer to another, as often as such movement means greater opportunity for the individual and greater service to the public. Because of the division of government in the United States into local, state, and national, movement may mean passing from one retirement system to another, if indeed each employing government has a retirement system. If, on each such move, the employee loses certain rights and perhaps uses his own retirement reserves for current expenses, he may end up with little provision for old age; yet reasonable provision for old age is one of the distinguishing elements of successful public career services.

To preserve mobility of labor and still give adequate protection for old age, certain courses are possible:

1. So amend existing public retirement systems that an employee who withdraws prior to the retirement age and is not disabled is given a suitable deferred annuity bond with first payment at the retirement age, the amount of that bond being what the accumulations of his own contribution and the government contribution in his behalf will purchase, with provision for payment of benefits in event of disability or death before the retirement age.

2. Provide that public employees shall be brought under the old age insurance provisions of the social security acts and modify existing public employee retire-

ment acts so that they are supplementary to the general old age acts.

3. Develop for the professions, where mobility of employees is desirable, systems comparable to that of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching whereby annuity policies are issued to the individual employee and are his property. Each successive employer pays the employer's share of the premium so long as the employee is in that employer's service. If the individual is unemployed, or working on his own account, he may: (1) discontinue all payments and let his policy continue as a paid-up deferred annuity contract; (2) pay his own share of the premium, thereby continuing in part the old age protection; or (3) pay the full premium, his own share and the employer's share, thereby keeping in full effect the entire protection. To make this system effective in the public service in a country under a federal form of government, interstate cooperation would be necessary. It could be secured either through uniform legislation or through the unifying action of the federal grant-in-aid system. This device is particularly desirable for professions in which movement from public to quasi-public or private agencies is fairly common. It is particularly desirable where many of the operating units are small and more or less independent.

- *Conditions of superannuation retirement.* In designing retirement systems the early tendency was to establish a fixed age for superannuation retirement, say sixty-five or seventy years; to require a long fixed term of service before the employee was eligible to retire; or to require both advanced age and long service. Similarly the employee would have to serve a considerable period, perhaps fifteen or twenty years, before he was eligible for disability benefits. The dominant philosophy then

was that retirement allowances were pensions for long and faithful service and that employees should not be eligible for them until they had served for a long time. The arguments that retirement systems were in part devices for improving the service were less slowly accepted. The conception of retirement systems as social insurance devices of value to the whole public was often even rejected.

Experience has pretty well demonstrated that rigid requirements with respect to age and length of service, either for the superannuation benefit or the disability benefit, decrease the value of a retirement system as a device for improving the efficiency of the service. One fixed retirement age, say seventy, or one fixed period of service, say forty years, can at best be right only on the average; and a thing right on the average may be harshly wrong in the individual case. The late William Alanson White, the distinguished head of the Government Hospital for the Insane, in one of his last addresses said that the number of variables in the human being was so great that since the origin of man probably no two persons had ever been just alike. All public personnel administrators and students of public administration ought to have that observation engraved in their minds to avoid the pitfalls involved in thinking in terms of averages rather than in terms of individual deviation from the average. Modern economists have discarded the concept of the average man and use instead statistics of what groups of actual people actually do. It is to be hoped that students of public administration will not unconsciously revive for themselves the old concept of the average man.

The practical administrator knows that neither length of service nor calendar age is a measure of value or efficiency. Instances can be cited where advanced age and

long service have decreased neither imagination, vision, nor efficiency, but have brought wealth of experience, insight, and mature judgment. On the other hand elasticity, adaptiveness, and mental vigor may largely depart long before the mere calendar age or the length of service would suggest that fact. Particularly for positions requiring leadership, which often involves imagination, vision, mastery of the field, and power to command the respect and admiration of followers, neither age nor length of service is a determining factor. Therefore a retirement system to be really valuable must permit of variation, even of wide variation.

The necessity for variation does not mean that a retirement system should not contain a compulsory retirement age, reasonably high, to be applicable in the normal case. In fact such a compulsory provision appears to be necessary to make the system effective; but the law should, with all possible safeguards, provide for exceptions. In certain instances—three are in the writer's mind at the moment—invaluable elder statesmen are well beyond seventy. Younger men still turn to them for advice and guidance with the feeling that when they are gone there will be nobody to take their places; that no successor will measure up to their combination of wisdom, experience, and character. These men, despite their age, have maintained their leadership, and no retirement system should be so designed that it will force out that rarest of all men, the real leader in his field.

On the other hand retirement on old age benefits should be permissible without proof of disability several years before the normal compulsory retirement age, either on the motion of the administrative officers or on the application of the employees. For example if the compulsory retirement age is seventy, voluntary retire-

ment should be permissible at any age between sixty and seventy.

Administrative officers often wish that there was no minimum age or service period for eligibility for superannuation retirement. Then an employee whose usefulness has been seriously impaired could be retired, even if he were several years short of the minimum, without proof of real physical or mental disability. The arguments against such provisions are two. The first is that the administrators are not invariably to be entrusted with this discretion, for they might abuse it. The second is the element of cost.

*Age of retirement in athletic services.* Some positions demand a high degree of physical fitness. They constitute what are sometimes referred to as "the athletic services." The police and fire departments in municipalities and the railway mail service and the armed branches of the national government are examples. For two reasons, rather low compulsory retirement ages are commonly established for such services. Physical fitness is ordinarily very closely associated with calendar age, and most men after forty-five have to preserve the physical fitness appropriate to their age by giving up strenuous athletic activities. They are no longer fitted to perform the strenuous duties of their positions. Unless the older men are retired, the service gets loaded up with men who cannot perform the most active duties. Thus retirement is used to keep the service young. In any service the upper positions are ordinarily filled by the older, more experienced men who have made a success of their callings, and unless there is an outside competitive demand for their type of training and experience, they tend to remain in the service as long as they can. They block the avenues of advancement for the younger men, and ordinarily they are high

enough up in the hierarchy so that they are passing on their own fitness and efficiency. In the absence of a low compulsory retirement age they would in a considerable measure be responsible for retiring themselves. To prevent the upper positions of command from being filled with persons perhaps lacking the necessary physical fitness, the retirement system is used to make way for the advancement of the younger men. Incidentally this procedure, when coupled with liberal retirement systems, vastly improves the attractiveness of the resulting career service, because it greatly increases the opportunity for the younger men to reach the top positions of command and distinction, which likewise carry the high salaries. If retirement benefits are related directly or indirectly to active salary as they usually are, the result is that the retirement benefits are relatively large when the compulsory age is reached.

In the earlier discussion of salaries an attempt was made to bring out the importance of this factor of rate of advancement from grade to grade in determining what a service actually offers as a career. Dr. W. W. Stockberger, chief personnel officer of the Department of Agriculture, has referred to the *X* factor, or the luck factor in most public services. In no small measure this luck is the occurrence of a vacancy or the creation of a new position which the lucky one is selected to fill. If it happens to be in what is sometimes called a "limelight position" the person may be made.<sup>3</sup> A low retirement

<sup>3</sup> The amount of "limelight" is often determined more by the position a person fills than by his real capacity. It is a common experience in the federal service to know a man who is recognized by his colleagues as of outstanding ability, and yet the general public knows little of him or hears little of him. No reporters are present when he makes a speech or reads a paper that is a distinct contribution. It is a real pleasure to such a man's colleagues when he is promoted to a limelight position and everything he has to say becomes news.

College presidents and others occupying such positions are embarrassed



age materially increases the chances of advancement to such positions and hence the career aspects of a service.

The establishment of low compulsory retirement ages for the athletic services of course materially increases the cost of retirement benefits for these services. The amount of the benefits must, moreover, be reasonably attractive if men are to be drawn to the service, for a low compulsory age with a small benefit is distinctly unattractive, especially in a society where it apparently is becoming increasingly difficult for a man past middle age to get a new job. If our public services could be more closely integrated, it would be entirely practicable to reserve certain classes of positions to be filled exclusively by the transfer of older men from the athletic services. In the custodial and inspectional forces of the national government are many positions that do not require great physical effort and for which prior experience in the athletic services would be advantageous. If such integration could be effected, the costs of retirement could be kept down and men who do not relish early idleness could be provided with work. Some experience suggests that such employees might be superior to many of those now employed in such positions.<sup>8</sup>

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because not only what they say about things within their sphere of competence is news but everything which they may be induced to say about anything is news, whatever their sphere of competence may be. Important public and quasi-public positions have that same characteristic, and it is a wise shoemaker who has the sound judgment to stick to his last. Some in these positions unfortunately yield to the temptation to dissipate their energies, to spread themselves out over so wide a field that their speeches and writings lack depth and are not based on real command of facts. The reporters treat them as oracles and they accept that evaluation of themselves. Public and quasi-public positions are particularly dangerous to the individual in this respect, hence the demand for public civil servants with that passion for anonymity which means as a rule not getting out beyond their field of competence and not seeking publicity.

<sup>8</sup>In one agency in which the writer worked the division messenger was a Civil War veteran. His salary as a messenger supplemented his pension and he thoroughly enjoyed his job, in no small part because he

*Costs as a factor in conditions for superannuation retirement.* Unfortunately the element of cost must always be borne in mind in dealing with retirement systems. The life of an employee under a retirement system is divided into two parts: (1) the period during which he is on the active roll; and (2) the period during which he is on the retired roll. These two periods ultimately make in the

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was guide, philosopher, and friend to so many of the employees in the organization. Both the day and the night watchmen at the main entrance were likewise veterans of a high type who knew all eight hundred of us at least by sight and generally by name. If a visitor asked where a certain employee was, the watchman would say, "His room is so and so." He might add: "But he went out to lunch about ten minutes ago; he'll be back in about fifteen minutes."

All that was before the days when in the name of efficiency the watchmen and guards were taken out from department control, made employees of a central service agency, and assigned by shifts to the department. Now the watchman obligingly looks up the name for you in the card index; and perhaps you will reflect that he is a watchman and not an expert index clerk. Naturally when you enter or leave after hours or on holidays, he must ask to see your pass and your identification papers and if he really does his job he must watch you sign the register to see that your signature corresponds with the signature on the pass. Whether the pass is forged or not, he has no easy way of finding out. With the advent of the monumental departmental buildings, much of the human contact inevitably has gone.

It is a real pleasure to the writer to visit the new Federal Reserve Building in Washington which has its own building service employees and to find that watchmen and elevator operators can still call employees by name and at once spot the visitor and find out all that their duties require them to know about him and his mission through questions that appear to be prompted solely by a desire to be courteous and helpful. Personnel students naturally will question the wisdom of centralization that eliminates the human contacts and personal knowledge. Many of us have recently been disturbed by two cases of payroll padding in the national service. In each case the employee who defrauded the government put fictitious names on the payroll and then got hold of the checks made out to the fictitious persons when the checks came from the big and distant disbursing office. Doubtless we were far less efficient when disbursing was decentralized and the disbursing officer knew the employees and what they did; but there was safety in the system, and much good humor. The disbursing officer and his crew were popular men on pay day. Something about their job tended to make them good joshers.

case of any one employee a fixed total; and hence if we lengthen one, we shorten the other. Under a modern retirement system operated on an actuarial reserve basis, the period of active service is one in which payments are being made into the reserve fund by the employee or in his behalf. The longer that period the more payments are made and the larger the accumulated reserve that draws interest. Because of the "snow-balling" or cumulative effect of compound interest, shortening the period of active service only a few years makes a great difference in the amount of the accumulation at the time of retirement. Obviously the longer the retirement period the greater the number of annuity benefit payments that will be made. Then, too, the mortality table comes into the equation at least with respect to annuities. In any thousand employees who enter the service at a given age, many more will live to fifty than to sixty, and many more to sixty than to seventy. Thus lowering the retirement age will increase the number to whom annuities must be paid, provided the employees or the administrators take advantage of the reduced requirements. The extent to which they will take advantage of such reduced requirements is another factor in the relatively complicated equation.

Because early retirement costs far more than late retirement, both the government as an employer and the employees have to take the cost factor into consideration, especially if both contribute to the retirement system. Each side will have to pay larger premiums for early retirement than for late retirement. Thus in a retirement system the employee faces the old question of what part of his earnings should be laid away for old age, what part spent for current wants of himself and his family;

but under most retirement systems the question ceases to be an individual question and becomes a group question, for the contributions are almost necessarily compulsory.<sup>4</sup> Do the employees want liberal provisions requiring them to contribute from say five to ten per cent of their current earnings or would they prefer far less liberal provisions that would cost them perhaps two or three per cent?

Permanent government employees who are making the service their life work have no chance to invest their savings as capital in their own businesses. They have the problem of investing their savings in other enterprises or putting them into financial institutions which in turn invest them. The nature of the duties of many public employees, one might even say of most employees, gives them no particular knowledge and skill in investments, and generally the amounts they have to invest are too small to induce them to attempt to become experts in this field. Bitter experience has taught many of them that they are rather easy victims for high pressure salesmen, some of whom sell pretty poor stuff. Observation suggests that as the employees become more familiar with retirement systems operated on an actuarial reserve basis they have more confidence in them and want more benefits and more adequate benefits even if they have to pay higher compulsory contributions. Naturally they try to get as much as possible out of the government but if their interests are recognized in the system and there are no forfeitures of their own contributions they are ready to contribute. The individualists among them are becom-

<sup>4</sup> Some retirement systems permit the employees voluntarily to elect to increase the amount of their own contributions toward old age benefits and to purchase special life insurance. The employer, being duly authorized, withholds the amount of the premium from the pay envelope or check of the employee and thus collection is automatic.

ing less numerous and less vocal, partly perhaps because some of them lost heavily during the depression.

The common demand on the part of many employees for an earlier optional retirement age has its curious side. Somehow some individuals in their younger days look forward to the time they can retire on an annuity and they want to retire "while I am still young enough to enjoy it." As they approach the retirement age their point of view changes and they want to stay in harness just as long as they can. In part the explanation lies in the difference between the active pay and the retirement allowance, which ordinarily and properly is enough to be an inducement to continue in active service, but it is deeper than that; a good many just do not like to give up.<sup>5</sup>

*Length of service requirements for superannuation benefits.* Retirement systems generally require that the employee, to be eligible for superannuation benefit, must have served at least a certain number of years—fifteen for example, under the general federal system. If fifteen years of service are required for the benefit and if re-

<sup>5</sup> The writer recalls a conversation with one of the prime movers for the establishment of the federal retirement system held a few weeks before that worthy veteran attained the compulsory retirement age under the system he had done so much to secure and perfect. It was hard for him to step out of harness. The writer naturally suggested an application for extension. The answer was: "I ought to be a good enough sport to take my own medicine." Then the two of us joined in discussing how much good the retirement system had done for the government and for the other fellow, while we agreed that so far as we were concerned we'd prefer to stay in harness till we dropped; but that means being lucky enough to escape physical and mental impairments that make one conscious of one's impairments. In a few cases, to the writer's knowledge, unimpaired employees have preferred early and optional retirement to readjustment to changed conditions in their own organizations. On reduction in force some of them have retired so that younger employees with dependents could retain their jobs. The writer's own guess would be that relatively few employees will really and entirely voluntarily take advantage of early retirement provisions, although they may be influenced seemingly to take advantage of them through administrative

tirement is compulsory at age seventy, it follows that no employee entering after the age of fifty-five can qualify for retirement benefits. Hence fifty-five tends to become the maximum age for entrance into the national civil service.

*Age at entrance into the service.* Two different points of view are sometimes encountered with respect to the maximum entrance age: (1) that of administrators and personnel specialists; and (2) that of humanitarians.

Some career service advocates would establish very low maximum entrance ages for the several normal entrance gates to the service, ages just a little above those at which students complete the schooling required for these gates. The idea is that they would enter young and spend their lives in the service. Obviously this plan is applicable only when careers are to be found in the service of a particular government. Such rules impede movement from one government to another and operate against a professional career service, in which the employee during the course of his career may work for several different governments. Even so high an entrance age as fifty-five may be a barrier to real professional career services, if it means that highly successful men are barred from making a change in the last ten or fifteen years of their active service. Thus many administrators and personnel specialists are opposed to rigid rules regarding entrance ages, and prefer a flexible system. They would draw a sharp distinction between (1) those who have had no prior experience which will be of especial value to the government they are to serve and (2) those who will bring to the government a background of experience that will enhance their value. For the inexperienced they would establish relatively low entrance ages; for the experienced they would remove

age restrictions and endeavor so to develop retirement systems that they would offer no impediment to the appointment of persons within a few years of the retirement age.

Humanitarians generally oppose age restrictions. They maintain that if each employer, public or private, consults his own individual interests and in the main restricts his initial selections to the reasonably young, the person of middle or advanced age who happens to lose his job with a particular employer is in a predicament. If loss of position has resulted from technological change, so that the person's previous experience is no longer an asset and he has to start over again, he may find most gates closed to him. No public service, it is maintained, should follow so selfish a policy. In so far as retirement systems foster, if they do not require, such a policy they are against the general public interest. If the humanitarian philosophy is accepted, then age restrictions must be largely eliminated and our general social insurance and retirement legislation so integrated that the late entrant who has already worked for his living in his earlier years will come into the public service with his accumulated old age reserves still intact. If these reserves can be kept intact, the fact that he will have only a few years to serve before reaching the compulsory retirement age will be a matter of no great administrative difficulty.

*Health requirement on entrance into service.* The inclusion of disability benefits in retirement systems has introduced a comparable conflict between the immediate interests of an individual employer and the general public interest. A government whose retirement system provides disability insurance naturally wants to protect the fund from the bad disability risks and hence candidates

for the service are given a thorough medical examination. Those who for one reason or another are regarded as bad risks are excluded. The more general this system becomes, the more effectively the impaired risks are excluded from employment. The impaired risks for the disability system are not necessarily intellectually impaired. In fact the principle of compensations may be at work and the person who is impaired in some respects may excel in others. Numerous cases can, of course, be cited in which persons who would have been disqualified from a disability insurance scheme have attained distinction in their particular fields. As civilization becomes more highly organized or regimented, if one prefers that word, the lot of the physically handicapped becomes harder. The humanitarian would contend that from the social standpoint the disability insurance system should exist to help the handicapped one if perchance the worst happens, and that it defeats its real purpose if it prevents the handicapped one from ever having his chance to serve.

The humanitarian would not contend that a candidate who suffers from an impairment that jeopardizes the health and safety of his fellow workers should be employed; in fact he would probably contend that such a person should be cared for, if necessary, at public expense to safeguard society. If, on the other hand, the impairment does not jeopardize the health and safety of fellow employees or the public and does not prevent the efficient performance of the duties of the position, then, according to the humanitarian, the government should not refuse to employ him because of the possible additional burden on its retirement fund.

The question of whether the admission of an impaired risk to a retirement fund is unfair to the members of the



fund who are unimpaired is actuarially complicated. The risk of disability is unquestionably greater but the risk of early death may be greater too. The contract which the Brookings Institution has with the insurance carrier for its superannuation fund provides that if an employee on reaching the retirement age believes he is impaired he may ask for a medical examination by the carrier. If the carrier finds that he is impaired it will offer him an annuity, increased above that called for by the contract, in accordance with the degree of impairment found by the carrier. The annuity on an impaired life, in other words, costs less than an annuity on an unimpaired life. Insurance, of course, presents just the reverse situation. Insurance on an impaired risk costs more than insurance on an unimpaired risk, and hence those insurance companies which insure impaired risks charge higher premiums to the impaired or require them to take forms of insurance that have like effect.\* Since a retirement system generally combines disability insurance with annuities, it would take thorough actuarial studies to determine the real effect on the fund of the admission of impaired disability risks. So far as the writer knows, no experiments have been tried on admitting impaired risks but charging them an increased premium because of that impairment and then, if they reach the retirement age, adjusting the annuity upward to compensate for the impairment.

*The amount of the benefit for higher paid employees.* In the early discussions of retirement systems for public employees in the United States some students took the

\* Some companies will sell to somewhat impaired risks endowment policies which provide high payments for a relatively short time. In other cases the impaired risk pays the premium established for an age considerably above his own. That is, the company may say to a man of twenty-five, "You are no better risk than a man of thirty-five"; and if he wants insurance he pays the premiums for that age.

position that there should be a fixed upper limit to the maximum annuity that any employee could draw, say \$1,500 a year. Those who would be fair would also have limited the amount of the salary of upper bracket employees which would be subject to percentage deductions, to say \$3,000. The argument was that these employees were in a position to make such further provisions as they wished for their own retirement. The major difficulty with such a device is that it makes so great a difference between active pay and retired pay that no upper bracket man will retire unless he is actually forced out and it does not make the service sound attractive as a career. During the period when the national service had a system that was grossly unfair to the upper bracket employees, some valuable men actually left the service for that reason. Competitors for their knowledge and skill offered much more favorable retirement terms. Today it is generally recognized that the retirement benefits must be so related to pay, either directly or indirectly,<sup>1</sup> that the retirement allowance for the upper bracket men of long service is a fair proportion of their active salaries.

*The amount of the benefit for low paid employees.* In determining the relationship of retirement benefits to active pay, special consideration has to be given to the numerous classes of employees whose active salaries or

<sup>1</sup> A direct relationship to pay is secured through a provision that the retirement allowance shall be a certain proportion of the employee's salary, his final salary, his average salary over the last five years, etc. An indirect relationship is secured by requiring each employee, or the government on his behalf, to pay into an individual reserve account for such employee a fixed percentage of his total salary each pay day so long as he remains in the active service. When the time comes for him to retire, the amount of his annuity is that amount which his accumulated reserve with interest will purchase. The larger his salary has been the larger his annuity will be; but the exact relationship between active pay and annuity may vary considerably because of differences in the time and amount of salary increases.

wages fall in the neighborhood of a minimum standard of subsistence. No one will for a moment argue that employees in say the \$5,000 bracket could not themselves subsist in economic independence on an old age benefit of say one quarter of their pay or \$1,250, or that in general they could not maintain themselves and their dependents on an old age benefit of half pay, \$2,500. The employee who has been earning only \$1,200 a year, however, could scarcely subsist in economic independence on quarter pay of \$300 a year or sustain himself and his dependents on \$600 a year. Such allowances must be supplemented from other sources: his own savings, contributions from relatives, or private or public charity. Investigations time and time again have established the fact that employees whose earnings are in the neighborhood of the minimum of subsistence have few if any savings; they are perhaps fortunate if they are not in debt. Many of them are chronically in debt and others have to go in debt in the event of illness in the family, unemployment in the family, and other similar misfortunes. Low retirement allowances for them mean generally that they will have to turn to their relatives or to public or private relief agencies for part of their old age maintenance. Even small benefits of \$300 a year are unquestionably of great assistance and make old people less a burden on the younger generation and hence more welcome in their homes, but still the old people tax the resources of their relatives and of course some of them have no relatives.

The existence of large classes of employees who never get much above the minimum subsistence wage for a single individual has led in some retirement systems to the insertion of provisions that no old age retirement benefit shall be less than a certain minimum. Such a minimum meets this economic situation.

The provision of minimum benefits adds of course to the cost of annuities. For example, if a contribution of six per cent of an employee's earnings, made by either the government or the employee, will produce an annuity of only \$450, it will take a contribution of twelve per cent to produce an annuity of \$900. Thus a percentage contribution made, either by the government or the employee, which will produce a reasonably satisfactory benefit for the upper bracket employees will prove insufficient to pay the entire minimum benefits for the lower paid employees who are affected by the minimum provisions. There will be a deficit resulting from the difference between the contributions paid by them or on their behalf and the cost of their annuities. How is this deficit to be made up?

Several courses are possible:

One course is to charge the low-paid employee a higher percentage of his salary or wages than is charged the upper bracket employee, to force him to save a higher percentage of his low earnings. Socially and economically such a course is undesirable and probably impracticable.

Another course is to pool all contributions both from the government and the employees in a common fund and to pay all benefits from this fund. Under such a system part of the contributions actually made by upper bracket employees may be used to pay for the benefits given to lower bracket employees.

The third course is for the government itself out of its own contributions to meet the extra costs resulting from the minimum provisions and to preserve practically complete individualism so far as the employees' contribution is concerned. Thus in effect the retirement system is divided into two distinct parts: (1) that which is supported by the contribution of the government, and (2)

that which is supported by the contribution of the employees. The government may without great criticism do relatively more for its lower paid employees than it does for its higher paid. It may properly raise the wages of its lower paid employees without raising the wages of the higher paid. That is virtually what it does when it provides them with relatively higher benefits.

*Contributory systems vs. straight pension systems.* In the last century the question of whether retirement benefits should be straight pensions granted by the government as gratuities or whether they should in part be paid for by compulsory contributions required of all potential beneficiaries was much debated. Many administrators, both in the public and the private fields, preferred the straight pensions because of the discretionary features permissible in gratuity systems and because of the control that the administrator could thereby exercise over the employees. If benefits were pure gratuities, no employee could demand them as a matter of contractual right and the administrators were in a good position to resist demands for benefits which were of no interest to the employer, such as a death benefit, or for benefits which were considered as adverse to the employer, such as a benefit on voluntary withdrawal or dismissal. In those days a good many employees already in the service opposed compulsory contributions and favored gratuity pensions because in their cases they got something for nothing. They had already served for a number of years and had been paid for that service and thus the pension was to them a pure gift.

New entrants under a gratuity pension system and even the younger workers already in the service when the system was established gradually discovered that economic forces made even gratuity pensions part of the

workers' compensation for services rendered. Pensions were only deferred and conditional pay. They found that the prospect of a pension after continuous service operated to hold them in the service, and led to their declining offers of positions that would pay a greater immediate wage. In some instances they knew that employers were paying lower wages to permanent employees who had pension privileges than to temporary employees who had no such privileges. Some administrative officers under the British straight pension system frankly testified that in fixing pay scales they took the pensions into consideration. Thus the employees adopted the economically sound deferred pay argument, and began to agitate for those benefits which were of interest to them and their dependents, regardless of the interests of the employers. To the argument that they should not look a gift horse in the mouth, they replied that it was not a gift horse because they were paying for it indirectly and they had rights. Gradually they won them; and as new systems were established provisions were generally included for contributions by the employees and for recognition at least in part of the interests of the employees.

If economic forces operate, in the case of new entrants, to make retirement benefits merely deferred pay, what difference does it make whether the employer pays all the contributions, or the employee pays all the contributions, or whether both share in the contributions? This question has to be approached from two standpoints, the economic and the psychological.

From the economic standpoint one has to differentiate between (1) the situation at the time the system is initiated or radically amended and (2) the situation after the system has been really operating. When the system is initiated the question is obviously one of wage adjust-

ment. If the employer pays all, wages are advanced by the present value of the benefits in respect to current services and in respect to past services. If the employees pay all through compulsory contributions, the amount of money in their pay envelopes is reduced by the amount of the contribution, whereas the wage bill of the employer is unchanged. The two sides are thus naturally thrown into a controversy, which ordinarily tends toward a fifty-fifty compromise. The employer pays part through an increase in his labor costs; the employee pays part by accepting the deduction of a contribution from his current pay.

After a system under which the employer pays into the fund a definite contribution is in actual operation, the employees naturally and properly figure that contribution made in their behalf by the employer as part of what they get as compensation for their work. Thus if their base pay is \$100 a month and the employer pays a three per cent contribution toward the old age benefit, the employee figures he is earning \$103 a month though his envelope on pay day contains, after his own three per cent contribution has been deducted, only \$97. If somebody offers him a new job at the same pay he is getting, he wants \$103 and not \$97 unless the retirement contributions make the actual pay \$103. Employees tend to keep their arithmetic pretty straight on these matters, and if the system is operated on a sound actuarial basis, they have reasonably close figures for their arithmetic. Thus except at the time of the initial installation of the system, it does not make much economic difference how the costs are divided between employer and employee. Some economists, appreciating that the whole thing is a mere matter of bookkeeping, suggest that it would be simpler if the employer paid all; but most modern re-

tirement systems are now so designed that separate accounts have to be kept in some form with respect to individual employees regardless of the division of contributions.

Psychologically it has proved distinctly advantageous to have the employees contribute. Contribution makes patent the fact that the employee has earned at least part of his benefits by his services and that helps in his relations with members of the general public and the legislatures. To some of them, despite economic reasoning to the contrary, a pension paid for entirely by the government is a pure gratuity; and pure gratuities are never popular and may be cut in times of depression. If the employees contribute, it is obvious to everyone that they have a real right to ask for the inclusion of benefits which are primarily of interest to them. They may even agree to somewhat increased contributions for the sake of getting those benefits. The fact that the employees will have to pay part of the costs for increased benefits from their own current wages tends moreover to make them consider costs. If the whole cost is borne by the employing government, then naturally the more benefits the employees can get out of the retirement system and the more liberal the conditions, the better. If, on the other hand, the changes mean a substantial change in their contributions and a material inroad on the current pay envelope they are going to do the proper thing: weigh current demands against future possibilities, and seek a reasonable balance. From the psychological standpoint the case for contributions from the employees seems pretty conclusively established.

*The necessity for operation on a sound actuarial basis.*  
From the standpoint of the government, the employee,



and the taxpayers, it seems almost imperative that expert actuaries on the basis of the most perfect possible data should determine the contributions necessary, from either the employer or the employee, to build a reserve sufficient to pay each benefit when it becomes due, expressed in proportions of the current earnings. This figure shows the government what its labor is actually costing it, namely, the sum of the cash wage plus the cost of the retirement benefits in respect to that labor. It shows the employees what they are actually getting for their services. It enables the public to inform itself as to what is going on. Such figures are essential when proposals for the modification of the system are under consideration, for without them changes may be made which will prove prohibitively costly in the future. Without sound actuarial cost figures a hidden governmental liability may be built up which will swamp the taxpayers of the future, and neither the legislators nor the employees will be conscious of what they are doing. That the best possible cost figures should always be available seems axiomatic.

The question of whether the contributions should be collected currently and be paid into a special retirement trust fund which bears interest has distinctive aspects. The actuaries, in determining real costs, must necessarily assume such a trust fund and the rate of interest it will earn, for otherwise they cannot determine present costs and let everyone know what is being done when it is being done. It is pretty clear that the trust fund should be assumed and books kept on that basis, even if it is not actually set up as a real fund. It should at least be set up on paper so that the whole program is subject to factual control and the interest which would have been earned by

a real fund should be carried to those books. Thus the government and the people will know what the liabilities are.

If the government simply takes the employees' contributions and turns them into the general fund without reserve accounts, and if it never actually makes any contributions of its own, it will in time discover a painful truth. A retirement system which could be operated for six or seven per cent of current payrolls on a real reserve basis may climb up to twenty-five or thirty per cent of active payrolls if no reserve is accumulated. If the taxpayers of today avoid their burdens, the taxpayers of thirty years from now will have to pay them, with accumulated interest. Under the "pay-as-you-go" actuarial reserve system, the premiums for current services remain level at approximately the figure named by the actuaries, subject, of course, to minor periodic adjustments. Under the plan of building no reserves, but appropriating for the benefits only as they become due, the amount starts at very little and gradually grows and grows until in thirty or forty years it levels off at a relatively high percentage of the active payroll.

The building of an actuarial reserve involves: (1) protection of the reserves from dissipation by political action, for the government may fail to distinguish between special trust revenues and general revenues, and (2) the safe investment of the reserves. These questions are of extreme importance but they lie beyond the scope of the present volume.

*Small systems on an actuarial basis.* Some governmental agencies are so small that they cannot by themselves establish a retirement system, operate it on an actuarial reserve basis, and develop a reserve. An organization to operate its own system has to be sufficiently

large to permit the law of averages to work. In a very small service a single adverse event like the early disability of a few employees may upset the fund. Small services must therefore seek an insurance carrier which brings together many such services and thereby gets sufficient members to permit of safe operation. Today several private insurance companies are prepared to render this service for either public or private enterprises. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching renders it for higher educational institutions. An amendment to the national Social Security Act might be passed to make its old age security provisions applicable to such public or quasi-public agencies as desire to get for their employees the old age insurance provisions it offers. The private companies engaged in this type of service necessarily and properly make a charge for their services in the form of loadings included in the premiums for the policies. Where a government operates its own system it customarily contributes the administrative costs and thus there are no loadings in the premiums or contributions levied upon the employees.

*The burden of accrued liabilities.* No government agency that is to be reasonably permanent or enduring should delay in establishing a retirement system, because of those troublesome things termed by the actuaries "accrued liabilities for past services." When a governmental agency is first established and most of its employees are relatively young and active, the provision for their ultimate retirement because of advanced age is likely to be postponed or entirely neglected. No contributions are collected from the employee or made by the employer. When ultimately an employee has to be retired because of disability or old age, it is discovered that an annuity for him will cost a lot of money. When the problem is

really faced and the actuaries are called in, it will be discovered that already each employee by his past services has earned certain benefits which will have to be provided if the system is to serve its purpose. If the establishment of a retirement system has been long delayed the total cost of these benefits with respect to past services may be distinctly embarrassing, even when the scale of benefits in respect to past services is held down to a reasonable minimum. On the other hand if the responsible officers and legislators have been far-sighted and have set up their system promptly they will find this accrued liability unimportant or even negligible. In fact if action is taken sufficiently promptly, it is even possible to establish a satisfactory system that completely ignores past service.

No attempt will here be made to go into the rather intricate details that are involved in financing these accrued liabilities. Part of the cost can of course be assessed against the employees through increased contributions, adjusted according to their length of service, but there is a distinct limit to that method. The employee who is already close to the retirement age cannot possibly be assessed any very considerable part of his retirement allowance, nor does it seem just to levy heavy contributions against the young employees to pay for the retirement of the old employees. The government therefore has to pay the major part of the benefits in respect to past services. Since no reserves were accumulated and no interest earned by the reserves, these costs are high for agencies that have long neglected this problem. In the past, delays resulted in no small part from division of opinion with respect to policy. Today the question of policy is pretty definitely settled and public and quasi-public agencies that have postponed action are not only negligent; they are letting their ultimate difficulties multiply.

## CHAPTER IX

### MORALE AND DISCIPLINE

The effectiveness of a government agency depends in no small measure on the spirit of its employees. Unless one has actually observed the phenomenon, it would be difficult to believe the change that can take place in a unit through a change in its spirit. In no small measure the spirit depends on the head of the organization and the supervisors in charge of the units. How do they deal with the subordinate employees? Have the employees confidence in the ability, the integrity, and the fairness of their chief or do they find him wanting in one or more of those three essentials?

Ability, it should be noted, is not synonymous with knowledge. Employees frequently have more respect for the leader who does not know but, knowing that he does not know, turns to his subordinates for advice and assistance, than they have for the superior who believes that he has already mastered the entire subject and is an outstanding authority. The first creates a spirit of intellectual democracy in which the employees feel moved to contribute their best, whereas the second is inclined to become an intellectual autocrat making the employees feel that a suggestion, however well intended, is an implied hostile criticism.

Absence of integrity on the part of the head of a unit is perhaps the most unpardonable sin against morale. If the employees know that the work of their unit is being perverted for personal or political ends, they lose all enthusiasm for it, unless they too are parties to its per-

version.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, they will pardon many personal idiosyncrasies on the part of the chief, and in fact even get a good deal of quiet enjoyment out of them,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps a few disguised, specific cases should be cited to indicate what is meant by lack of integrity.

A police officer had a complete case against a man who had so violated traffic regulations that he had endangered the public safety. The offender had so much political influence that the officer was cautioned against enforcing the law if the violators were of the specially privileged class. Under such circumstances a policeman perhaps naturally may reach the conclusion that he too can, on his own motion, add friends, and friends of friends, to the specially privileged class.

A young college graduate, on the recommendation of a distinguished professor of labor economics, was appointed to an agency enforcing a state child labor law. Her chief handed her one application for an employment certificate with the suggestion that she need not spend much time on the case as it was brought in by a friend of his and he knew it was all right. Finding no evidence in the papers to support the allegation of age, she checked it. She found not only school records but also a birth certificate proving that the child was below the minimum working age, and hence his employment was absolutely prohibited. Her chief had no legal discretion to grant a certificate. The chief ultimately got rid of her and reported to her college professor endorser that she was a cantankerous person with whom no one could get along. Without investigating the facts, the college professor later mentioned the criticism in reply to a letter written to him about the young woman when she was a candidate in a civil service examination.

A responsible official wanted a distribution of certain expenditures by designated geographic units. No such tabulation had ever been made. To make it would necessitate returning to the original expenditure documents and tabulating them by geographic units, a slow and costly procedure. The impatient executive demanded that the statistician estimate the geographic distribution of the known total, and when it was submitted struck out, or had struck out, all the words the statistician had carefully used to show that it was an estimated distribution and not an actual distribution. Thus it was made to appear what it was not and constituted a distinct violation of the statistician's code of ethics.

A department had two sets of figures dealing with the same economic phenomenon, one of well-established reliability, the other already scientifically discredited. Newspaper reporters visited the political head of the department for a statement regarding the phenomenon and he based his statement on the discredited figures, as they sustained the point he wanted to make. The reporters, without telling of the statement just secured from the political chief, interviewed a permanent civil servant thoroughly conversant with both sets of figures. He based his statements on the more reliable series; and when he had finished the newspaper men confronted him with the discrepancies between his statement and that just given them by his political chief.

if they are convinced of his complete sincerity of purpose.

Fairness, the third requisite, means both fairness to the individual employee and fairness as among the several employees. It may be contended that fairness to one is fairness to all and that really there is no distinction between fairness to the individual and fairness to the group. In actual practice, however, one finds a marked distinction, because some supervisors customarily think only of the individual and not of the group as a whole. They do not always stop to consider whether the action they propose to take in a given case is not only fair to the individual but fair to others similarly placed. To give a concrete example: The chief thinks that a certain employee richly deserves an advance in salary and hence that it is eminently fair to increase his salary. Within the organization there are, however, three others who are equally deserving of recognition. Fairness to the group requires that all be considered. It is fairness as among the several employees that particularly influences morale.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In one case a member of a board had an extremely high opinion of the merits of a certain employee and was a strong advocate of her promotion through the reclassification of her position. Another member of the board, temperamentally more objective, pointed out that several other employees, whom he named, were performing comparable duties with a high rating for efficiency and urged that the entire group should be considered together. In one way this recommendation amounted to a negative vote, because it was doubtful if the available funds would permit of promotions involving advances in pay for the entire group. The third member sided with the first, and endorsed the papers, "I believe that every tub should stand on its own bottom." Doubtless the endorser felt that he was being eminently fair to the highly supported candidate, but he did not appreciate the unfairness to the other employees whose duties did not bring them in such close contact with individual members of the board. Since members of the staff often know well the duties, responsibilities, and efficiency of their fellows, such action appears to be rank favoritism and is destructive of morale. In this instance, it should be noted, the board was not called upon to select one individual for promotion to a single vacant supervisory position above, which always necessitates selecting one from the group; it was reclassifying a single position without considering other similar positions.

Morale is distinctly the product of the supervisory officers. Two extreme types of administrative officers may be distinguished in respect to their attitude toward discipline and morale, with almost innumerable gradations between these two extremes. The first group contains the strict disciplinarians who seek to secure results by driving. The second group gives little thought to discipline as such, but seeks to secure efficiency through leadership and the maintenance of a high state of general morale.

#### THE STRICT DISCIPLINARIAN

In the office under a strict disciplinarian, the rules and regulations are legion. Each time an ingenious employee reveals a loophole in the regulations, it is straightway closed by the adoption of a new rule, or a new sub-section of an old rule. The determining factor thus becomes the most unruly or rebellious employee in the unit. It should be noted that the phrase used was "the most unruly or rebellious employee" and not "the worst employee" or "the most inefficient employee." Employees of the highest personal efficiency frequently chafe under detailed rules and regulations and kick over the traces.

A concrete case may be worth presenting. In one government agency appropriations were running low and a general speeding up of the work was indicated. The plan of the responsible acting head administrator was to lengthen the working day and to withdraw all leave privileges. To him the problem was a simple one in arithmetic. If he increased the working day by one-fourteenth he increased output by one-fourteenth. The experienced division chiefs who knew the employees advised against the procedure, even begged that the entire matter be left in their hands so that they could handle it on a voluntary basis. They even went so far as vigorously



to question the validity of so obvious an arithmetical calculation. The acting top administrator was obdurate, and the new rules were clamped down with such rigidity that an employee could not be granted leave with pay, which he had already earned, to attend, in a distant state, his father's funeral.

One employee in this situation proved particularly interesting to watch. He was a bachelor, a past grand master of his profession, ordinarily completely engrossed in his work. He preferred a late dinner and customarily worked for at least an hour and a half after the closing bell. Not infrequently he returned to the office in the evening to continue the work on which his mind was absorbed. In past emergencies he had been a tower of strength, because he seemed to have no nervous reactions to pressure and rush. When under the new dispensation, the closing bell rang at five in the afternoon instead of four-thirty, this sterling employee arranged his papers with customary neatness, carefully distributed the glass paper weights, and left for the day. In the morning, instead of coming to his desk on arrival, as had been his custom, he joined the unusually large group standing in the sunshine outside the office and only entered when the warning bell rang. What could a division chief do when the ablest man of his class in the unit punctiliously observed all the rules and regulations of the office, but at the same time cut his customary working hours by at least fifteen per cent?

This particular man more or less typified the spirit that prevailed throughout the organization. Division chiefs could not complain about the order and formal discipline that prevailed: it was unusually placid, but all agreed that no additional work was being turned out. Several of them reported an actual decrease, and this was

taking place in an organization, units of which, under an earlier head, had frequently volunteered for night and Sunday work with almost the spirit of a picnic.<sup>8</sup> At long last the rather fixed acting administrator gave in and the organization went back to regular hours with normal leave privileges, but it was then too late to rally the volunteer spirit to meet the extra load.

Persons who have made reputations as administrators in private enterprise through the use of the driving, autocratic techniques are often nonplussed when they attempt to apply them in the public service. The effectiveness of the driving technique is fear of the boss, fear of dismissal. In the public service few administrators are in positions of autocratic authority. Powers are divided between the legislative, appropriating branch, and the executive branch. Within the executive branch a hierarchy is developed, generally with a politically chosen person at its head. The autocratic driver from the private business world is usually subordinate at least to the chief executive, if not to others in the administrative hierarchy. The employees as citizens have the right of appealing to their representatives in the legislative body, which they may do indirectly through their friends. Some of them are naturally wise enough in ways of the world to appeal

<sup>8</sup> The picnic element came in part from the fact that ordinarily the members of the group working at night did not go home to dinner, but, at their own expense—for the government neither allowed supper money nor paid for overtime—ate together in a neighboring restaurant. At the close of the night session one of the chiefs frequently suggested to his young male assistants a little round table gathering at either one of the two best German places on the way uptown. Here the boys discovered that their chief had a delightful companionable side that rarely appeared during office hours. It was an unwritten rule of the group that the spirit of the round table gatherings belonged solely to social interludes and was not to be carried over to office relationships, although the resulting personal attachment to the chief played a part in the high morale of the group.

to politically powerful friends. Thus the driver who wants to strike fear in the hearts of his subordinates by a few well-chosen official decapitations, finds his recommendations held up by his politically appointed administrative superiors. They either have already heard from the legislators or know they will hear from them. They know that public business is conducted in the open and that removal of public employees is subject to investigation by the legislative branch and to comment by the press. The autocratic administrator may be letting his political superiors in for a whole lot of adverse publicity. They have more of a political sense than the autocrat, and they will not sustain him.

If such an autocrat is working under a civil service system the chances are that he will straightway blame all his difficulties on the civil service. "You can't fire a civil service employee," he will repeat, joining in an old familiar chorus. In the national government the truth is that it is easier to fire a classified civil service employee than it is to fire the employee who holds office by virtue of live, current political connections. More will be said on this subject later. The main point here is, civil service or no civil service, conditions in public offices are such that the driving technique offers little chance for success, because of the existence of an elected legislative, appropriating body and a long administrative hierarchy with politically selected officers at its head.

#### THE LEADER

Success in public administration offices is more generally found among the administrators who depend upon leadership and the maintenance of high morale. In such offices purely disciplinary rules and regulations are held to a minimum, although rules regarding business prac-

tice and procedure may be highly developed so that the employees know precisely what is expected of them under any ordinary circumstances. They offend, if they do offend, not because of some disciplinary rule, but because they have done something which interferes with the work. The rules are based on reasons; the experienced employees know the reasons for the rules, and they try to abide by them just as they generally try to do acceptable work.

Tardiness rules are a good example. In certain positions tardiness delays other employees in getting started for the day, and the employee occupying one of these positions knows perfectly well that tardiness is an offense. In other positions tardiness is a matter of little or no real consequence. Certain employees have duties that do not warm up until the office is really under way. Often these same employees can rarely stop when the office closes. They have to stay to finish up: get the signed correspondence in the last mail; file the last papers; have the memorandum, the table, or the case all ready for the chief the first thing in the morning, or even stay until the chief himself leaves. Their real day begins later and ends later than that of many of their fellows. Things like that are well understood in most offices. The administrator of the leader type is concerned, not with the question, "Did you, or did you not, report for duty at nine o'clock?" but "Did you get your work out?" "Did anything in your conduct interfere with the efficiency of the office?" To the conscientious employee these latter questions are based on reason. They embrace tardiness if there is a real reason for a rigid tardiness rule.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>To some persons tardiness is *per se* a cardinal offense. The writer recalls a deep-voiced rather pompous efficiency engineer who at staff

*Developing a sense of responsibility.* If morale is to be developed in the public service, the employees must

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conference in war-days boomed out charges against the girls in the writer's units because they were not always on duty at eight-thirty sharp, but "came drifting in, all smiles, five or ten minutes late." The chief, with a very understanding wink, asked the writer what he had to say to that charge. The answer was that the girls would be all smiles if they had a chance to drift out within five or ten minutes after the official closing hour, that practically every day we were violating laws governing the hours of work for women, and that if the girls would continue to volunteer for overtime work the way they were doing, the government could well afford to give them five or ten minutes in the morning in exchange for the hour or two at night necessary to clear the desks for the day. The chief announced that the situation seemed to call for no action. The deep-voiced pompous one then said he would have his desk so placed that each girl reporting late would have to pass it, and he would "give them a look that would show their tardiness was noted and disapproved." He did have his desk so placed, but soon after that he was transferred to another position.

In that organization one woman had family responsibilities which made it necessary for her to leave promptly at the closing hour. When she began using the privilege of drifting in five or ten minutes late every morning, she was reminded that she already had the special privilege of leaving on time, and that the two privileges were inconsistent. She was entitled to one or the other, and she could have her choice. She elected to continue to leave on time and thereafter she reported on time. When an office is run with a minimum of disciplinary rules and regulations it is occasionally necessary to speak to an individual who abuses the freedom. The absence of petty disciplinary rules and regulations is generally appreciated and the sentiment of the office is against the individual who abuses the liberty and thus creates a situation that might lead to rules curtailing it.

In another organization where the writer had nothing to do with rule-making and had merely to enforce the existing rules, there was a strict tardiness rule. All employees arriving after the opening bell had to sign at the front door and their leave account was charged with half an hour as penalty. Naturally an employee who found slight tardiness inescapable would telephone the office and actually take the leave for errands, reporting at nine-thirty, or perhaps later. Special favorites of the chief clerk were excused from the rule, and it was not applied to the upper officers. The favoritism caused a good deal of ill-feeling and the writer reached the conclusion that if such a rule was on the books it should be uniformly enforced. Later, when in other organizations he had some real say in the matter of rules, he advocated depending practically entirely on the sense of responsibility and of fair play that most government employees possess, although that procedure involves "romping on" the rare individual who does not play fair.

be treated as responsible adults, partners or cooperators in the enterprise. Two practical methods for developing morale are generally recognized. The first is that the employees shall understand the why and wherefore of their duties. Here the public administrator has a great advantage over the private administrator, for his agency is concerned, not with making profits for private individuals, but with rendering a public service, ordinarily designed to promote the general welfare. It is not difficult to engender among practically all the employees in an agency under the merit system, a sense that they are partners in an important public enterprise.<sup>5</sup> All that is

<sup>5</sup> In the preceding footnote the instance of girls volunteering for long hours of overtime during the World War was cited. Practically every statistical project in that office was undertaken for a definite practical objective. With rare exceptions, there was no reason why the girls should not know fairly definitely the precise objectives, and they were told. In the exceptional instances, they were given some vague general objective, such as: "These figures are for a confidential report to the General Staff of the Army." The response was naturally practically perfect, and the job of the supervisors was not to get work out of the girls, but to channel the work and see that individuals did not over-do.

Although the stimulus of war psychology is fortunately rarely present, the principle remains the same. In a well-run public office the duties are performed for a particular objective. Each employee can be told the objective of his or her particular assignment and can have a general understanding of how that assignment fits into the job as a whole. Even the messenger boys in a public office get a sense of personal responsibility.

The writer once fell heir to a strict disciplinarian section chief, who when something beyond our control interrupted the flow of work would go to the files, withdraw some old tables, and have the clerks re-work the computations. Every clerk knew precisely what she was working on, and why. The next time the flow of work got jammed, to the consternation of the section chief, she was told to tell the clerks to get books, magazines, or newspapers, either from our own collection in the division or from the bureau library, and to spend their time reading until the new work came in; if forces beyond our control made us waste time, we would waste it frankly and openly and not make the clerks waste it going through the motions of their real jobs. Work should be for an objective, or it should not be done, and the employees should understand the objective.

ordinarily necessary is to pass down the official hierarchy, often by word of mouth, the purpose of the work or the situation that calls for extra effort. Orders are accompanied by statements of the reasons for the orders. Occasionally the whole group may be assembled for a particularly important announcement, but that procedure is rarely necessary.

The second method is, to the maximum possible extent, to delegate and fix responsibility. The duties may be extremely simple, but the employee should have the feeling that performing them well is his personal responsibility. To give a simple illustration: A clerk may be running an adding machine day in and day out. He initials and dates each ribbon, for the total on that ribbon is his contribution and its accuracy, or approach to accuracy, is his responsibility. On the back of many statistical tables, in a well-run office, is a history of that table showing not only the sources from which the figures were secured, but who did the work, usually indicated by initials only. In the national government service the law frequently requires that certain papers carry the signature of a bureau chief or even of the head of a department, and thus the really responsible subordinate who prepared them cannot sign them. Many bureau chiefs will only sign when the initials of the responsible employee are written on the document immediately below the place where he has to sign, or when the initials or the full name are carried on the office carbon. The original of an important letter to be signed by a bureau chief or a Secretary may be devoid of all identifying marks, but the carbon copy may be all lettered up with initials and endorsements. They fix responsibility and make personal what may appear to be the acme of impersonality. Employees soon get the feeling that their own ini-

tials are their personal hall-mark of good craftsmanship.<sup>6</sup>

The vast majority of employees selected through open competition want to do good work. They appreciate that they have secured their places on merit and that they are to hold them that way. Spoils system employees may feel that their positions are rewards for services rendered the party, either by themselves or by their influence. They may take the position that they are under no obligation to exert themselves in their government positions and that their official superiors have no real authority

<sup>6</sup> In the scientific and technical bureaus of the national government, the matter of giving credit for work published plays a great part in the maintenance of morale and has much to do with the reputation of the upper officers for fairness. Once an able scientific man complained bitterly because his chief, a political employee but also a technical specialist in his field, had calmly appropriated as his own the results of months of labor of a committee of permanent civil servants of which the complaining scientist was one. He maintained that nothing in the situation precluded his chief from acknowledging his indebtedness to the members of the committee. This particular chief had the reputation of failing to give credit to his subordinates. Another type of chief appreciates that to young scientific, technical, and professional workers credit for work done may be almost as important as immediate salary and perhaps in the long run even more important, because of the close relationship between reputation and advancement in these fields. At times chiefs may carry the practice of giving credit so far that the number of names mentioned becomes too large to make inclusion on the list much of a distinction, yet the practice is probably sound.

In this connection it should be pointed out that in civil service tests for scientific, technical, and professional positions candidates are often required to list or even to submit publications. If the chief has named his collaborators and assistants in the letter of transmittal, even if he has not designated the particular sections of the report they contributed, they have that much supporting evidence for their claim to authorship of particular parts. Of course it is much better for them if the chief has designated the parts. If the chief has made no acknowledgment whatsoever the subordinate is obviously in a weak position and the examiners are in a quandary. Did the employee actually do the work or is he claiming credit for what really was the product of his chief?

The assignment of credit for parts of group projects presents many difficulties but it would seem that in most instances it is possible at least to mention by name the employees who have made substantial contributions and for the chief not to appropriate as his own the original ideas of his subordinates.



over them.<sup>7</sup> How good work can be secured from such employees is beyond the writer's experience. The merit system in some form seems in general to be a prerequisite for efficiency and real morale, although not all political offices are badly administered.<sup>8</sup>

*Letting employees know what is expected of them.* Given the desire to do good work, the employees need to know what constitutes good work, what is expected of them. Occasionally one encounters an administrator who seems to believe that the employee should know by intuition. Administrators of this type may complain rather bitterly to their associates regarding the shortcomings of some or even all their subordinates, but they do not feel that they can do anything more than grumble. In such an office the employees are frequently conscious of the

<sup>7</sup> During the World War the writer visited on several occasions a large stenographic unit made up in the main of civil service employees. All the employees were working in dead earnest except one, who sat with hands folded on her desk. The third time the writer visited the unit he noted her belligerent expression, and his curiosity got the better of him. He asked the supervisor about her. The supervisor said, "Please tell me what to do about her. She is in here on her influence without civil service and she maintains that the work we have given her is not what her Congressman promised her. She simply will not touch it." The writer asked, "What does the Congressman say about it?" The answer was, "That is the difficulty. He has left town and will not be back for two weeks." The writer, not being in the hierarchy, could be noble and say, "I'd fire her if it were the last thing I did," but the upper officers in that agency were too busy with really vital matters to give attention to the mean, petty, personnel problem presented by that individual striker. (The sit-down strike was not then a familiar device.)

<sup>8</sup> In one state, two elected heads of departments kept their own political following among the voters on the basis of the way they ran their departments. Their special clientele among the electorate was apparently satisfied with the performance of these two departments and the heads had each served several terms. Their employees stayed with them and seemed to have the interest in their work that is common in a good civil service office. It would seem in a political office that much depends on the attitude of the chief of that office and the extent to which he is able to resist the pressure of other politicians for improper appointments.

fact that they are not giving complete satisfaction, but they have not the remotest idea as to the precise nature of their shortcomings. They get the notion that the difficulty is personal, that the boss just does not like them.

At the other extreme is a chief such as Dr. Joseph A. Hill of the Census Bureau who has trained a considerable number of statisticians for the government. His method was to give the youngsters assignments that were perhaps a trifle beyond their experience, and then personally to review and edit the resulting product. Together he and the youngster would go over the work in a spirit of complete scientific objectivity. There were never words of personal censure nor words of personal praise. One saw what was wrong or weak and how the experienced master did the job. He would often ask, "Have you looked up so and so?" or else he would reach for a particular volume in his working library and turn at once to the proper pages. The youngsters naturally sought to produce text and tables that did not call for Dr. Hill's editorial pen and to anticipate all possible suggestions as to illuminating references. The fact that the chief was satisfied to let a manuscript stand practically as written was all the praise anyone required.

Another administrator, who achieved success in the government service and subsequently personally developed an extensive and profitable private enterprise, once said to the writer: "My father always condemned bad work; he never commended good work. He was right in condemning bad work, but life would have been pleasanter if there had been occasionally words of commendation. I have made it a definite practice to give words of praise when they are due." Both his words of censure and of commendation were given privately. With

him few employees had any question as to where they stood, and why. This particular man often materially under-estimated the time required for a workmanlike job, but for him the employees gladly undertook the impossible. Strong loyalties developed on both sides.

In some agencies staff conferences may prove a helpful device for letting the employees know what is expected of them. At such conferences the subject is the standards that should be applied. The employees are encouraged to give their opinions as to what the standards should be, and the supervisor tries to draw the employees out by questions and gives his or her own point of view. Employees whose work has been below grade may get from the staff conference a new idea of what is wanted. Of course, at such a staff conference the supervisor makes no employee a horrible example, either by name or by citing examples of bad work that the other employees will immediately identify. Such conferences are an important part of the development of sound systems of efficiency rating.

*Calling attention to shortcomings.* Pointing out defects in the work or the conduct of an employee is rarely agreeable, but the thought of it is generally worse than the performance, provided two related rules are observed. The first is that the disagreeable task should be performed in private,\* and the second, that if the adminis-

\* In dealing with women subordinates the experienced male supervisor will often have a third person, possibly his secretary, present, but out of earshot so long as voices are kept at a conversational level. Another possible device is to have the interview in a place where the parties to it may be seen but not heard unless voices are raised. Occasionally one encounters an employee who more or less loses self-control during an interview and whose subsequent statements as to what actually took place are not entirely correct. If both the supervisor and the employee are of the same sex, such a development is not particularly embarrassing, but if the employee is a woman and the supervisor a man there may be

trator is angry, he should wait until he has cooled off and can approach the subject objectively from the standpoint of the effect on the work and the office. One sometimes discovers that an employee has been conscious of some defect in himself, but has not been able exactly to diagnose it, and he is genuinely grateful to his supervisor for calling it to his attention, especially if the supervisor can suggest ways of overcoming it, and help in their application.

Unfortunately in some organizations the responsible officer attempts to avoid the distasteful task personally and tries for results through the employee's associates. For example, the chief is not satisfied with a manuscript. Instead of calling the writer in and talking it over with him personally, he sends for another member of the staff, gives him the manuscript, and outlines to him the general line of criticism which a requested report on the manuscript should take. Thus one employee has to criticize the other, and the chances are that neither likes the arrangement. If the one who has written the destructive criticism happens to tell his colleague why he did it, the morale of the office is even more seriously disrupted. Supervisors, chiefs, directors get larger salaries than their subordinates in part because they have certain supervisory duties to perform. It is unfair if they pass the disagreeable supervisory duties to a defenseless subordinate who is scarcely in a position to refuse to perform them.

#### PETTY PENALTIES

Petty penalties for infractions of disciplinary rules or even for faults in the actual work of the organization are,

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a good deal of embarrassment. The supervisor, of course, has to have interviews with his problem employees and some of these employees may not be entirely stable or responsible.

in the opinion of this writer, of worse than doubtful value. The objective of the supervisory officer is to make the employees interested, willing, and responsible workers. Petty penalties irritate them and often rouse a feeling of resentment and unfairness. They must too be enforced without discrimination between the several employees unless this sense of resentment and unfairness is to be greatly increased. Thus the supervisor may find himself in a position where he must impose a penalty on an employee who has offended by sheer accident or by an unprecedented slip. To the sensitive, eager employee a penalty that would roll off a callous employee like water off a duck's back is nothing short of disgrace, destroying peace of mind for weeks and thus impairing efficiency.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> In one government office the writer had a stenographer-secretary whose typewriting was art. He discovered that even in informal letters and memoranda he could not, on reading over the transcribed dictation, change his mind on a choice of words and phrases and scratch in the desired changes with a pen. He might sign a letter thus scratched up and put it in the box to be mailed, but this secretary would stay after hours, re-type the whole thing as he had edited it and bring it to him for re-signature, with, "I couldn't let a letter like that go out with my initials on it." He learned to indicate the changes lightly in pencil so that, if art permitted, the corrections could be made without re-typing.

On one occasion he was writing a long memorandum for the typing of which there was no particular hurry. Without bothering to explain the situation he asked the secretary briefly, "What are you doing?" Her answer showed that the work she was on had priority over the new memorandum, and so the writer went on with his memorandum. Suddenly he was interrupted by deep sobs from the secretary: "Miss \_\_\_\_\_," he asked, "what on earth is the matter?" In broken voice, she said, "You asked me what I was doing?" That led to a complete explanation, and then the secretary said, "I thought you thought I was wasting time." In this case the answer was easy. "My dear young lady, I have known you and your work now for several years, and never once in that period have I ever had even a suspicion that you were wasting your time." She was, as a matter of fact, a close approach to the perfect secretary, although at times it was a little difficult to live up to her standards. Any petty penalty imposed on such an employee would be a real tragedy.

Fines, furloughs without pay, reductions in salary, and demotions, imposed as disciplinary measures, strike the writer as being generally unsound.<sup>11</sup> Penalties that cut down the earnings of the employee not infrequently get his personal finances all balled up, especially if he has dependents. Thus he is plunged into a whole nest of difficulties, real and imaginary, and he becomes a harder person to handle in the organization. It sometimes seems as if there were only three really sound disciplinary measures: (1) withholding salary increases; (2) transfer to another unit where the employee comes under a new supervisor in a somewhat different environment; and (3) separation, either by forced voluntary resignation or outright dismissal.

The three disciplinary measures thus mentioned do not include letting the employee know exactly what is expected of him and pointing out to him clearly, but tactfully and privately, wherein his work or his conduct is falling short and endeavoring to help him make good. If the case looks hopeless he may be told in advance that unless improvement comes, which one of the three particularly sound disciplinary measures will have to be taken. He knows what the situation is, but he is not publicly humiliated before his fellow employees and his personal finances are not upset during the period in which he is trying to make good.

The responsible supervisor may, if he wishes, record memoranda of the interviews for a confidential personal

<sup>11</sup> When appropriations have been reduced, or money is running out, furloughs without pay, reductions in salary, or demotions, may, of course, be imperative, but they are not disciplinary measures. The psychological reaction to them is generally very different. The supervisor is bowing to a major force and is not acting on his own initiative. Under such circumstances employees may prefer furloughs, reductions, or salary cuts, to dismissal, and can preserve a liking for the supervisor and a willingness to work cooperatively with him.

history file so that he has a record which may be shown to his superiors or to the personnel agencies if the case ever requires it. If the office has, as it should, a personnel officer, the supervisor will naturally discuss the case with him as soon as it really threatens to become serious. The employee likewise under such circumstances should have the privilege of discussing the subject privately with the personnel officer.

If the supervisor adopts the practice of filing adverse comments and evidence in the records, it is also theoretically fair that he should likewise file favorable comments and evidence. Some experienced administrators in the national service rarely file favorable evidence and comments, so that the personal history of the satisfactory employee and of the excellent employee is thin, containing only records of advancements in pay, promotions, and assignments, and the recommendations for these changes. The highly favorable comments are generally in the carbon copies of recommendations. This course has one practical advantage. Occasionally when an adverse recommendation is made to superior officers with respect to an employee, especially one with political influence, it is embarrassing to be confronted with favorable comments and evidence which you yourself have filed in an effort to be fair. It is easier to make a case if the record is one-sided. Even in efficiency rating this tendency to be one-sided, to make the employee either good or bad, is encountered. Unfortunately some superior officers do not appreciate that their subordinate officers and the personnel officer are trying to give balanced judicial appraisals.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> On one occasion the writer made an adverse report on an employee who was seeking transfer to a scientific and technical position in the bureau with which the writer was then connected. The proposed trans-

As a matter of practical administration, subordinate supervisors and personnel officers more or less have to adjust their procedures to the idiosyncrasies and temperament of the head of the office. Not every top administrator understands the attempt at judicial appraisal. Some top administrators are so constituted that they forget the good and remember the ill. Thus when a personnel officer discusses the advisability of giving an employee a certain assignment and recounts both merits, which may score the employee about ninety-five per cent, and defects, which account for the remaining five per cent, he may discover the only thing that registers with the chief is the adverse five per cent. Similarly he may find that reasons he has given against a particular assignment for a certain employee are recalled and used against that employee for another assignment where they do not apply at all. For example, an employee may be weak in public relations and the immediate superior or the personnel officer may have to make a recommendation against an assignment for him involving public relations work; but the chief may regard that as a general condemnation of the employee and refuse to consider him for another assignment that does not involve public relations and for which he is eminently qualified. Thus the effort to be fair, judicial, and balanced may not produce the desired results; and since personnel officers and supervisors in operating agencies are more concerned

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fer was supported by a distinguished group of political powers and was being almost forced on the bureau chief by the Secretary. The particular employee had previously worked, not as a scientist but as a clerk, in the writer's division in another agency. While with that agency he had written of her: "She is a first class A.B.C. file clerk, loyal and hard-working." This evidence was used repeatedly to support the transfer to a scientific position. The distinguished bureau chief who was fighting the unwarranted transfer once said, laughingly, during the fight: "I don't doubt it is true, but I do wish you had not said it."



with effective results than with theoretically proper procedures, they tend to present not judicial evaluations, but arguments for what they deem the proper course. They may find that their best method of distinguishing between possible candidates is the warmth and enthusiasm with which they comment upon them. They say nothing against any employee, because what they say that is unfavorable will not be forgotten and may be misapplied later.

A recognized technique for preventing a wrong assignment to a good employee is to suggest another candidate who is better equipped for the assignment and to stress his strong points for the particular work, saying nothing regarding the other employee's weaknesses on that side. In fact one of the best ways of preventing a bad assignment or a bad appointment is not to say a word against that proposal, but to produce an alternative suggestion that does the job by unspoken contrast.

#### DISCIPLINARY DISMISSALS

Disciplinary dismissals and the procedure in dismissals occupy a rather large space in the existing literature on public personnel administration. The civil service reformers are divided into two broad camps on this subject: the "open back door" group, who believe that the responsible appointing officer should have almost unrestricted power to dismiss; and the "closed back door" group, who believe that the central personnel agency should alone have the power to dismiss, and that the responsible administrative officer should have only the power to prefer charges, or to suspend under charges. The national civil service act follows the open back door principle. The law merely requires that the employee who is dismissed by an appointive officer shall be given

a written statement of the reasons for removal and shall have opportunity to file his answer to the charges in writing supported, if he so desires, by affidavits. He may file all the papers he wishes, but he is out on the basis of the action of the administrative officer. The Civil Service Commission has no authority even to investigate unless the employee alleges that he was removed for political or religious reasons, or unless he was removed through the efficiency rating system operated under the general supervision of the Commission. In some of the state and municipal systems, trials before the central personnel agency, or before the courts, are a frequent incident to removal procedure and an employee may be restored to his position contrary to the wishes and recommendations of his administrative superior.

*Why disciplinary dismissals are rare in the national service.* In the national civil service dismissals on disciplinary grounds are extremely rare, for several reasons:

1. If employees are carefully selected through well-devised competitive examinations and the offices are reasonably well run, there is little occasion for dismissals. The employee is ordinarily reasonably good in the position for which he was selected, even if he is not material for promotion.

2. Since the employees have no real protection against dismissals under the law and the usual procedure, they will often resign voluntarily rather than face removal for cause. Removal for cause means a black record, whereas voluntary resignation may be explained in any way the employee desires. It will not bar the employee from subsequent employment, as a removal for cause may do.

3. Since the employees know they have no legal protection, some of them naturally resort to political pro-

tection. In the national service it sometimes seems that the amount of political influence is in inverse ratio to the efficiency of the employee. The personal histories of good employees, covering years of service, will often disclose no political letter or endorsement. The histories of weak employees may bulk large in the files because the weak employee cultivates the political forces and has many letters on file from members of Congress disclosing their personal interest in him. If dismissal is suggested, the routine examination of the personal history file shows the responsible administrators that a political fight may be involved.

4. The hierarchy in the national service is generally long, with many steps between the official appointing and removing officer and the immediate supervisor of the offending employee. The immediate supervisor who finds an employee so unsatisfactory that dismissal is indicated finds himself up against a regular house-that-Jack-built situation. He must convince his own immediate superior that dismissal is warranted, and that the situation is sufficiently serious to galvanize that superior into action. Each successive superior must in turn be both convinced and galvanized, until at long last the top man who has power to act is reached, convinced, and galvanized. To get quick action it is usually necessary that the employee shall have been guilty of some serious offense of either commission or omission that has attracted, or is likely to attract, public attention. The offense itself is thus naturally self-explanatory and the need for action is obvious. If the charge, on the other hand, is general inefficiency, laziness, or worthlessness, the reporting superior may find that his own ability as a supervisor is questioned up the hierarchy. Even if he is found to be right, there is no special hurry about the case: any time

will do. Everybody except the immediate supervisor can more or less forget about the case; he is the only one who has, day by day, to struggle with the inefficient one. If he can succeed in getting that employee isolated from the really important daily routine, even he need not worry much about the waste of public funds, for he has reported the matter and it is off his conscience.

*The need for checking the recommendations of supervisors.* Upper administrative officers are, of course, right in questioning the efficiency and ability of subordinate supervisors who recommend the dismissal of an employee. The old saying that it takes two to make a quarrel is not without applicability in personnel administration. In some instances, both the supervisor and the offending employee may have a real case: the situation is one of conflicting personalities; two reasonably satisfactory employees cannot get along together. Supervisors may be excellent in certain aspects of their work, but they may be weak in dealing with employees who deviate from the supervisor's ideal. As Dr. W. W. Stockberger, the chief personnel officer of the Department of Agriculture, said in a recent address, most employee grievances have their origin in bad personnel work on the part of the supervisors.

Under the open back door policy of the national government, serious injustice may be done a good employee whose ethics preclude an appeal to political friends. These employees are the ones who may be successfully eliminated through the forced voluntary resignation route, and some of them resign without any request because of their contempt for a supervisor and his work standards. An instance might be cited in which one bureau lost two of its outstanding younger men because a supervisor insisted that they apply technical rules which

were obviously ill-considered. He wanted work done; he did not want his rules questioned by any young intellectuals. Neither of these young men felt disposed to carry a fight to the top of their organization; they simply quit. Subsequently both returned to the civil service by the competitive route and advanced to leading positions.

In another case a new chief clerk tried to force a resignation of an able employee on the grounds of secret charges, which, it subsequently developed, had been preferred by a woman employee who was notoriously unreliable. In this case the victim's superior officer was incensed by the secrecy of the procedure and hotly carried the matter to the top, where he secured an able committee of investigation. When the secret charges were at last disclosed to the employee and subsequently to the committee of investigation, they completely evaporated. The employee was unanimously exonerated. The committee recommended the dismissal of the woman who had made the unfounded charges. Later she was retired on grounds of mental disability. That chief clerk was new to the organization. Had he been really familiar with it he would not have accepted at face value charges from so notorious an employee.

#### THE NEED FOR PERSONNEL OFFICERS AS INVESTIGATORS

Observation of the national service leads to the conclusion that every bureau chief and every department head should have on his staff a trained, experienced personnel officer, unless his staff is so small that he can himself attend at once to every personnel question that arises in his unit. From the standpoint of the busy chief administrator who has before him major problems of management and policy, many of the personnel matters that

arise are petty and detailed. It takes a lot of time to arrive at the facts, and often even more time to work out a solution. Employees and supervisors with overwrought nerves talk endlessly, and the head of the organization cannot listen to them "get the whole business off their chest," which is the first step toward restoring a rational frame of mind. What must be remembered is that although from the standpoint of the chief the matter is petty and detailed, to the employee, and perhaps only to a slightly less extent to the immediate supervisor, it is vital. It affects them during the entire working day and possibly during their leisure hours. It may affect their official associates and their families.<sup>13</sup> If proper working conditions are to be maintained, personnel difficulties should be settled before they produce a real crisis.

An expert personnel officer on the staff of the head of the organization is needed for four main reasons:

1. Almost every personnel case has two sides, and both sides should be heard and investigated. Even an honest, able, well-intentioned supervisor can only give fairly his version. He may not be able to present the employee's side, for he may not be able to see it.

2. Immediate supervisors who are having serious difficulties with an employee are entitled to an immediate investigation the moment they reach the decision that an adverse report must be made. They should not have to fight the case all the way up the official hierarchy.

3. Upper administrative officers in the hierarchy should be given not a series of charges and counter-charges, but the results of an independent investigation

<sup>13</sup> When groups of employees are stationed at more or less isolated posts, as in the Indian Service, they may be completely dependent on each other, not only in their work, but also in their recreation. Situations develop which would be funny if they were not so tragic.

by a competent investigator, together with his recommendations.

4. Getting at the real facts in a personnel case requires a personnel officer with special training, both for diagnosis and treatment. Not only should he have broad knowledge of the government personnel practice and procedure, but he should have the techniques of the professional social worker.

Unless one has been close to the personnel of a large establishment, it is hard to realize the complicating factors that are often present. Physical and mental conditions of the employee or members of his family, family relationships, financial difficulties, are often involved. True, they are distinctly private, personal problems; and one may take the position that they are of no concern to the government as an employer. But investigation often discloses that the difficulty the government is encountering in a personnel case has its origin in private personal matters. The situation cannot be corrected until the causes are removed. Often the employee cannot be his own physician and diagnose his own case. Even more frequently he is not familiar with the ameliorating resources of the environment in which he lives and the procedures for availing himself of these resources. His immediate superior is often no better trained and experienced in this type of social service than he is himself. All that the supervisor may see is that the employee's work is entirely unsatisfactory. Such situations call for a person trained and skilled in dealing with the personal factors.

Financial difficulties, often resulting directly or indirectly from illness in the employee's family, are fairly common. The salaries of national government employees are not subject to garnishment, but creditors may write to the office complaining against the employee and

asking the aid of the office in collecting. What the office may do in such instances is more or less a matter of administrative discretion. The complaints may be completely ignored; the employee may be written a letter of reprimand; or a considerate superior may take the time to inquire into the actual situation and see what can be done toward an adjustment. In the best offices credit unions or loan associations have been set up to assist employees. In other offices certain employees have turned "loan sharks," charging illegal rates of interest and threatening their victims with exposure if payments are not made regularly on pay day. Instances have been known in which supervisors borrowed from their subordinates and then forgot about the debt. One of the duties of a personnel officer is systematically to clear up these conditions. To do so he must, like a banker, inquire into the employee's assets and liabilities and with the employee work out a program.

The physical and mental condition of the employee himself is of direct concern to the government. To an increasing extent adequate facilities are being made available for medical examinations and care. The main difficulty now is recognition of the actual situation. Many physical conditions are quickly recognized, but mental cases are often obscure. The ordinary supervisor or administrator cannot be expected even to recognize them: he does well if he even suspects that a difficulty may be mental. If the victim commits some definite overt act, the procedure is reasonably quick and simple, because the patient can at once be turned over to the alienists. If no overt act is committed, and if the supervisor is not sure of his ground, there is often no simple procedure and the case may demand far more time and thought than the supervisor can ordinarily give. Personnel offi-



cers in operating agencies should have some training in psychiatric work and should relieve the administrator and the other line officers of this responsibility. Through their contacts with the medical departments of the government, they can have the necessary examinations made and get professional advice as to treatments.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Cases of this type are not numerous, but over the years most administrators encounter a few; and fortunate indeed is the administrator who can look back on his record and say he handled them well. The writer naturally recalls his worst case. He secured a forced "voluntary" resignation from an exceptionally well-educated employee who absolutely refused to wear the traditional government harness. In an agency which was engaged primarily in fact-gathering and only secondarily in giving expert opinions, this employee flatly refused to organize and present the facts, maintaining that they were but scaffolding for the really valuable structure, the opinion of the expert. Unfortunately the opinion he derived from the facts was diametrically opposed to the opinion the chief of the bureau derived from these same facts. The ordinary compromise of presenting the facts without opinions for the use of all students was scornfully rejected by the employee. The chief and the advisers, of whom the writer was one, decided unanimously on separation, and it was the writer's duty to get the resignation. The device of the private personal interview was used, and a fairly long continuance on the payroll while the employee sought another position was arranged. The interview was much less trying in actuality than it was in anticipation, for the employee was a gentleman. Some years later the attention of the writer was caught by a newspaper headline "College Professor Shoots Dean and Kills Self." The dean was doing to this employee what the writer had had to do several years before, what several others had done within the course of that relatively short life. This time the strain proved too great, and the employee had killed instantly the dean and then himself. Prior to this accident, the writer had learned more or less fortuitously of a long history of serious lack of adjustment in that case. Not until the accident, however, did it dawn on him that the case had been really mental, and serious. It does not necessarily follow that even a well-trained personnel officer could have done very much, but he could at least have assembled the personal history to date and that would have disclosed evidence meriting consideration of psychiatrists. The ordinary line administrator has neither the time nor the knowledge and skill needed in these cases. Simply firing the employee may solve the problem of one government agency, but that may raise countless problems for other agencies of the government.

Another case arising in the same bureau presented a happy contrast. There the mental character of the difficulty was recognized at once, and the chief arranged for competent diagnosis. The reports from the first

If the domestic life of an employee is all stress and strain, it is rarely possible for him to be efficient and adaptable in his official position. Some employees are so constituted that they spill their troubles, and most supervisors have sufficient sympathy to make allowances. The fact that the situation is known and understood permits the employee to work with reasonable efficiency. Other employees are tight-lipped about their personal affairs and the supervisory officers have no inkling of the actual situation. A bureau chief at a recent informal conference said he was surprised at the number of difficulties that arose in cases where the employee's previous record was long and unblemished. Without any warning, something fairly serious happened. When nothing in the official work explains these breaks, the answer is to be sought in the employee's personal life. If the office can secure a personnel officer of the understanding type who wins the confidence and respect of the employees and has time to give the employees, some of the disasters can be averted. Experience indicates that this work takes time. The reticent employee will not walk into an office and tell his troubles in five minutes. He has first to feel that he can trust the personnel officer and then he must have time to tell his story in his own way, sometimes piece-meal. When the personnel officer has the facts, he is in a position to consider possible remedies.

If each major bureau and department in the national government had its personnel officer, the personnel officers would naturally have their formal and informal associations. In their formal associations they would be concerned primarily with advancing the personnel

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alienists were discouraging, but a second examination resulted in a different diagnosis. Treatment followed and was so successful that the employee was reinstated at the end of a year, completely recovered.

standards of the government. In the informal associations they would tend to help each other out with their difficult cases. Often the solution of a problem is a change of environment, or a change of supervisors. Not always can such a change be effected within an agency, or even within a department. The employee is often almost helpless to effect his own transfer, especially if he is under somewhat of a cloud in his own organization, and yet others can do it for him.<sup>15</sup>

In almost every personnel case which threatens to become serious, independent investigation of both the employee whose record is questioned, and his supervisor, is essential. This investigation should be made at the first indication of difficulty, because things like that tend to go from bad to worse and the worse they are the harder they are to cure. The investigation calls for the expenditure of a good deal of time and the exercise of special skill. Line officers in the regular hierarchy between the complaining supervisor and the appointing and removing officer are often subject to three disqualifications for such work: (1) they are not independent, because the inquiry may involve their own selections and assignments, and their own rules and procedures; (2) they cannot spare from their regular administrative work the time that these cases require; and (3) they may not

<sup>15</sup> Time and again the writer has seen two or more supervisors get together and work out, with complete frankness on both sides, a transfer of an employee who has been in a difficult situation. The supervisor who agreed to give the employee another chance in fresh surroundings would know pretty definitely what the nature of the trouble had been. Not infrequently he would talk the whole thing over with the employee when the transfer was arranged. If the difficulty had arisen from a clash in personalities or environmental difficulties, the change has frequently worked a cure. The transferred employee often makes a special effort to succeed, and to avoid any occasion for criticism. Failures are not unknown and are perhaps to be expected in case the personal habits of the employee are involved.

be skilled and experienced in the human relationships which such cases involve.

*Investigation by operating officers; investigation by central control agency.* Some students of public personnel administration take the view that these independent investigations should be made initially by a central personnel agency, such as the Civil Service Commission or a civil service court of appeals. That procedure presents another dilemma. If made immediately it puts the entire hierarchy of the agency concerned under investigation before it has itself fully investigated and acted upon the case. If the central personnel agency waits until the hierarchy has investigated the case, and the top administrator has made his decision, not only has precious time been lost, but the case may result in an unfortunate and even disastrous reversal of the operating officers by the central personnel agency. The central personnel agencies, moreover, have not, in general, been so staffed that their investigators are competent to investigate in all fields. Many of these investigations demand an intimate knowledge of the work of the agency, and the investigators of the central personnel agency may not possess that knowledge.

To the writer it has long seemed that the initial and immediate investigation should be made at once by a personnel officer on the staff of the responsible operating officer in charge of the operating agency. In the national service, the personnel officer immediately handling the case would be on the staff of the chief of the operating bureau, not on the staff of the department as a whole, unless the department as a whole is itself a closely knit operating unit.

In making the investigations, such a personnel officer ordinarily starts at that level of the hierarchy at which

the case arises, and works up the hierarchy from there until all the necessary facts have been secured, or until the case just naturally washes itself up. The personnel officer, being an aide and adviser to the chief of the operating unit, has properly no authority himself to issue an order or to give any instructions to the responsible subordinate officers, but he does get facts from them, give facts to them, and discuss possible solutions or remedies with them. He must do that, if he is ultimately to lay a full report before his principal, the top operating officer. Not infrequently the result of securing the facts and discussing the solutions is that a subordinate supervisor decides on his own responsibility to take a course which the personnel officer cordially approves. The personnel officer may even have suggested it implicitly or impliedly, but the operating officer has accepted it as his own, certainly without orders, and often without pressure. He may have had his judgment influenced, but at least he has been saved a flat reversal from his superiors, or from the central personnel agency; and his authority has not been undermined without his acquiescence. The personnel officer, as has been said, has no authority to give an order, but he does have much power of moral suasion, because the lower line officers know pretty well what he is going to tell the big boss, and what recommendations he is likely to make. The situation leads toward adjustment, and the adjustment may be in the direction of a change in attitude, or a change in rules and procedure on the part of the supervisor. The employee under fire may in part have been right.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In one instance an employee had had a fight in the office, and was charged with attempting to push his antagonist over the balustrades and down a stair well, four stories deep. A departmental investigating committee of three voted, two to one, for a verdict of not guilty on the grave charge. The employee was however reduced in pay for fighting

If every operating agency had on the staff of its executive offices a well-qualified personnel officer, the number of administrative mistakes in personnel cases, at least approved by that executive officer, would be materially reduced. Still within the regular lines of administrative authority and responsibility, as they are established in most of the national government, an appeal would lie to the Secretary of the department, who has, or should have, on his staff a departmental personnel officer. Appeals would permit the department heads to check up on their bureau chiefs and their personnel officers, as well as on the employees under their direction.

The same line of reasoning would logically lead to a further appeal, in the national service, from the department head to the President, who has as his personnel agency the Civil Service Commission. The findings of the Civil Service Commission would be only advisory to the President, who would himself decide what action he would take. Even if the purely advisory nature of

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in the office, and transferred to the writer's division. Such an employee presents an unwelcome problem. Within a few weeks his section chief reported him generally for failure to carry out instructions, and described his violent manner. When he came in for the resulting private interview, he was so tense that one could understand the old fight. As the interview developed, it became apparent that the section chief had misconstrued the instructions relating to rather rare cases, whereas the pugnacious one had correctly construed them. According to his view, he had only insisted on the accuracy of his own construction with proper vigor. At this point the section chief was called in for a three-cornered discussion of the technical problem, and in the course of it, frankly admitted her own mistake and apologized to the victim. By sheer accident, we had hit upon the remedy for that case, for the employee saw that our office did not have it in for him on his past record. He and the section chief became friends, and she thereafter gave him assignments that involved the more difficult cases. It is entirely possible for employees to be right and supervisors to be wrong. Administrators up the hierarchy will welcome the facts that prevent mistakes either in the work itself or in personnel cases. The problem is to get the facts, and one cannot get them unbiased from the supervisors, even good supervisors.

the findings of the central personnel agency is not the correct and possibly the only answer from the standpoint of good personnel administration, it is the only answer from the legal standpoint so far as the national government is concerned. In the Myers case, the Supreme Court held that the executive power to remove purely administrative officers cannot be curtailed by Congress. An act making the findings of the Civil Service Commission or a civil service court of appeals mandatory on the President would probably be unconstitutional according to that decision. The President could, of course, by executive order, make the findings of the Commission or a civil service court of appeals mandatory on his cabinet officers, or he could informally announce to them that he would follow the decisions, but at any time he could change his mind either in general or in respect to particular cases.

## CHAPTER X

### EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION: UNIONS OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

When organizations become large and official hierarchies long, the upper administrative officers cannot know personally all the employees or be familiar with conditions prevailing in all the various units. They become dependent for information primarily upon the reports coming up the hierarchy from their line officers. At times these reports may be unreliable, because they mis-state the facts, or more frequently, because they give only a part of the picture. Thus administrators who desire to be fully informed and to deal fairly with all their employees seek devices that will open up other avenues of information and give the subordinate employees an approach to the upper officers without proceeding along the regular administrative line. Three major devices have developed which have some utility for these purposes: (1) employee representation in a formal organization sponsored by management, (2) unions of employees, and (3) personnel officers on the immediate staff of the responsible administrator. These three devices it should be understood are not mutually exclusive: all three may be used in a single organization. The device of the personnel officers on the staff of the administrator is interwoven in most of the chapters in the present book, and will be likewise interwoven in this chapter which will deal primarily with employee representation and unions of government employees.



## EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION

The term employee representation will here be confined to the representation of employees in a formal organization set up by management under its own authority to consider and make recommendations with respect to matters in which the employees have an interest. It does not include devices whereby administrative line officers deal with representatives of independent voluntary unions of employees, which will be considered in the following part of this chapter, nor does it include special *ad hoc* committees set up from time to time by administrative officers for the consideration of particular current problems or specific personnel cases. Such special *ad hoc* committees have over the years been frequently used by administrative officers in the national service but they have generally been temporary and for a particular purpose. We are here concerned with a formal, organized, more or less permanent structure which partakes somewhat of the nature of the so-called company union.

Some writers, impressed by the fact that certain progressive private enterprises have found employee representation helpful, have urged that governments uniformly should follow their lead. Indeed in some instances these writers have severely criticized the personnel administration in the national service because such devices have not been uniformly adopted. That such devices may have a valuable place in certain big public operating agencies such as the Postal Service, the Government Printing Office and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing is of course true, although it may be questioned whether the results are more satisfactory than where management deals with representatives of the voluntary independent unions. Limitations of space and scope do not permit of a detailed discussion of what may

be done advantageously in distinctive organizations which have their own specific problems. Here the discussions must be confined to the broad aspects of the problem, to the consideration of whether this device of employee representation should be general throughout the service, whether public personnel administration is fairly open to attack because it has not universally embraced the practice of certain progressive private industries.

In private enterprise one generally finds three groups: (1) owners or shareholders, (2) managers, and (3) labor. In some cases owners and managers may be combined. Managers and labor are distinct, and time and time again they line up on opposite sides of the fence. The job of managers is to make profits for the owners and justify their own positions and salaries. The object of labor is to get the highest possible wages or earnings. Often the objects of the two groups are in conflict. A formalized mechanism such as an employee representation plan may be set up to mitigate and adjust these conflicts.

In most of the American public services these elements are not present. The public enterprise is run for service and not for profit. Salaries and wages are not paid out of earnings: they are paid out of appropriations. Even if service revenues accrue, they are not distributed among owners, managers, and labor. Salaries and wages do not depend on earnings; they are generally either fixed or regulated by a legislative body which ordinarily is governed by many considerations other than revenues or possible revenues from the service rendered. In America one rarely finds in government a clear demarcation between management and labor. All the employees work under fairly like conditions as far as their own salaries and wages are concerned. The upper perma-

nent civil servants generally know that the numerous lower paid workers are relatively more powerful politically than they are and are relatively better paid. It would profit the top man nothing to attempt to grind down the salaries and the wages of these lower groups. In many branches of the national service most of the top men are realists enough to appreciate that advances in the general level of their salaries have come from advances in the general level of all government salaries and that the effective push for adjustment has come in the main from the numerous groups in the lower salary brackets. Adverse interests are usually not present, and hence, generally, machinery for adjusting adverse interests meets no real need.

A clear distinction is drawn at times between the top politically appointed group and the permanent classified civil service employees. Certain top permanent civil service men, however, have the job of working intimately with the politically appointed heads in a government where the relationships between the permanent civil servants and the political heads have been neither defined nor standardized, and where the top civil servant must adjust himself and his work to the personality, the individuality, and even the idiosyncrasies of his chief; and the new chief may be nothing like his predecessor. The top civil servant may be running the office under one chief and running errands under his successor. Occasionally a top permanent civil servant may try so hard to ingratiate himself with the political chief or with congressional agencies that he antagonizes his permanent associates and is despised by them, but that is a chance happening and does not make a rule that permits of developing a standardized unified grievance adjustment system within the service.

A more real difference is found in many offices between the technical, professional, and scientific personnel on the one hand and the clerical and non-professional inspectorial group on the other. Here generally is a distinct difference in educational qualifications and background. The conflict arises over the qualifications for advancement to administrative and supervisory positions or over the question of whether a given group of desirable positions is to be regarded as requiring scientific, technical, or professional training. If the positions are classified as scientific, technical, and professional and hence as demanding higher education, the clerical and non-professional inspectorial group may find themselves confined to the lower brackets of the service and their avenues of advancement cut off. This conflict is not service-wide: it affects only certain bureaus or offices; and, according to the writer's observations, it affects these bureaus at different times. The acute cases have come when the top administrative group has attempted to professionalize an old establishment which had previously required no high professional standards for large numbers of its positions. The writer knows of no instance where it has arisen in a new agency which started with a clear demarcation between the different classes of positions. In the new agencies the distinction is accepted as part of the natural scheme of things.

Another closely related line of cleavage in some agencies runs between the heads of the so-called housekeeping units dealing with finances, accounts, supplies, and central personnel records and the heads of the operating units that are carrying out the specific objectives of the agency. This cleavage is particularly notable in some scientific, technical, and professional agencies where the heads of the housekeeping units have risen from clerical

positions whereas the heads of the operating units are scientific and professional men. In certain matters such as expenditures, accounting, and purchasing, the house-keeping units control; and control always means a certain amount of conflicting interests. Some organizations have greatly reduced this friction by bringing the house-keeping functions under men who are themselves scientifically or professionally trained and have a real understanding of the work of the agency. Here again the problem is one of administration and not one for a formally representative committee to adjust grievances.

Because of the absence of clearly defined lines of cleavage between labor and management in much of the public service and because so many of the vital decisions affecting employees in the public service are made by the legislative body and not by the administrators, it seems as if comparisons with private enterprise are largely beside the point. Something which may be living and vital in private enterprise, because it deals with real issues and decisions, may be stiff and wooden in the public service, because it there deals with minor matters and has no power to affect decisions on large, significant issues. In many branches of the public service the administrators will find special *ad hoc* committees appointed to consider special problems or particular cases, and including representatives of the rank and file of the employees selected for this specific purpose, far more significant and less likely to fall into innocuous desuetude. A good personnel officer will stimulate the use of such special committees which have a vital matter to consider and are made up on the employee's side of representatives selected for that particular problem. They may be union representatives, as will appear in the following section.

## UNIONS OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

*Types of unions.* In discussing unions of government employees it is first essential to consider the different types of unions commonly found in the public service. Three types require mention:

1. A regular craft union which has members both in public and private employments and is by no means exclusively concerned with the public service. Examples of this type are unions of printers, machinists, electricians. Ordinarily such craft unions are affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. In some instances a local of such a national union may be composed largely if not entirely of employees in the service of a particular government.

2. A union made up entirely of a given class, or group of related classes, of public employees such, for example, as teachers, letter carriers, postal clerks, railway mail clerks. Such unions may or may not be affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or with the Committee for Industrial Organization. If they are affiliated, they constitute a distinctive unit with practically its entire membership in the public service. In the case of the postal employees all members are in the service of the Post Office Department of the national government, whereas in the case of teachers' unions, many different governments are the employers.

3. A union made up of a diversity of classes of employees, having as their common bond employment usually by a single government. The National Federation of Federal Employees was the first of the unions of this type in the national service. Its membership included everything from the lowest paid custodial workers, such as charwomen and unskilled laborers, up to the highest paid civil servants, such as administrative officers and

leading scientists and professional men. It also included some employees in building operation and maintenance, employed on an annual salary basis, whose work was in many respects like that of the ordinary craft unions, particularly painters, carpenters, electricians, building operating engineers, and so on. At the outset, the National Federation of Federal Employees was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, but differences arising from the overlapping between the regular craft unions and part of the membership of the National Federation led to the withdrawal of the Federation, which is now independent. A new general United States employees' union affiliated with the A. F. of L. was established as the result of the breach, the American Federation of Government Employees. Later still another general union, the United Federal Workers of America, affiliated with the Committee for Industrial Organization, was set up.

The personnel and administrative problems arising from these different types of unions are radically different, and therefore little is to be gained through attempting to discuss unionism in the public service as a whole. Each type has to be considered separately.

*Regular craft unions.* The regular craft unions, having employees both in the public service and in private employment and affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, do not ordinarily tend to draw any sharp line between public employment and private employment. Rather they seek to have the public employer use union members, conform to union hours, and pay the union scale, which is ordinarily on an hourly or a daily basis. In general they have not favored a distinctive annual salary for their government workers. They seem to prefer what they regard as the more flexible union

wage scale, which has been more adjustable than annual salaries to changes in the cost of living and to advantages gained in private industry through organization activity. They have not favored efficiency rating and variations in pay on the basis of individual efficiency. Legislative bodies, both in the national government and in the municipalities, have tended to accept the principle of paying the union scale or the prevailing wage for union men in the community where the work is done. Sometimes machinery is set up to determine that scale, either periodically or when changes have taken place. Obviously the legislative bodies, particularly in municipalities, are under a good deal of pressure from the craft unions as a whole to have the government a regular union employer.

The outstanding exceptions to the general rule of no distinction as to public employers and private employers have arisen in the matters of leave with pay, both for sickness and vacations, and of retirement with pay in the event of early disability or old age. The craft unions which have a considerable number of members in the national service have cooperated actively with other unions in the furtherance of retirement legislation which includes them in its provisions.

*Service unions.* Unions made up of a particular class or group of related classes of public employees, such as letter carriers, policemen, firemen, teachers, have a radically different problem from the regular craft unions, because their salaries are fixed by, or under the direction of, the legislative body with no direct basis of comparison with private enterprise. Their numbers are sufficiently large and their occupations sufficiently distinctive so that legislative bodies ordinarily set their pay and their conditions of labor in separate bills or



ordinances, or at least in separate sections of bills or ordinances. These groups often have the essential elements of a career service, with special provisions all the way from the entrance gate to the retirement system. The postal employees come under the general civil service law and the general retirement law; but they have their own special civil service examination, and their numbers are sufficiently large so that they are given special consideration with respect to age at retirement in the retirement law.

These career service unions, if they may be so called, thus are concerned primarily with the special legislation that relates to them; moreover, they are generally concerned with a single group of operating officers administering these laws and the rules and regulations of all types made in the prosecution of the activity. Only occasionally are they directly involved in general legislation that affects all public employees. It must be noted that this form of organization grows from the existence of a numerous and distinctive group of employees engaged in a highly specialized function. Naturally they do not want the heterogeneous group of public employees to mix up in their own peculiar and specialized problems, which the heterogeneous group perhaps rarely understands, nor are they ordinarily greatly concerned with the problems of the heterogeneous group. Being themselves numerous and hence not without political power, they are ordinarily in a good position to take care of themselves.

*General unions.* The heterogeneous unions, made up on a vertical industrial basis in that the binding factor is a common employer, face an entirely different situation. Legislation affecting their salaries and working conditions is ordinarily general, or else it is composed of a

host of disconnected scraps scattered through the statutes or ordinances. If it is of the disconnected scrap variety, a few of the scraps may be of vital concern to the entire group, but most of them are of importance only to a little handful of employees, possibly only to a single individual. Whereas the career union or the craft union is dealing in the main with one set of administrative officers and one set of rules and regulations, the heterogeneous industrial union has to deal with many different administrative officers and many different sets of rules and regulations. Personnel administration, as a matter of fact, is not separable from general administration or from business practice and procedure. The heterogeneous industrial union is therefore hunting hornets all over the farm, and often doing so not because of a specific concrete interest of its entire membership but because of a vital and special interest of a tiny group, a group so small as to be practically helpless without the aid of the union representatives.

The officers of the heterogeneous unit thus have the difficult task of representing diverse groups in a myriad of different situations. The largest and most general problems ordinarily bring them before the legislative body or the chief executive officer or his principal assistants. The smallest and most specialized may carry them to a tiny unit at the bottom of an intricate hierarchy, where the difficulty may be unfair treatment of an individual employee by his supervisor.

*Effect of division of governmental powers on union activities.* The dominant factor that distinguishes the union of government employees, whatever its type, from the union of private employees, arises from the fact that in the United States as a rule we have a government of divided powers. Our legislative bodies make appro-

priations and they determine, or control the determination of, such vital matters as salary or wage levels, hours of labor, and working conditions. Thus in these broadest and most general fields, the court of last resort, if not the court of first resort, of the government unions is the legislature which directly represents the people. The unions ordinarily go to the administrators—to management—only on the smaller and more specialized matters. The broadest and most general questions ordinarily taken up with management are rules and regulations made in pursuance of law, or the interpretation of these rules and regulations. In this field an ultimate appeal usually lies to the legislature. If the union finds that the difficulty lies in the law itself, it can seek modification of the law; if the difficulty lies with the administrators' interpretation of the law, it can seek clarification of the law that will prevent that interpretation.

*Union relationships with administrative officers.* Even in the unions' dealings with management, there are features which differentiate the government union from the industrial union. In most public services the chief executive and his principal assistants are politically selected and thus the final administrative appeal is to an officer who has some interest in politics. Hierarchies in the public service, particularly in the national service, are ordinarily long, so that there are many levels for appeal before the top is ultimately reached. If the general union is well organized and well coordinated, one might even say well disciplined, cases pass up inside the union hierarchy much as they pass up in the government hierarchy. If the officers of a local cannot get a satisfactory adjustment of a local difficulty, they refer it up the union hierarchy and the national officers deal with the higher government administrators. The officers of the union

locals are generally themselves employees, often subordinates of the supervisors against whom they are complaining. The principal national officers are ordinarily not subordinates of the officers against whom complaint is made; they may indeed be full-time paid employees of the union with no place on the public payroll. If the various union officers are competent, and the headquarters and the locals cooperative and well coordinated, the union has a whole series of possible appeals in individual cases. If a complaint arising in a local involves a general matter common to an entire department or to the entire government, the national officers can handle it either with the legislative body, the top administrators, or both, as the facts may dictate.

The utilization of this system of appeals up the hierarchy depends, as has been suggested, on coordination and cooperation within the union itself. If these factors are absent, the local itself may attempt by direct action of its own local officers to settle difficulties with government supervisory officers. Not infrequently under such circumstances the local union officers attempting to settle the dispute are subordinates of the government officials against whom the complaint is made. Then the situation partakes more of the nature of an ordinary private labor dispute with labor ranged on one side and management on the other, and a good deal of heat and friction may be developed. Charges may be heard that government officers are dismissing employees for union activity. Such cases may arise because of prior friction between local union officers and union headquarters officers or they may induce that friction. For example, a local may be dissatisfied with the policy or the procedure of its headquarters body and decide to go its own way; or in dealing with a matter that is of concern to several other locals

or even to the service as a whole, it may proceed without waiting for the union as a whole to formulate a policy or to decide upon a course of procedure. Naturally the local officers and the national officers get at outs under such circumstances. Government administrators in subordinate positions are put on a hot spot by this type of procedure as are their superiors. The superiors are faced with the question of backing up their subordinates in a labor quarrel that has gained publicity, or of letting them down and publicly humiliating them.

The hierarchical form of our national administrative structure appears to afford in the national government the mechanism for a fairly orderly method of presenting grievances and for their redress, with an ultimate appeal to Congress on broad matters of law and policy. In cases of injustice or unfairness to individuals or groups of individuals a similar line of appeals lies open up to the head of a department or even to the President himself. Any President who so desired could utilize the Civil Service Commission as an investigating agency in such cases, although as is pointed out in another connection, he would not be bound by the decision of the Commission and it is doubtful if Congress could establish a civil service court of appeals which could override the President, if the President decided to remove an employee from a purely administrative post. The fact is, too, that union officials, if they see fit, can take even individual cases to Congress by way of individual members of Congress. The Congressmen may as individuals intervene in the situation, presenting their views to the appropriate administrative officers. That is done fairly frequently in individual cases. Each house of Congress has its power of investigation and if complaints are at all general or if they reveal what may be regarded as a critical situa-

tion, a committee may inquire into it. It must be understood that this congressional form of inquiry does not necessarily involve a special investigating committee. Either the regular legislative committee or the appropriations subcommittee in charge of the appropriations bill for a given agency can inquire, either on the record or off the record, for a report on an individual case. Many avenues of appeal are open, if the employees' union can get itself so organized and so disciplined that it can take advantage of them.

*The right to strike.* The question of the right of public employees to strike is invariably raised in any discussion of union organization in the public service. The service rendered by public employees in a democracy is for the people as a whole and as a general rule it is essential for the general welfare. The people as a whole are the victims of any strike of public employees. True, strikes of public employees are not deliberately aimed against the people; they are aimed against the political and administrative agents of the people. But that does not alter the fact that the welfare of the people is jeopardized. In the field of transportation, where private enterprise manages the carriers, legislation has been adopted which, although not denying the right to strike, sets up a mechanism for adjustment and mediation which must be used and exhausted before a strike becomes legal. Such legislation has the support of the general public and on the whole of the carriers and their employees. The principle of it is even more applicable to public employees rendering an essential public service.

If the right to strike is morally and legally denied to public employees, it follows as a matter of justice and equity that adequate mechanisms must be provided for the presentation and the redress of grievances arising

in the public service. For the presentation of grievances much is to be said in favor of the union of the employees under officers of their own choosing with the upper union officers on the payroll of the union and free from control by administrative officers. The government employees in the permanent civil service are in the last analysis servants of the people; they are paid by the people. The upper administrative officers are the agents of the people temporarily running the administrative establishments. The loyalty of both groups runs to the people and to the law. If upper administrative officers assume that they can determine to suit themselves the conditions of public employment, if they evade the laws the people acting through their legislatures have passed to govern the conditions of public employment, the permanent subordinate civil servants must have some orderly, established mechanism for appealing from the upper administrative officers to the people and to their legislative representatives.

To illustrate by a historical example: During the World War certain cabinet members decided as a matter of policy that no changes in salary levels should be made in their departments during the war. As a result of the war the cost of living, especially in Washington, advanced by leaps and bounds. Employees who did not own their own houses found it impossible to maintain their modest standard of living, and even those who owned their own homes were in difficulties because of increased costs for the other two major items in the family budget, food and clothing. Because of the position taken by their department heads, employees could not approach Congress through the customary official administrative channels. No recommendations for salary adjustments were made in the appropriation estimates

from these departments. Any employee who complained to Congress was fighting the policy of his department head. But the people of the United States have never vested in the department heads individual and unrestricted authority to fix salary levels and to determine policy with respect to salaries. At times this authority may be delegated in part to department heads, but always subject to congressional withdrawal or congressional control. The power to fix salaries and to determine salary policies is in the Congress. The employees, being citizens, have an unquestionable constitutional right to petition Congress for a redress of grievances, and, moreover, so far as the administration of the national government is concerned, Congress is the board of directors.

*Affiliation with general labor organizations.* Recognition of the right of government employees to organize and to be represented by officers of their own choice, whether or not these officers are themselves on the public payroll, naturally leads to the question, "Should these unions of government employees be permitted to affiliate with general labor organizations, such as the American Federation of Labor or the Committee for Industrial Organization?" To this question no single answer seems possible because of the diversity of situations and conditions. Two extremes may be cited to illustrate that diversity.

In many state and local governments, as well as the national government, some workers are employed who are members of a recognized trade or craft union, affiliated with, say, the American Federation of Labor. Some of these union men occupy more or less permanent positions, whereas others are employed seasonally or temporarily. If the government refuses to employ union members, it is forced to take a definite stand contrary



perhaps to the general wishes of the electorate. If it requires resignation from the union, or non-participation in union activities during government service, it does much the same thing. In the national government and in many of the larger municipalities the tendency has been not only toward informal recognition of these unions, but also toward acceptance by the government of union wage scales and union hours of labor. The political forces in American democracy tend to make this the accepted practice in communities where labor is highly organized.

At the other extreme are the unions or associations of police officers in our American municipalities and some of our American states. Some of the most difficult problems of municipal administration arise from strikes and the resulting disorder. If the police associations or unions were directly affiliated with the general labor organizations, it would be even more difficult than at present for governments to preserve that neutrality as between the conflicting parties that appears to be the ideal. The police should be the representatives of the people as a whole and should not be on one side or the other. The police policy properly should be the policy of the responsible elected officials. If either the employers or the striking employees are dissatisfied with police administration during a strike, their remedies lie in the courts or at the ballot box. Control of the police either by the employers or by the striking employees seems contrary to democracy and democratic institutions.

Between these two extremes of government employees in the organized crafts and the police are of course many gradations and variations. Obviously the legislative bodies, which constitute the board of directors of governmental administrative establishments, must determine this matter of public policy. Unless it has been

determined by the legislative branch, it ordinarily has to be settled in each instance by the chief executive of the government in question, and a single executive, although he may be said oratorically to represent the whole people, generally lines up with a particular group in issues such as these. The legislature as a whole is generally both more representative and more responsive to the popular will. Minorities often find their protection from partial chief executives in the legislative bodies; and the duty of American chief executives is not to determine policies according to their own will but to carry out the policies decided upon by the representative legislatures.

In arriving at policies it must be borne in mind that in our modern American democracy, organized pressure groups occupy a real, although usually extra-legal, place in the legislative process. Legislatures often act in response to pressure, perhaps from a minority group, and not infrequently they must be arbiters between conflicting pressure groups. Any body of persons denied the privilege of associating with a pressure group that represents their general social and economic interests is at a distinct disadvantage in legislative matters. The old motto, "In union there is strength," is generally recognized today in our democracy, and all kinds of groups tend to organize to gain strength. Government employees are in a peculiarly vulnerable position for two reasons: (1) in last analysis all the vital matters of their employment are fixed by legislative action; and (2) as a rule their salaries come from taxes, and many organized pressure groups outside the public service have as a cardinal objective the reduction of taxation. In many branches of government, expenditures for personal services are by far the major item in the administrative costs

of government and thus these pressure groups are seeking one or both of the following objectives: (1) the reduction in the number of employees, or (2) the reduction of salary levels. If the organized government employees cannot affiliate with outside groups who are on the other side, their position is extremely weak.

A beautiful theory exists that American legislative bodies should recognize the peculiar position of the public employees and should make it a point to deal equitably and fairly with them, quite regardless of all extra-legal pressure groups. Recognition of this principle and its practical application are both essential whenever a legislature denies to a given group of public employees the right to affiliate with the organized pressure groups that represent their general social and economic interests.

So far as the history of our national government goes, it shows clearly that before the employees were organized and affiliated, Congress gave little attention to the salaries and conditions of employment of the government workers. The evidence is clear that after the Civil Service Act of 1883 was passed and whole areas of the service moved from congressional patronage to merit, the federal employees lost ground and in general suffered a progressive fall in their standard of living. This fall in the standard of living was accompanied by an increase in hours of work and much more rigid standards of efficiency. The old records show that under the spoils system "the gentlemen of the departments," as the government clerks in Washington were then known, worked from ten to three, often with liberal time off for the noon-day meal, and their real wages were high. Substitutes and sinecures were by no means unknown. The introduction of reasonable working hours and of high

standards for entrance and for official performance were in all respects commendable; but it is unfortunate that from 1855 to the beginning of the World War the Congress gave little attention to the salaries of the general employees of the government. Those who got consideration were in the main either connected with organized crafts or employed in great units like the postal service that covered the entire country and were big enough to be politically important. What happened to little isolated groups who were unorganized and unrepresented was in some instances no less than tragic.<sup>1</sup>

Unionization and affiliation have been the major factors in getting the Congress to give serious consideration to measures of vital concern to the public employees of the national service. If the Congress had of its own volition given these measures careful consideration, unionism could scarcely have gained a stronghold in the service, except in the lower salary brackets. In the early days of the general union many employees did not identify themselves with labor nor consider organization as something entirely appropriate for them. The general union had its opportunity through governmental neglect; and it capitalized it by demonstrating that through organization wrongs could be righted. The first general union,

<sup>1</sup> At the United States Naval Observatory was a little group of civilian mathematical and astronomical experts who prepared the naval almanac. The almanac was so designed that a navigator equipped with a copy even four or five years old could look up the day of the month and learn the exact position of the stars on that day and thereby determine the latitude and longitude of his position. The employees in this unit were university graduates with excellent academic records but at the time of the investigation by the Congressional Joint Commission they were receiving salaries below those of many routine stenographers and typists. They were off in a little corner by themselves and no one took any particular interest in them. When the union succeeded in having Congress direct its attention to the general problem of government salaries, these employees received a substantial increase.

the National Federation of Federal Employees, has been on the whole conservative both in program and in method. Many citizens' organizations have joined it in furthering important elements in its program, and it has not alienated them nor its own more conservative and dignified members by spectacular or vociferous methods. Its leadership has been distinctly of the intellectual type, thoroughly conversant with the significant facts and the best administrative practices, and it has been content to place its main reliance upon the inherent merits of its case, but still it is not lacking in the arts of mass action and pressure, nor in political skill. So much of its program has been shown to be in the public interest that it has generally had a favorable press and it is almost universally recognized as one of the leading champions of the merit system.

Many Americans regard the extension of the merit system, the preservation of its integrity, and the perfection of its techniques as an outstanding need of our democracy. Persons with such views generally recognize that unionism and affiliation both tend to further these objectives. Unions of government employees in a jurisdiction under the merit system have an enlightened self interest in that system. To them it does not represent merely a righteous ideal giving efficient administration. It means an orderly and fair working life, with established recognized procedures. The patronage system and political influence in the administration of a merit system office mean both discrimination and unfairness. Unionism strives to stamp out both, because their elimination is to the interest of the group as a whole.

To a greater extent than any group of disinterested outside friends of the merit system, the government employees in a merit system office know the importance

of competent administrative officers, from corporals and sergeants up to commanding generals. Perhaps contrary to popular belief, most merit system employees like to work in an efficient office, where the officers know what they are doing and why, where the work moves with accuracy and dispatch, and where the employees are valued in accordance with their capacity. Unlike the outsiders the employees know the details and can frequently tell precisely what is wrong, and they often know that what is wrong is the result of politics and influence. They generally seek to further good administration.

The employees, especially the organized employees, do seek salary advances by pressure methods and they often combat reductions in force. Some of these reductions are in the public interest and some of them are blind and unreasoned, resulting in a serious crippling of public service. With the situation as it is, the sound course appears to be to permit the employees to present their case to the legislatures and to use those methods that are open to other groups in urging their case upon the legislatures.

## CHAPTER XI

### POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In a government under the spoils system, the civil employees are expected to participate in partisan political activities and to contribute to party campaign funds. Contributions may not be entirely voluntary but may be actual assessments. Numbered tickets to an expensive dinner which is to swell the party fund or wipe out the campaign deficit may be mailed to the employee who has a political position. He is given the privilege either of mailing his check or returning the numbered ticket. Knowing on which side his bread is buttered, he ordinarily mails the check. When a campaign is on, the conscientious employee in a spoils position takes vacation leave while he works for the party or his faction.<sup>1</sup> Less conscientious employees regard political work for the party or faction as part of their official duties paid for by the taxpayers. Most of the working day during the period may be devoted to preparation of campaign material. Politically selected officers having charge of lump sum appropriations may decide that for once the weeds along the public highways shall all be cut, and thus the funds appropriated for highway maintenance are distributed among the voters along the right of way, a few dollars to each one. The attempt is made by the public officials and employees in office to secure their own continuance by the disguised purchase of votes through the use of the taxpayers' money.

<sup>1</sup> In states where one party is dominant, the real fight is between factions of that party and takes place in the primary. If a faction loses control of the offices, its members are often dismissed to make room for members of the incoming faction.

PROHIBITION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND LEVYING  
OF ASSESSMENTS

Under a well-drafted merit system law the employees are prohibited from participating in political activities, and the soliciting of campaign contributions from public employees or the levying of assessments on them for political purposes is made a criminal offense. Of course the mere passage of such a law does not entirely clear up the situation and make it pure as the lily. Political officers in charge of the enforcement of the law may be entirely out of sympathy with it and entirely willing to shut their eyes to violations. When the penalty provided against an offending employee is dismissal from the service, the political administrator may refuse to enforce the penalty. Politically appointed prosecuting officers may decide that the evidence against the politicians who have attempted to levy an assessment is not sufficient to sustain a prosecution or that the camouflage of selling tickets to a dinner or subscriptions for a copy of the campaign book is good enough to take the case outside the law.

The fact that such laws are not perfectly enforced by no means proves that they are valueless. The laws have wide popular support, for the ordinary citizen does not want public funds spent for purely partisan purposes and especially does not want elections bought with public funds. Thus the political opponents of those who have violated the law often find evidence of that violation good campaign material. The fact that an action is a direct violation of the will of the people embodied in the law of the land makes it not only ethically wrong but legally wrong. Even the practical politician without many ethical scruples may advise against attempting assessments on the ground that that type of thing does the party more harm than good. Since, in a merit system



jurisdiction, members of all parties are likely to be represented in the service, the chances that illegal pressure may become known and may be taken up by the newspapers are greatly enhanced.

If the officers directly in charge of lump sum appropriations are career men, appointed because of their professional, scientific, or technical achievements, they are likely to oppose the use of public funds for political weed-cutting. Their political superiors may be afraid to do it because the civil service men might let the cat out of the bag. Things that are practicable in a spoils system service where almost all employees are of the same party or faction of a party may become impracticable when the service contains employees from all parties and a considerable sprinkling of political independents, whom the politicians often sneer at as idealists.

Most civil service employees selected under the merit system appreciate, moreover, that permanency of tenure, despite change of party control, is entirely inconsistent with partisan activity. They see the inconsistency of requiring a political party on coming into power to retain civil service employees who have actively and notoriously worked for its opponents. They realize that the merit system will work well only if the civil servants under the merit system wear publicly the mantle of neutrality, whatever may be going on in the heart cloaked by that mantle. In some cases they preserve neutrality on intellectual and moral grounds, and in others because of their fear of getting caught or of losing their jobs on a change of administration. The existence of a law prohibiting political activity strengthens both the moral and intellectual, and the timorous. Of course a few take their chances, some because they place certain worthy objectives above permanence of tenure and

others because should their party win they will have enhanced their own chances of advancement.

#### DIFFICULTIES UNDER POLITICAL ACTIVITY RULES

The rules against political activity of permanent civil servants give rise to three major difficulties:

The first, just referred to, is the case where the civil servant has a deep-seated social or economic conviction. One political party represents his own point of view; the other is diametrically opposed to it. He may feel that in preserving neutrality necessary for permanence of tenure he is selling his own soul for a mess of pottage. The provision that permits him privately to express his own views and to vote as he pleases without pressure of any kind does not satisfy him. He wants his American rights of complete freedom of speech, the privilege of setting up his soap box on the corner and haranguing the crowd. The things which he can do quietly and privately within the law seem to him a subterfuge not worthy of him as a man. Although much is to be said in favor of this highly individualistic, liberty-loving position, it seems true nevertheless that the individual often has to sacrifice some personal liberty when he joins an organization. He has to modify his own conduct to meet the requirements of the organism of which he becomes a part. If he insists upon his individual rights and accords to all other employees the same individual rights he probably makes impracticable a permanent civil service.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> At a recent conference one observer of the Washington scene commented on the ability of the federal civil servants to adjust their political and economic views to those held by the party in power. He had the impression that individuals changed their coats with a change of administration. That a few individuals do change sides for practical reasons is of course true. But civil servants whose economic and social convictions are at variance with those of their official superiors must of necessity

The second difficulty arises from the fact that many civic problems in the community in which the employee lives have to be settled ultimately by political action through government. For example the civil service employee is bringing up his family in a community which according to his judgment has inadequate schools and sanitary facilities. With his fellow citizens, many of whom may also be civil service employees, he advocates supplying these facilities. It may be possible that the civil service employees because of their experience are among the best qualified citizens in the community to collect, organize, and present the facts. During the early stages of the movement it may be purely civic, but in time it becomes a political issue. One party at the polls or one faction in the primary supports the program; the other opposes it on the ground of expense. The government employees who have been active in non-partisan civic organizations, officers or committee chairmen, suddenly wake up to the fact that further activities will involve partisan politics that may be against the rules.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the government employee has a wife who has been a leader in the local women's club, the League of Women Voters, or the Parent-Teachers' Association. These organizations have been the motive power in advocating

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keep pretty close-mouthed and have little to say regarding the policies of their chiefs. Civil servants whose convictions are in harmony with the administration may with much greater safety be outspoken, even enthusiastic. It sometimes seems that what takes place is not in the main a change in the convictions of individuals but a change in the group of persons who feel safe in expressing their views freely. In almost every administration under our American system some civil servants are put into political positions and are no longer expected to be neutral. It must be remembered too that in many of the so-called emergency agencies the employees are politically selected and are not classified civil servants. Such employees can hardly be expected to preserve neutrality.

better schools or improved sanitary facilities. Must the wife of the permanent civil servant stop when the issue becomes partisan? Can the wife engage in partisan politics which are prohibited to the husband? Can a husband have his politics in his wife's name? Can it be assumed that the wife acts as her husband's agent or on his compulsion or can it be assumed that the wife is entirely free or beyond her husband's control? Either of these assumptions may be true in individual cases.

The third difficulty arises from the fact that the legislature is the board of directors for the civil service and itself is the final authority on such vital matters as salaries, hours of labor, holidays, vacations, sick leave, compensation for injuries, and retirement. Organizations concerned primarily with keeping down or reducing taxes may open a concerted drive against the civil service employees, bringing pressure on the legislature or on candidates for the legislature. Does the rule against political activity leave the employees helpless to do more than privately express their opinions and secretly cast their ballots at the polls? Does this rule deny to them their constitutional right peacefully to assemble and petition Congress for a redress of grievances? Can a rule be applied to civil servants which would be entirely unconstitutional were it applied to any other group?

The answer to the last two classes of cases seems to be that the rules against political activity ought to be confined pretty closely to partisan political activity, and that the employees should be free to participate in the general civic and welfare activities of their communities and should be able to present their own special needs to legislative bodies through their own organizations. The dividing line seems to come at the point of supporting one party and opposing the other, of actively endorsing and

supporting one candidate and actively opposing another.

What constitutes actually supporting a candidate or actually opposing one? For example, an organization of government employees or a civic organization including in its membership a considerable number of employees ascertains from the record or from the statements of candidates the position of the several candidates with respect to a question in which the organization has a special interest. The organization prints and distributes an article simply giving the position of each candidate on the issue. It neither specifically endorses nor opposes any candidate, although the facts would naturally lead the civil service workers to support one candidate and reject the other. In American public life it rarely happens that all the candidates of one party occupy a favorable position and all the candidates of the other an unfavorable one. More frequently the parties have not divided specifically on the issue and it is an individual matter. Assume, however, that the parties have taken diametrically opposed positions on such an issue and that the employees' organizations have merely published in parallel columns the party platforms with respect to this issue without comment or exhortation. Does the publication of the stand of the parties constitute supporting the candidates of the party taking the favorable stand?

To the writer it has never seemed that either a candidate for public office or a political party or a faction of a political party has any just ground for complaint if any individual or group of individuals gives wide distribution to an accurate statement of the position of that candidate, party, or faction on any question of importance to the group. The fact that these statements of the positions of the opposing forces are arranged in a form permitting of ready comparison does not change the situation. The

candidate, the party, or the faction is seeking the public office that will give the power to decide these questions. If it is taking a position adverse to the interests of the civil servants either collectively or as individuals, the civil servants, it would seem, have a right to know the facts and so to distribute the facts that they will reach voters. If the employees confine themselves to an accurate statement of the candidate's position he has no valid ground for complaint. If the voters defeat the candidate because of his position, he is properly responsible for that position. On the other hand the civil service employees should not actively campaign for the defeat or the election of a candidate, much less of a party or a faction of a party. The dividing line is perhaps a rather fine one but the distinction appears to be in the main practicable.

#### ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS AGAINST POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Since the laws prohibiting political activity of permanent civil service employees are an integral part of the merit system, it would seem that the interpretation of these laws, the adoption of the rules and regulations made in pursuance of them, and their application and enforcement should all be vested in the civil service commission or other central control agency, subject to such control by the chief executive as the law or the constitution may provide. In our national service, under the civil service rules in effect to February 1, 1939, the Civil Service Commission might investigate cases of improper political activity, but it had no power to do more than recommend disciplinary action. If the appointing officer in the operating agency, say the Postmaster General, did not carry out the recommendation of the Civil Service Commission, the Commission was powerless. Its only course was to call the matter to the attention of the Presi-

dent. Similarly, if the Commission got fairly conclusive evidence of a violation of the law respecting soliciting campaign contributions it could not itself take legal steps. It had to refer the matter to the Attorney General, and the Department of Justice determined whether the case should be prosecuted. Since in the national government the Attorney General and his prosecuting staff were all politically appointed officers, the recommendations of the Civil Service Commission were not always carried out or pressed with real vigor. It would seem that the Civil Service Commission should have power to prosecute violations of the laws governing contributions and that, subject to appeal to the President, it should have power to remove an employee from the permanent civil service for improper political activity. Power to withhold salary from an offending employee is conferred upon the Commission by Rule XV of the rules to become effective February 1, 1939.<sup>8</sup>

Most civil service employees want to comply with the law and the rules regarding political activity yet, as has been seen in the preceding discussion, some of the distinctions are pretty fine spun. The civil service commission should therefore follow the practice of giving quickly and fully declaratory opinions telling the employees whether or not a proposed course of action would be construed as a violation of the law or the regulations on political activity. The fact that commissions have to deal with such subjects is one reason in favor of having not only a board of civil service commissioners but a bipartisan board.

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix A.

## CHAPTER XII

### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLITICAL OFFICERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

Nothing in our national personnel system deserves more careful analysis and consideration than the relationships among (1) the permanent civil service employees, (2) the politically appointed administrative officers who represent the party in power at the moment, and (3) the legislative body. No small part of the administrative difficulties in the United States arises from the fact that these relationships have never been defined and systematized, and that so much of the writing on the subject deals in generalities. Terms such as "policy-making officers" are used without accurate definition, and no attempt is made to apply them to concrete situations. If that attempt were made, the futility of the generalities as working tools would promptly become obvious.

#### ADVANTAGES OF THE BRITISH SYSTEM

The British civil service has three great advantages over the United States service in this respect; and it is possible that in these differences lie much of the administrative superiority of the British system. These advantages are:

1. The permanent British civil service is the service of the Crown. The employees are His Majesty's civil servants. The political ministry of the day is entitled to their services and to the loyal performance of their duties, but the ministry is only the tenant of the structure in which the servants are employed. If we were to have the same system in this country, we should say that



permanent civil servants are the servants of the people, that the administrative structure belongs to the people, and that the political party in power is a temporary tenant of the structure entitled to the service of the employees and to the loyal performance of their duties.

2. The ministry of the day accepts full and undivided responsibility for all matters of administrative policy. That does not mean at all that the permanent civil servants have no part in arriving at policy. They play a very great part in the policy determining processes. Policy making in any modern government means assembling and analyzing all the pertinent facts and expert opinions; and the regular work of the administrative agencies often consists of assembling and analyzing the pertinent facts and opinions. Perhaps generally the best expert opinion on matters of organization, business practice and procedure, and other factors affecting the practicability of making a policy effective is possessed by the experienced civil servants. The distinguishing feature of the British system is not that the permanent civil servants have no part in policy making, but that their part is purely advisory. The political officers, even when accepting without modification the advice of the permanent civil servants, assume full and undivided responsibility, and according to the ethics of the service, do not credit or discredit the permanent civil servants in the parliamentary or political debates.

3. This British system is possible partly because the British have centered all power in Parliament and do not have a division of powers among legislative, executive, and judicial. The executive is subordinate to the Parliament; the ministers are members of the Parliament, subject to control by it. Thus permanent civil servants do not, as in this country, customarily appear as

witnesses before parliamentary committees. There is no such thing for an extended period as a House of Commons adverse to the Ministry; of permanent civil servants' being called before a committee hostile to the administration and forced to give testimony which may prove adverse to the administration; of a public bill's being passed through Parliament against the will of the Ministry. Our Congress in order to legislate must have the facts and the expert opinions possessed by the permanent civil servants. Under our system it often gets the data by summoning them and eliciting from them information that is used against the administration.

Under the British system this process loosely called "policy making" is integrated and coordinated, whereas in the American system it is scattered all through the structure of government and is neither integrated nor coordinated.

#### WHERE IS POLICY MADE?

The decision of major matters of policy under our American constitution is vested in the Congress as the legislative body. The President participates in the legislative process through his power to advise the Congress on the state of the nation and to recommend legislation and through his veto power; but under the Constitution the Congress by a two-thirds vote has power to adopt a policy to which the executive is so opposed that he has vetoed the act when it was first presented to him. According to the Constitution he is required faithfully to execute the laws, although the laws may contain some recent acts passed over his veto and some earlier acts which he would have vetoed if he had had the chance and which he would like repealed if he could get repeal through the Congress. The President under our system has practically unlimited proposing power in matters of

broad general policy but the Congress has the disposing power. It can reject a presidential proposal by a mere majority vote; it can adopt its own policy contrary to the wishes of the President by a two-thirds vote. Thus the Congress is the dominant policy-making agency in our national government.

The extent to which the Congress shall go in determining policy, even details of administrative policy, is under our Constitution a matter for the Congress itself to decide. The Congress is, as a matter of constitutional law, virtually a board of directors for the entire administrative structure. So far as finances and appropriations are concerned it has, practically speaking, as much detailed control as it may care to exercise. In the matter of appointments to the purely administrative services its powers are narrowly limited, except that it can if it sees fit require Senate confirmation of presidential appointments. Even in matters of appointment the Congress can if it so desires adopt a system under which the President proposes and the Senate disposes through the power of the Congress to require senatorial confirmation.

With respect to most matters of policy in administration therefore the Congress has authority to determine the extent to which it will delegate policy-making powers to the President and the administrative officers, subject of course to the limitations imposed by the Supreme Court which will not permit delegation of what it regards as purely legislative powers to the President. Under our system of division of powers, Congress cannot divest itself of its responsibility for major matters of policy and give its legislative policy determining powers to the President. Thus the Constitution provides an upper limit which the Congress cannot exceed in vesting policy-making powers in the President or his subordi-

nates, but there appears to be a wide area within which the Congress can give or withhold policy-making powers. Such policy-making powers as the President and his administrative subordinates have, in most administrative matters, are therefore delegated powers which may be withdrawn by congressional action.

In our American national administrative structure, the civil service thus has two bosses: the President, who is chief executive officer, or as some would say general manager; and the Congress, or as some would say, board of directors. It differs from the typical American business corporation, from the parliamentary system, and from the American city manager form of government in that the general manager is not subject to removal by the board of directors at will, except by impeachment, which has never been successfully used against a President of the United States. The Congress legally appears to have in the long run the upper hand but in exercising its power it often runs down into pretty minute detail. With that particular point we are not at the moment concerned. The main point is that the real policy-making power under our system is in the Congress and that administrative officers, in so far as they exercise policy-making power, are generally exercising a delegated power.

#### THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DECIDING POLICY AND FORMULATING POLICY

Within the executive departments it is necessary to distinguish sharply between: (1) work done to aid in the formulation of general policies, and (2) the actual decision of matters of policy. For example, the United States Forest Service collects and analyzes a great body of data relating to forestry in the United States, which

is designed to aid in the development of general policies in connection with forestry, flood control, and conservation in general and may be used by either the Congress or the executive, or by both. On the other hand the Forest Service actually administers national forests and, within the authority delegated to it, decides upon the policies to be followed in the management of those forests. In the first case the officers of the Forest Service are playing a part in the processes that are incidental to arriving at a policy, but they are not in any sense deciding policy: they are at most influencing policy. In the second case the officers of the Forest Service are actually deciding policy. Some students of the subject would adopt a distinctive designation for these two activities. They would not speak of making policy with respect to the management of a national forest: they would refer to such activities rather as "exercising administrative discretion." These students would restrict the term "policy making" to the activities of the legislative body and the quasi-legislative commissions, and apply the term "exercising administrative discretion" to the activities that are in the field of management.

Even within the narrower field of "the exercise of administrative discretion" no really useful purpose would be served by attempting to divide positions into two classes—those involving the exercise of administrative discretion and those not involving any administrative discretion—because the positions that involve no administrative discretion would not be particularly numerous, whereas the positions that require some administrative discretion are legion. The policeman patrolling a beat ordinarily is exercising a large measure of administrative discretion. Before him is conclusive evidence of violation of a city ordinance. He may ignore it as a

matter of little real consequence; he may chat with the offender and tell him in a friendly way not to do it again; he may "bawl him out" after the best police style and, having scared him to death, let him go; or he may make an arrest which will be followed by prosecution. The officer may be making his own policy, or he may be following a general policy indicated by his superiors. A customs inspector at the international boundary uses administrative discretion when he takes but a cursory glance at one passenger's open baggage and then proceeds to examine in detail the property of another. A hospital bedside nurse in a big government hospital may have very little opportunity for the exercise of administrative discretion, whereas a field nurse in the Indian Service twenty miles from the agency doctor and the agency superintendent may find it necessary to exercise a high degree of administrative discretion involving matters considerably beyond the duties of a bedside nurse. Field officers in general have to exercise more administrative discretion than do employees of roughly corresponding rank at headquarters, because in administering a far-flung field service it is necessary to delegate more responsibility and authority to the employees in remote sections. The question of administrative discretion from the practical standpoint is not a matter of "yes" or "no" but of degree and extent. How much administrative discretion is necessary to make the position a policy-making position?

In an efficient modern service, a distinction is commonly made between the actual decision of important matters of administrative discretion and the procedure which is followed in determining what the decision shall be. Ordinarily the actual decision in major matters must be the official act of the head of the department or agency

and must bear his signature. Three types of procedure in formulating the proposals are common. (1) The chief officer calls a staff conference, the matter is discussed at length, and some one of the conferees writes or dictates the decision which is signed by the chief. (2) The chief talks the matter over informally with his lieutenants or gets memoranda from them and on this basis prepares a decision. (3) The chief asks his subordinate most concerned to draft a decision which is then circulated among other interested officers; each in turn endorses it with his comments or suggestions, and if it is generally acceptable the chief signs it, or if not, gets some compromise. Under each of these three methods several employees have participated in policy formulation but the chief alone has decided policy. Occasionally one encounters a politically appointed policy deciding officer who never in his official career formulated a policy: he merely decided which one of his subordinates should write the policy deciding memorandum and he signed it. Such officials are not necessarily bad administrators. They may be better than the officers who make their own decisions without really knowing what is involved.

Supplying data and expert opinion to be used in the determination of policy, whether to the President to furnish the basis of recommendations to Congress or direct to Congress, a committee of Congress, or an individual member involves much the same procedure. Somewhere down the line in the hierarchy is the employee who is the organization's authority on a particular aspect of the subject, if not on the subject as a whole. From the Secretary's office or from the chief's office comes the request for a memorandum or a report. Possibly there will be a staff conference at which the report as a whole will be discussed and outlined and then chapters or sections of

it assigned to the several specialists. Some of them may put their assistants on the job. At the end will come the report itself, sometimes carrying merely the signature of the Secretary or the chief, sometimes showing clearly the authorship of each of the sections. The method used depends in part on policy and in part on the nature of the Secretary or the chief. The question is: What officers were engaged in assisting in the formulation of broad policy? Was the Secretary or the chief alone responsible and hence the only one who could properly be classed as policy making? Perhaps down the line was the man, or a little group of men, who for fifteen or twenty years had prepared for the day when the nation would do something on an adequate scale about the pine tree blister and who found the dawn of that day when the Civilian Conservation camps were established and suitable work had to be found for the boys. Government files have long been filled with such projects waiting the day when the policy deciding agencies should act.

#### **POLICY FORMULATION IN CONTROVERSIAL MATTERS**

Both the exercise of administrative discretion and the participation in the formulation of programs and policies may under our American system draw the permanent civil service employees into the field of social and economic controversy. Two disguised cases may be used as examples.

A highly conservative administration is required to adjudicate rival claims to certain valuable property. One claimant is economically and politically powerful, the other economically and politically weak. The political administrative officers decide in favor of the strong, and direct the civil servant to prepare the necessary documents. The weaker party appeals to progressive Sena-



tors on the Senate committee which has jurisdiction over the agency, and the committee decides on a hearing. The permanent civil servant is summoned, as the person who has the factual details. He makes a first rather easy decision that he will confine his testimony strictly to the facts and studiously avoid any expression of opinion. Then he has to make a far more difficult decision: shall he present the facts impartially and judicially or shall he give them as a lawyer would give them in presenting the case for his administrative superiors, stressing the points on one side, omitting or minimizing the points on the other? Is he the servant of all the people and is it his duty to give to the Congress the whole story impartially and judicially? Or is he the servant of his administrative superiors and his duty to help them maintain their case? Whichever horn of the dilemma he selects he is in difficulty. If he makes an unbiased complete statement of facts, thereby furnishing ammunition to the opposition and perhaps defeating the objectives of his administrative superiors, he has jeopardized his own position in the civil service. If he vigorously supports his official superiors and presents a brief for them, he is put under fire by the opposition and may be a marked man when the opposition gains control of the executive branch of the government.

In the second case, a politically appointed administrative officer is extremely active in partisan politics. He sees no impropriety in calling upon the permanent classified civil servants under his direction for partisan service. It may start with having them prepare official statistics, which are subsequently adjusted, by sins of omission and commission, so that they give a false impression. Later, as the fight gets more heated, he calls on the civil servants to prepare partisan addresses or even to help in

the preparation of the campaign handbook. These activities are almost always well known within the organization and often to the newspaper men and the politicians.<sup>1</sup> The administration changes, and a leader of the opposite party inherits a classified civil servant, high up in the hierarchy, who has been right-hand man or tool of the administrator's predecessor and political opponent. Had the administration not changed, the classified civil servant would now "be sitting pretty," but as it is he is on the way down, if not out. Some civil servants of course welcome the chance to establish themselves with the top political officer. Others are disturbed by the impropriety of the requests made of them, but are almost powerless in such a situation.<sup>2</sup>

Several agencies of the national government are set up to engage in promotion, adult education, or the furtherance of the interests of particular groups or classes of the people. The permanent civil servants for such agencies are selected because of their qualifications for the duties involved, in other words because of their education and successful experience. Not infrequently they have gained the necessary education and experience because they have a compelling conviction of the desirability of a given

<sup>1</sup> Washington is, as is well known, a great whispering gallery. Miss Julia Lathrop once remarked: "If I had anything official which had to be kept absolutely secret, I don't know what I could do with it except post it on the official bulletin board."

<sup>2</sup> An outstanding career man was popularly regarded as completely identified with his political chief, because he was always called into consultation by the chief and given many assignments that took him into controversial fields. From long association the writer knew that the social and economic philosophy of the civil servant was far from that of his chief. On one occasion the civil servant remarked: "I wish the newspaper men and the politicians could know that not once in the past two years has the chief taken my advice; I can't quite understand why he keeps on using me." Fortunately in this case the career man did not suffer in a change of administration.

course of social or economic action. The policy-making Congress, after hearings and investigations, has established the agencies in the first instance to carry on these activities, and year after year, following appropriation committee hearings, has appropriated funds for the continuance of these activities. Occasionally an elected chief executive or an appointed political officer is not in sympathy either with the general policy approved by the Congress or with the activities being carried on by the civil servants. They may disapprove both the policy and the acts of administrative discretion made in pursuance of that policy. From their point of view all the employees who are furthering that policy through promotion and public education are engaged in the formation of public opinion and hence in policy making of the broadest type. This situation again brings out the fact that under our American system, the civil servants have two bosses, the President as general manager and the Congress as the board of directors, and neither one is directly subordinate to the other. If the principle is adopted that all employers who are engaged in this type of policy formation are to be excluded from the classified civil service and are to be appointable by the President without competition, then the President can in a large measure prevent the attainment of a policy of the Congress, because employees who believe in the policy and are equipped to carry it out are essential to its success.

#### SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITUATION

From the foregoing discussion the following points seem worthy of repetition in summary:

1. A sharp distinction must be drawn between the act of deciding policy or of making a decision and the process

of formulating or determining, through study and deliberation, what the policy should be.

2. The primary authority to decide major matters of policy is, under the American Constitution, vested in the Congress. The Congress itself decides what is major and what is minor.

3. The President and the officers and employees of the administrative branch of the government may:

a. Assist in the formulation and the determination of policy through study, deliberation, and recommendations; but under our American system they have no monopoly of such activities. The Congress itself decides whether it will use the recommendations and assistance of the President and his administrative assistants and, if it uses them, to what extent. The Congress may itself investigate and report or call in outside witnesses or advisers.

b. Decide matters of policy or exercise administrative discretion in accordance with the powers conferred upon the President by the Constitution or in accordance with powers delegated to them by the Congress.

4. Employees from the top of the hierarchy to the bottom may:

a. Decide matters of administrative discretion in accordance with powers delegated to them by their superior officers.

b. Participate in the formulation of matters of policy or administrative discretion.

5. The term "policy-making officer" is too vague and indefinite for use in real personnel administration because the question of whether an officer is or is not a policy-making officer cannot be answered "yes" or "no." The question is one of degree and can best be handled through the duties classification, where responsibility is carefully considered in relation to duties.

## POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN PRESENT SITUATION

Under a form of government such as we have, is there any device whereby we may draw a suitable dividing line between the positions which are properly filled politically by representatives of the administration in power—the government of the day, as the British would say—and the positions which are properly filled by permanent civil servants who are servants not of the party in control of administration but of the whole people? It is doubtful if any such dividing line can solve the problem but certain devices might conceivably help materially.

Under existing practice, at least in the national government, many positions high up in the administrative hierarchy combine in a single position two types of duties. The first type involves the direction and control of activities that are political in nature. In the exercise of the administrative discretion vested in the administrator with respect to these duties, he properly takes into consideration political factors. The second type of duty is, or at least ought to be, entirely non-political. In the exercise of the administrative discretion vested in him with respect to these duties, he should be absolutely non-political. Vesting the non-political duties in the hands of a political officer has two bad results: (1) it tends to bring politics into activities which should be kept free from politics; and (2) on a change of administration a new officer has to assume responsibility for non-political duties in the performance of which he may have had no experience. To classify positions in which the two types of duties are combined as either policy making or non-policy making, political or non-political, is impracticable, because they are as a matter of fact both.

A possible solution lies along the line of a redistribution of duties among positions in such a way that the political officers will have discretionary authority directly

over only such activities as are properly political. Duties that are properly non-political would be vested primarily in non-political positions and the political officers would have no direct control or authority over the performance of these duties. Thus high up in the administrative hierarchy many existing positions would be divided. Non-political duties would be taken from political positions and attached to permanent civil service offices. In some instances that would mean having two positions in place of one; in others it would mean simply a redistribution of duties among existing positions with no new positions.

For example, at present one often finds the power to make appointments, promotions, salary advances, and assignments to duties, the authority to make purchases and contracts, and other similar powers vested in the political head of the organization despite the fact that none of these duties properly involves any principle on which the political parties have divided. The postal service is the most familiar illustration. As has often been said, there is no Republican way of delivering the mail, no Democratic way. Giving the Postmaster General authority to say what kind of floors shall be laid in post office work rooms, to specify the use of a special patented flooring, to determine where premises shall be rented for postal purposes, introduces partisan politics into transactions directly contrary to the public interest. Obviously, from the standpoint of economy and efficiency there should be a permanent civil service director of the postal service in whose position would be vested the power and authority to direct and control those activities of the postal service that are properly non-political. These powers would be taken away from the political Postmaster General.

The political Postmaster General, if one were still

deemed necessary, would have no authority in law to act in purely non-political matters nor to give detailed directions to the permanent director of the postal service. A political Postmaster General would have direct authority over such matters only as were properly political in nature, and he would report to the President regarding the administration of the permanent director of the postal service. The President, with or without the advice of the Postmaster General, would have authority to remove the director. Thus both the Postmaster General and the President would be in a position to put a good deal of pressure on the permanent director; but if he refused to yield their only recourse would be to remove him from office, because the legal authority and power to perform the non-political duties would be vested in him alone. The political officers could remove him but they could not force him to act against his will in any particular case if he were ready to pay the penalty of refusal. Since he would be refusing to permit partisan political forces to determine non-political business matters, he would be in a relatively strong position. Partisan politicians would be slow to remove him on the ground that he refused to approve a smelly contract for post office floors or for the rental of quarters.

If positions were thus divided and legal authority over non-political matters vested in a non-political permanent officer, the foundation would be laid for the development of an ethical and traditional rule that political officers do not interfere with permanent civil service officers in the non-political matters of administration. Some permanent civil service officers might, it is true, become arbitrary, tend to ignore their political superiors, treat the public autocratically, and try to assume authority over political matters that were beyond their

legal jurisdiction; but any such action would lay them open to removal for cause. Probably more civil servants would keep well within their jurisdictions and be if anything too susceptible to the pressure of their superior officers.

In so far as it proved practicable to divide duties, responsibilities, and legal authority between political positions filled politically and non-political positions filled on merit by permanent employees, we might overcome the present difficulty under our form of government. When the Congress or its committees were inquiring into political matters, they would call the political employees; because under the law the political officers would be the ones who had the responsibility and the authority. When they were inquiring into non-political, purely administrative matters, they could call either the political officers or the permanent civil service officers or both groups as they saw fit. If the permanent civil service officers had had the wisdom and good sense to stay within their legal jurisdiction, they could very properly confine their testimony to their own acts, for the political head of the office would be responsible for political activities.

Under such a system it would be eminently proper for the political officer to ask the advice or the suggestions of the permanent officer but the political officer would have to make the decision and the responsibility for the decision would be vested in him by law. We might possibly develop in this country a tradition that political officers do not attempt to shift responsibility to permanent officers and that legislatures do not examine permanent officers on matters beyond the scope of their official duties and responsibilities.

Too much stress cannot be placed on the fact that such



a reform cannot be brought about by a mere change of titles but must go at the basic things—the duties, the responsibilities, and the legal powers. Calling a person a permanent under-secretary and leaving him with some duties that are political in nature and others that are non-political in no way solves the problem, for despite the word permanent in the title he will have to go out of office if his performance of political duties has made him *persona non grata* to an incoming political administration.

The question is sometimes asked: How far down the hierarchy should such a system be carried? Would it involve having in each of the bureaus of a department a political head and a permanent civil service head or could that system be confined to the departments? The answer to these questions is: "That would all depend on the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the head of the bureau." Certain bureaus have almost no political duties and responsibilities and thus their heads could well be permanent civil servants. That degree of political control essential in a democracy could be adequately exercised by the political head of the department. Certain bureaus are political hot spots and for them a political head performing the political duties and carrying the political responsibilities would be essential. Associated with them and with respect to all political matters entirely subordinate to them would be the top civil service man with authority over the non-political matters.

In non-political bureaus the permanent civil service head of the bureau would be responsible both for the technical work of the organization and its business practice and procedure, for neither would be political. In political bureaus the permanent head might be responsible only for matters of business practice and procedure and for the permanent personnel because all beyond that

would be political. Just as a duties and responsibilities study is used in salary standardization so a duties and responsibilities study would have to be made to redistribute duties and responsibilities among political positions and non-political positions. In a non-political office the permanent director within his scope would be a policy determining officer and his subordinates might assist him in policy formulation. In a political office the political officer would determine political policy. The real need is to separate political duties from non-political duties and to separate the legal authority and responsibility for the performance of these duties.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CAREERS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND UNIVERSITY TRAINING FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Both in popular discussions of public personnel administration and in the special literature on the subject, the term "a career service" is so commonly used that it seems desirable to devote an entire chapter to the subject. Unfortunately the term is often used without any precise definition and it has conveyed very different ideas to various persons. In university courses on public administration the writer has found marked confusion among the students as to what is meant by "a career service."

#### EXISTING CAREER SERVICES

In the national field the term long meant a specialized branch of the service into which a person entered in his youth and in which he ordinarily remained during his working years, generally advancing grade by grade according to a definite, highly developed plan. Often at the end of the working life the employee of the career service was retired on a definite pension. Readers will think at once of the commissioned personnel of the Army and the Navy as constituting such a "career service." Several others, however, closely resemble those two, among them the commissioned officers of the Public Health Service, the Coast Guard, and the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Under the Rogers Act a somewhat similar career service was established for the Foreign Service and later one was established for the foreign representatives of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

Each such career service has its own entrance requirements, its own system of grades and salaries, and its own rules regarding promotions, dismissals, and so on, and as a rule its own distinctive retirement system.

In municipal governments one not infrequently finds the police and the fire departments rather similarly organized in merit system jurisdictions, so that these so-called "uniformed services" are largely career services.

Public school teaching, largest of all public services, has long been a career service.

Promotion from within is the customary method of filling positions in the upper grades in a career service, but it is not necessarily the exclusive method. Occasionally appointments may be made from without the normal lines without destroying the general character of a career service.

Initial appointment does not have to be by open competition to make a career service of this type. Appointment as a cadet at West Point or as a midshipman at Annapolis, for example, constitutes the normal gateway to the two best known of our national career services, and these appointments are part of the patronage of members of Congress and of the President. The nominees are, however, required to qualify in educational and physical tests and subsequently to pass examinations, not only in the academies but generally on promotion from rank to rank in the service.

Certain national administrative agencies that are under the general Civil Service Act of 1883 and other general personnel laws operate under conditions that tend to make them closely resemble career services in this old sense. In these services the upper positions<sup>1</sup> can as a rule

<sup>1</sup>The very highest positions may, however, be filled from the outside politically. If the service is one in which partisan political policies

be filled satisfactorily only by the promotion of employees experienced in the service. Thus recruitment from the outside is generally confined to the lowest professional entrance class. The examining corps of the United States Patent Office is an example of this type. The lowest class is recruited from the engineering and technical schools through a stiff open competitive examination.

One feature which distinguishes the Patent Office type of career service from the Army and Navy type is worthy of particular note, although perhaps it is of degree. In the Patent Office, as in most of the civilian organizations, promotion from one class to another is contingent upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the class above, and thus the opportunity to advance, or for a successful career, as some would say, depends on resignations or other withdrawals. In the Army and the Navy, the occurrence of vacancies is not the only factor. The number of positions is determined in part on a basis which will permit advancement on completion of a certain length of service provided the officer's services have been satisfactory and he passes the requisite examinations. The necessity for promotions is frankly recognized and it is part of the policy to provide them. A low compulsory retirement age is provided partly to keep the service young and physically fit, and partly to enable the younger officers to advance to positions of higher responsibility, to gain the new experience, and to get more money and rank. The good man is more certain of his opportunity for "a career," if by career one means rank, salary, and the chance to occupy a high place in his chosen profession.

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are involved, this method of appointment may be the best device for subjecting the permanent civil service to proper democratic control. If on the other hand the agency does not deal with partisan political matters, much is to be said in favor of making the top position part of the permanent career service.

In the typical American public service little attention is given this aspect of life. It is a matter of luck.

#### PROPOSALS FOR A CAREER SERVICE FOR GENERAL ADMINISTRATORS

Some writers would make a career service in this broad Army and Navy or Foreign Service sense for general administrators. Copying from the administrative class of the British civil service, they would separate out certain positions in the public service. Incumbents of these positions would constitute a distinctive administrative service. According to one plan, part of the new entrants to the group would come from other groups already in the service, and part from original appointment of brilliant graduates of our colleges and universities, recruited not on the basis of their competence in some particular field, but on the basis of their general ability and interest. They would be specially trained through their assignments so that they would have broad vision and experience when at length they achieved the upper positions. Occasionally students are encountered who regard the establishment and development of such an administrative division as the correct meaning of the term "career service." The great reform of our public personnel system, according to their view, is the establishment of this administrative division on a career basis.

*Distinctions between the British and American situations.* That the public service as a whole requires able leadership and skilled administrators is of course obvious. But that fact alone does not establish the desirability of a distinctive administrative class patterned in part after the administrative class of the British civil service. The problem of administrative leadership and recruitment is far more complex than that, especially in

the modern government with its professional and technical services. The question must also be faced as to whether a device which has given eminently satisfactory service in England can be successfully transplanted to the United States even in a modified form. Some of the elements in the problem merit more detailed consideration.

*Federal vs. central administration.* The federal form of government prevails in the United States. Powers not given to the national government, expressly or by necessary implication, remain in the states or the people. National taxes may, however, be levied for the general welfare. As a consequence, in numerous fields of governmental activity, particularly in the newer and growing fields, we have a system whereby (1) the authoritative decisions with respect to policy and the actual installation and management of the services are the functions of the states, and (2) the collection of facts and statistics, research, investigation, propaganda, and promotion are the functions of the national government. If the national government gives grants-in-aid to the states, it may, and often does, virtually force them to accept a given policy, and it advises and supervises them with respect to its execution. Even so, the state actually adopts the policy and manages and directs the enterprise. Thus in field after field of government administration the national government agencies are staff units, doing research and investigation, exercising advisory supervision. They are not engaged in actual operation and management; they may be advisory as to policy but they are not actually deciding policy. Operative management and actual decisions as to policy remain vested in the states.

As a result of these forces the national government

has developed many agencies that serve as a sort of general staff for the states. The staff officers are national officers; the line officers are state officers. Many foreign visitors have been favorably impressed by our national agencies of this staff type, particularly by those in the Department of Agriculture.

Advocates of an administrative career service generally cite British experience and advocate bringing into our national service men of the type recruited for the British administrative class. Curiously, some British leaders in public administration believe that in England they have not developed the research or investigational group as we have in this country. They recommend reform in this respect. They recognize frankly that for this type of service their own administrative class men are not equipped; that to secure men with adequate qualifications they would have to adopt a new method of recruitment.

*The conflict between general administrators and professional workers.* The British adopted their administrative class system about 1855 before the full impact of modern science, technology, and industrial development had taken place.<sup>2</sup> They have not themselves solved the problem of the proper relationship between the general administrators and the technical, scientific, and professional workers. The general administrators in the British national government occupy the controlling position and they have kept subordinate the scientific, technical, and professional men. Some observers say that friction is increasing and that there is a growing demand for admission of the technical, scientific, and professional men to upper administrative positions.

<sup>2</sup> The British have not used the administrative class in the field of local government. In that field, most of the employees have a special field of civilian competence.



Our American national situation presents an interesting contrast. Because of our spoils system the tendency has been to leave in the patronage fields the upper positions which it was felt could be filled acceptably by general administrators without special technical and scientific equipment. Some of these administrators have been highly competent, others mediocre or worse, but few of them have become career men, because they go out on a change of administration. Our national legislators and political executives have on the other hand repeatedly recognized that for scientific, technical, and professional work, competence in the field and permanency of tenure are essential. They have provided them either through career services of the Army and Navy type or through the general civil service system. Thus many persons who have worked closely with the national government for the advancement of personnel administration have secured a measure of success through convincing the legislators or the political administrators that the positions demanded scientific and technical competence.<sup>8</sup>

*Possible arrangements for an administrative service.*

<sup>8</sup>In one instance a group was deeply concerned over an appointment to the head of an important service. The position was to be filled by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The group had to present its case to an adviser of the President. The adviser announced at the beginning of the interview that he would have to be convinced that the position demanded special competence and could not be satisfactorily filled by a reasonably good general man and further that successful administration of that particular agency was essential to the general success of the administration. He explained the pressure for positions that confronted the administration: to overcome that pressure the administration had to have a good case. It was for the group to present that case.

Repeatedly during the past quarter of a century old agencies have been reformed by what is often called the professionalization of the service. If the only qualification is "a good administrator," then the door is open to the campaign contributor or his friends who have had some experience in the administration of a private business enterprise. They have not been trained for the public service, nor do they ordinarily remain in it on a change of administration.

In many of the scientific, technical, and professional agencies, especially those of the general staff type, the upper permanent positions are now filled by competent professional and technical men. If an administrative division is to be created, the possibilities appear to be: (1) to exclude from it the administrative positions in the technical, scientific, and professional agencies; (2) to place these positions in the administrative group and gradually to replace the technical and professional men with general administrators; or (3) to place these positions in the administrative group and fill them either with generally equipped administrators without scientific and technical equipment or with scientific and technically equipped men who have demonstrated administrative capacity of a high order. Each of these possibilities must be considered in some detail.

The number of positions in the national service that would go into an administrative group is not known; but even if the scientific, technical administrative positions are included, it is doubtful if it would exceed 2,000 out of a service of 800,000, or one quarter of one per cent. If the scientific and technical administrative positions are excluded, the number would probably drop below 1,000. The number recruited each year to maintain a force of 1,000 would probably be less than one hundred. The American university students who think that the establishment of an administrative career service would open wide opportunities for them in the national government cannot be conversant with the small size of such a service and the tiny number of annual appointments necessary to maintain it.

*Is administrative ability inconsistent with professional competence?* Any proposal gradually to replace scientific and technical men in upper administrative positions

by general administrators involves the assumption that general administrators would be more effective than the competent scientific men. The question may be asked: "More competent in what?" Staff agencies of the research, investigational, promotional type are usually relatively small, and they present few large problems of general operation and management. They do, however, require a large measure of professional competence and professional standing. The mere naming of heads of certain of these agencies will help in considering the proposal: the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, the Commissioner of Education of the Office of Education, the Chief of the Children's Bureau, the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, the Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Director of the Bureau of Standards, the Director of the Geological Survey, the Director of the Bureau of Mines, the Director of the Coast and Geodetic Survey. The effectiveness of the work of many of these agencies depends in no small measure not only on the technical and professional competence of the leader but on the extent to which the clientele of the agencies involved recognizes him as an authority.

Proponents of a special administrative class sometimes contend that scientific and technical men lack administrative ability. In an earlier chapter relating to salaries this subject was discussed at some length. Here it is only necessary to repeat that ability to cite some cases in which scientific and technical men lack administrative ability does not prove that all scientific and technical men lack administrative ability, any more than ability to cite some cases in which scientific and technical men were outstanding administrators proves that all such men are excellent administrators. No evidence has yet

been adduced to prove that in America, under our educational system, a general academic education produces better administrators than a more vocational education, or that graduates of general arts who do not go on into professional fields are superior in administrative ability to graduates in arts who subsequently get professional education. In the absence of sound statistics one must resort to observation. Observation suggests that administrative ability and interest are something rather separate and distinct from fields of learning and that good administrators and poor administrators may be found in almost any field.

The proposal to set up an administrative division which may be reached either by original entry at the bottom or by transfer from the scientific, professional, and technical division, or in exceptional cases from the clerical or inspectional divisions is entirely practicable. So far as the national service is concerned, it would be new only in name, for the practice of the national government has long been to fill the upper positions from these groups. The question may however be raised as to whether such a system should be called "a career service." The young university men who enter without special fields of competence, expecting to advance to upper administrative positions, will not consider it a career service if, when administrative positions above them are vacant, the persons selected are taken from the professional, scientific, and technical division or the clerical and inspectional divisions. They will regard such a career service as something of a gold brick.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Recently an associate reported the case of a young college man with good general education but without any special field of civilian competence who had been brought into the service by the apprenticeship method. His salary as an apprentice was below the standard classification

*Psychological handicaps of junior administrators.* One familiar with government offices and their psychology cannot help questioning whether it will be advantageous to the young man to enter the service initially in the suggested administrative division. He may regard himself as heir apparent to a big administrative job and hence superior to the common fry of the other divisions.

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rate for the entrance professional grade. He had been led to expect promotion after a reasonable apprenticeship period. Now he feels that he has learned about all that he can learn in his apprenticeship position and he is unhappy in it. Each vacancy that has occurred above him has demanded proficiency in some one particular field and he has been passed over because he lacked that proficiency. University trained men having the required proficiency have been brought in over his head at the higher salary provided for junior professional workers. They have positions which give more opportunity for growth in their special fields and for promotion.

How good the young employee in this case may be has not been investigated. The situation in which he is placed is likely to breed difficulties. He is discontented and his superior officers are finding it necessary to pass him by when selections are made for promotions. The reason given—absence of professional competence—may well be the real reason, although of course there is the possibility that his superiors do not regard him highly and do not like to tell him so. They may regard him as satisfactory in his present position but not material for promotion. After a year or so in such a situation the young man may become a problem case.

Fortunately Washington offers an excellent avenue of escape for such an employee. With his good general educational equipment he is eligible for graduate work in the evening classes in any one of several good local universities and he may within a few years attain a field of civilian competence which will make him eligible to climb one of the professional or technical ladders. If he has means, he might resign, devote all his time to study, and perhaps in the long run advance more rapidly.

This case illustrates what seems to be a significant fact. Most administrators are hard pressed to get today's work done, and therefore they want men who can handle today's task efficiently. In a period of pressure they have little time to devote to the employee who needs much training and supervision. If they can get men who are already well trained for the task in hand, they do not feel justified in giving preference to the untrained man. They may well be skeptical regarding the assumption that the man with no special field of civilian competence has greater potentialities than the equally well educated youngster who already has his field of civilian competence.

Even if he retains modesty, cooperativeness, and a desire to learn from his associates, whatever their division, he must in such a career service make good in competition with them for the upper positions. Since he occupies what will be regarded as a favored position, some employees will be tempted to trip him up, and they will delight in doing it if he has the manner, even if not the reality, of conceit. In many situations cooperation is the essence of success, and if cooperation is not given wholeheartedly the project drags or even fails. Mere possession of the prize tag "junior administrator" may prevent him from gaining cooperation, and if his superiors in the administrative division happen to be drawn from the professional, scientific, and technical division with natural preferences for and allegiance to their own group, they may not want to force cooperation even if they think they know how. Forcing cooperation is difficult.

The English system works because the members of the administrative division constitute a caste which occupies all the positions from top to bottom within that division. It is highly questionable whether it would work if it were not a caste and if there were real competition among two or more divisions for upper positions. If the caste ever loses full and complete control of the upper positions, its own days are probably numbered.

*The problem of recruiting for an administrative class.* Recruiting for the entrance positions in a distinctive administrative career service would, in the United States, present peculiar difficulties. The competitive tests for the administrative division of the British civil service were based originally on the curricula of Oxford and Cambridge. The candidates, originally restricted to graduates of these two universities, were examined in the subjects they had studied at these universities. When

the field of competition was somewhat broadened by admitting graduates of a limited number of other universities, the principle was not changed. Candidates were still examined in a limited number of subjects they had studied in the universities. The head of the British civil service commission once pointed out that if the tests were to be really competitive the number of subjects had to be kept fairly small so that many candidates competed in the same subjects. If a wide variety of electives is offered in the competition, the commission faces the difficult task of determining the value of an excellent paper on botany as compared with an excellent paper on mathematics.

In the United States it would be quite impossible to limit the competition to graduates of as few as fifty colleges or universities. Presumably graduates of every state university and of every state college of agriculture and the mechanic arts would necessarily have to be eligible to compete. Graduates of the great privately endowed universities would naturally be admissible; and rash indeed would be the person who, admitting the big ones, would exclude the small. The forces in American public life would operate not toward restricting the list of eligible institutions but toward expanding it. The most practicable method of holding down the number of competitors would be to admit only those standing in the upper portion of their class, say the upper quarter, or the upper ten per cent. To put through such a provision would require a change in the temper of American legislators, and they may safely be regarded in this connection as representing the majority of the voters.

Because of the diversity of the curricula of our American institutions of higher education it would be necessary to have tests in many different subjects, if the com-

petitors were to be examined in the subjects they studied at the universities. The agency that devised the examinations in the social sciences would have an almost insuperable task to develop tests that did not discriminate in favor of particular schools and against others.<sup>5</sup> Teaching in our American educational institutions is far from standardized, particularly in the social sciences. The theory that underlies the British tests that brilliance in the university subjects predicts brilliant subsequent performance is doubtless sound, but the practicability of applying it in the United States is quite another matter.

The system of professional and technical schools and of graduate study in the arts and sciences which has developed in the United States still further complicates the competitive examining process. Under this system students who make a distinguished record in the intellectual pursuits of undergraduate days are often encouraged to go on with further study, usually of a specialized nature fitting them for the professions or for advanced work in arts or sciences. In the past the national government has drawn heavily on these professional and graduate schools, for frequently training in them has furnished the qualifications required by the national government

<sup>5</sup> The writer recently had occasion to go over some questions in one of his fields of interest prepared for a civil service examination. The questions clearly revealed the school at which the examiner who prepared the questions had studied. Students from that school would, in the writer's judgment, have an advantage in the tests despite the options which would enable candidates from other schools to omit the questions that relate to matters particularly stressed in that school. Students from other schools might or might not know the answers; students from that particular school could hardly escape knowing them. The man who prepared the questions in this instance had no intention whatever of favoring his own school. He honestly accepted his school's evaluation of the importance of this knowledge. If this country tries the British plan, the questions should be prepared by an outstanding committee of examiners to avoid the dangers that would be inherent because of the heterogeneity of our American educational system.



especially in those scientific, professional, and technical agencies which serve as a general staff for state and local governments and for certain great clienteles.

A general examination for entrance to an administrative division, pitched at the level of the A.B. or B.S. degree, would present serious difficulties. If it were so generally designed that students from the professional and graduate schools could not derive any real advantage from their advanced work, it would be somewhat unfair to them. If on the other hand they could profit materially from their advanced work, they would, in the intense competition, crowd out almost all the men and women fresh from the undergraduate schools. In a country where so many people are graduated from institutions for higher education, the competition is already intense, and as has been pointed out elsewhere, the mere volume of candidates taxes existing testing techniques.

In the United States, civil service selection has evolved in the direction of the distinctive examinations for the several fields of professional, technical, and scientific achievement. It has, it is believed, been inevitably driven in that direction primarily by the industrial revolution and modern technology. Much government work, and much private work, now calls for specially educated and trained men. Our American educational system has naturally responded to that demand. The civil service commissions, lying between the demand of the operating agencies on the one hand, and the supply of trained people coming from our universities on the other, naturally has tended to give a large number of specialized examinations, in which they can examine with particularity the relatively small number of persons specially equipped by training and experience for particular positions.

That at times the tendency toward demanding a high

degree of specialization in education and experience has gone too far has been generally recognized. Leading government administrators in the special fields and leading educators in those fields have generally agreed that the civil service tests should be designed to measure all-round education and competence in the broad field of the profession or science rather than proficiency in a narrow segment of it. Government administrators generally agree that young men and women adequately equipped in the general field can be well trained in the narrow specialized segments within the service, but the service is not well equipped to make up deficiencies in the basic general professional or technical education of employees. Thus over the past fifteen or twenty years the tendency has been away from narrow specialization toward the broader type of professional and technical examinations which fit well into our American educational system. It has always seemed to the writer that these broad general professional and technical examinations represented the safe and sane middle ground for the United States and are far better adapted to American conditions than would be any examinations modeled after the British, because our educational structure is so radically different.

*Is the government a monopolistic or a competitive employer?* Another important matter to consider in connection with the term "a career service," is the degree to which the government is what may be called a monopolistic employer. It is a monopolistic employer when it is the only agency, or practically the only agency, that requires employees possessed of certain bodies of knowledge and certain skills in the application of that knowledge. It is a competitive employer when its work requires substantially the same knowledge and skills as that of

other employers. Thus in the case of the Army and the Navy the United States is virtually a monopolistic employer. Army and Navy officers must find their careers in the national service. The great postal service approaches a monopoly because the postal employees can rarely sell their specialized knowledge and skill to any other employer. The years spent in a monopolistic public service are frequently but as years wasted to a man who seeks to leave it and enter private employment. He has no real advantage over younger inexperienced men.

In competitive services the situation is often quite the reverse: the employee's experience in the public service may be a distinct asset to him in seeking other positions, either public or private. In a few instances, as has elsewhere been pointed out, training and experience in public offices may be almost a prerequisite for employment in private enterprise. Thus the employee who is in a monopolistic agency must look to the services of that particular agency for his career, whereas the employee who is in a competitive agency may look to his profession or calling for his career.

A sharp distinction must therefore be drawn between "a career in the public service" and "a career in the service of a particular government." In profession after profession the interests of the public and the interests of the members of the profession demand that the objective be a career in the public service, and this objective is defeated by any deliberate effort to tie employees to a particular government. To repeat in part a matter already discussed in the chapter on retirement: The writer several years ago had occasion to study with some care retirement systems for public employees. In the numerically greatest of all public services, that of public education, he found that mobility of the members of the teaching profession

was repeatedly regarded as a prime requisite. In England teachers' retirement funds were national in scope, so that a teacher would be free to move from local government to local government. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching embodied this principle in the retirement system for college teachers. Many of our state teachers' retirement systems have provided that service outside the state shall be counted in part at least in figuring benefits and eligibility for benefits under the state system. City managers must be free to move if the country is to have a city manager career service. Highway engineers and various other types of engineers in public service must be equally free to move. In social service administration there can be no real career unless mobility is preserved and the social worker can find his career in his profession.

*The size of the government as a factor.* The size of the government unit also plays a part in this question of a career in the public service or a career in the service of a particular government. Big services like the Army, the Navy, and the postal service can obviously offer a career, because positions in the upper reaches of the hierarchy are sufficiently numerous. The little municipality, the little highway department, the little social agency, the little school cannot offer a career. The size of the organization, the wealth of the community, and many other factors mean that the top salary cannot be large. Often such positions are best filled by well-trained young men who gladly accept them for the experience, for the chance to demonstrate their capacity and to qualify for a bigger job in a bigger community. If the bigger communities should decide on "a system of careers in their own departments" and should close them to the men and women from the smaller units, the professions

involved would suffer. Where there are many small agencies under many different governmental employers the only answer seems to be "careers in the public service as a whole," or "careers in the profession."

Requirements that candidates for state, county, or municipal services shall be residents of the particular state, county, or municipality preclude the development of careers in the public service. Large states and municipalities may be big enough to offer something approaching a career to its qualified citizens who enter its service, but small governments cannot do it. When a small government insists upon the appointment of a local resident, it may get the best the local area affords but not the best that the entire national market affords. If small governments adopt the policy of requiring local residents, they cannot consistently complain if larger governments follow the same course. The local boy or girl who enters the service of the home state, county, or municipality and makes a brilliant record may find his or her chances for advancement blocked by the residence rules of other communities. Residence rules tend to create blind alleys. Although they may appear to give the local people an advantage at the start, they likewise tend to limit the employee's chances for a broad career. Both the public service and the lives of the public servants would be vastly improved if recruiting were done entirely on the basis of actual qualifications regardless of residence.

*University training for the public service.* This distinction between "a career in the public service" and "a career in the service of a particular government" is important in considering university training for the public service. In so far as a particular government is a monopolistic employer, it is questionable whether universities or other schools should give special training for the posi-

tions involved until the student has been specifically selected for one of the positions. Annapolis and West Point are abundantly justified in giving intensive training in specialized subjects because the midshipmen and the cadets who are successful have reasonable assurance of appointments and a career, and most of them do not waste time and effort getting vocational training that they do not subsequently use. It is quite otherwise when universities give vocational training to fit persons for a particular monopolistic service before the persons have any assurance of appointment. If many are called but few chosen, the many uncalled have wasted time on vocational courses that might better have been spent on broader, more basic subjects. Strictly vocational training for monopolistic services should be post-entry rather than pre-entry. Universities should be discouraged from vying with each other in giving pre-entry training for a small number of vacancies in a monopolistic service lest they turn out far more graduates than the service requires, thus being guilty of making many students waste time and money.

*Requiring higher education where it is not essential.* A closely related question is whether a government should demand college or university training if the duties of the class of positions to which the candidates are to be appointed do not actually demand such education. The argument in favor of requiring much more education than the actual job demands runs something like this. Many positions above the entrance classes do require college, university, or professional school training and hence employees in the lower classes are not eligible for promotion unless they had on appointment, or subsequently acquired, the education requisite for the higher positions. To overcome this difficulty it is proposed to

require college or university education even if the duties do not demand it. Such a system, it is further argued, would bring into the service a host of university men from which selections for promotion could be made.

The fact that such a system would bar from the competition brilliant young high school graduates who have the real qualifications that the job requires, and incidentally perhaps more native ability than some of their classmates who went on to college, has been pointed out elsewhere and need not be elaborated here. Let us examine the situation from the standpoint of the brilliant young university graduates who are brought into the service to perform duties that a bright high school boy or girl could do as well, and possibly better because he or she would not regard them as beneath capacity and uninteresting.

Such positions give the university graduate: (1) a job with a salary, (2) a chance to learn the duties of the position to which he is appointed and to familiarize himself with the service, and (3) an opportunity for promotion.

The importance of a job with a salary depends on the economic conditions prevailing at the moment. If jobs are extremely scarce and the college graduate has to take what he can get and be thankful, he is perhaps wise in accepting the offer of a position that does not demand the immediate use of his university training. If he has a choice between such a position and one at perhaps a lower salary that will exercise his mind, he may be wise in accepting the lower pay in the interests of his own long-run development. If his financial resources or his connections are such that he has the choice between the government position that will not exercise his mind and further study that will fit him for a scientific, technical,

or professional position, further study may be the more profitable use of his time. He may, of course, accept the routine position as a device for paying his way while he acquires desired professional education through evening work or as a means of saving money for further education. Such matters are, of course, largely personal, but the decisions will be based in part on the other two factors: what he will learn on the routine job, and his chances for advancement.

What he will learn in a position that does not require the education he has had is, unfortunately, often extremely limited. Within six months he will frequently have gained all the position has to offer in the way of new experience and the acquisition of knowledge and skill. From that time on the duties of his position often become a routine repetitive grind that brings boredom and necessitates an escape. If he can find his escape through constructive channels, such as night school or discussion and study groups, he may console himself with the thought that "all comes to him who hustles while he waits." On the other hand, if he finds his escape in the purposeless recreational activities of the bored and the frustrated, he may be out if and when opportunity knocks. The real question that the ambitious, intellectual college man must ask about a position of the type under discussion is, "What are the chances of getting out of it by promotion?"

In many government offices the number of routine repetitive positions that do not require college training is at least as great as the number that require college training or in which college training is a distinct asset. Some of these upper positions will demand professional, scientific, or technical training beyond that possessed by the college graduate who has not acquired any special-



ized field of civilian competence. The college man without such a specialized field of civilian competence may find the ratio of routine repetitive positions to upper promising positions open to him as low as one to one, but he is more likely to find it running much higher. In some agencies the routine positions will outnumber the desirable positions at least ten to one. If incumbents for routine positions were recruited exclusively from the college trained and if the ratio were say five to one, when a vacancy occurred in a desirable position one college-trained man would be selected and four left on the treadmill.

The problem is, however, not as simple as that statistically. The rate of turnover comes into the equation. If the employees in the upper positions changed with great rapidity, chances for promotion might come so frequently that even a ratio of ten routine jobs to one desirable one might not be impossible. When a service is expanding by leaps and bounds, as in the World War or in the depression, the expansion means vacancies and therefore good opportunities for advancement. In periods when the service is not growing or is being reduced, vacancies arise mainly from actual turnover. Turnover is likely to be slow in the attractive positions the college man seeks, and thus he may remain for several years in a position that does not add much to his training and experience after the first six months. He is indeed fortunate if he can so govern himself during prolonged service in a routine job that he is to be preferred to a newer employee who has not been so long subjected to the deadening influence of such a position. The fact that he has had five years' service in it may make him really less desirable than the employee who has been in it only during the learning period.

Observation suggests that university professors and some personnel enthusiasts make a grave mistake in encouraging university students in large numbers to enter positions that do not require university training, and an even greater mistake if they attempt to have college graduation made a prerequisite when it is not. A concrete illustration may make the point clear. A fair number of upper officials in the federal service want a stenographer-secretary with a good mind and good education, a college graduate preferred. If college education should be made a prerequisite for stenographers, all the stenographic pools and all the routine stenographic positions would be filled with college graduates praying for vacancies in the attractive positions above them. When the vacancies occurred, they would all be in competition. Under a competitive system that sets no formal educational requirements but permits all to compete in practical tests, the stenographer who is a college graduate is matched against the business high school graduate on her merits for the routine job. After the college graduate is in the service her higher education, if it is really good, makes her stand out from her fellows and gives her an advantage in the subsequent competition for promotion. It may almost at once influence her assignments, for she may be given the small amount of work in which higher education is advantageous and she thus escapes some of the routine. True, some brilliant young high school girl may prove her superior, but she does in the long run have an advantage.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> One college graduate, qualified as a stenographer and within reach on the civil service register, was extremely anxious to get into the Children's Bureau. Her ambition was to be on its staff of field investigators. All the field investigating positions had been filled and the only vacancy on the statutory roll was a position then called "copyist." She wanted that job. In great detail the duties of the vacant position were explained to

Limited observation and study suggest that: (1) for certain positions, mainly in the scientific, professional, and technical fields, higher education is, practically

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her. She would get all the routine typing and stenographic work and much of her time would have to be spent addressing mailing franks for publications. Those were necessary duties in the Bureau and they went with that position. Unless and until a vacancy in a better position arose, she would have to perform those duties. She accepted the position. Above her on the clerical staff were two employees not college graduates previously transferred to the Bureau because of their marked success in other agencies, and they were both invaluable employees. Naturally, the copyist who was overburdened with routine work could not be taken off it to participate in the conferences on the plans for the next field investigation. She did not get work from the other clerical employees. When they were not busy, they both helped her on the accumulating routine. She was obviously bitterly unhappy in her work and frequently took up with different members of the staff the possibility of a reassignment. Unfortunately, we all had repeatedly to give her the same answer: we could do nothing until a vacancy occurred. Finally, she could stand it no longer and resigned. She was replaced by a stenographer from the civil service register who was only a high school graduate but a bright hardworking one with a sunny disposition that never failed, even in the face of a morning mail that brought hundreds of requests for "Infant Care." She pounded out franks all day long. When the appropriation was increased she became stenographer and understudy to the financial clerk, work in which she took great interest and had real aptitude. Later a departmental official, impressed by her capacity, asked for her transfer as his stenographer-secretary. She was definitely on her way up in the service when she resigned to marry.

At a recent meeting of the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, Mr. Herbert W. Cornell of the Milwaukee commission, formerly of the United States Commission, cited a case of a well-trained young physicist who was thrilled when his name was reached on the physicists' register and he was appointed to the Bureau of Standards. There he was assigned to testing clinical thermometers, submitted by their manufacturers to the Bureau for certification. As the manufacturers themselves had ordinarily tested the thermometers before submitting them for certification, the poor physicist rarely had the joy of rejecting one. Ordinarily he just made out the certificate, noting any slight deviations within the permitted range. A sub-professional laboratory assistant could have learned the job quickly and doubtless have been happy in it.

Cases such as these are so numerous that some of us are inclined to advise college graduates against taking routine jobs. Perhaps such cases account for the fact that some college professors advise their students against government jobs in general. The service has many kinds of jobs, some good for the college man and some bad. One cannot generalize but must know the facts in the particular case.

speaking, essential and must be required either directly or through tests that no one can pass who has not somehow acquired the essentials of that higher education; (2) for other positions the possession of higher education gives a candidate with superior natural endowments a distinct advantage, but it is not essential and employees of superior natural endowments who lack it may prove more valuable than employees of mediocre ability who possess it; and (3) for some positions higher education is perhaps a detriment because it is not needed in the work and makes the employees who have it dissatisfied or gives them a sense of frustration. The safe course seems to be to fix the entrance requirements according to the duties of the positions to be filled by recruitment from outside the service and not to put the formal educational requirements higher than necessary. In so far as possible, actual tests should be substituted for the grading of formal education.

Within recent months some leading educators and educational institutions have made statements or issued reports to the effect that the colleges and universities in America are not necessarily recruiting the best brains and the best ability and that some graduates of colleges and universities are inferior to persons who for one reason or another have not been to college. When university presidents and a leading educational research institution make such statements they tend to give more confidence to administrators who have reached somewhat the same conclusions on the basis of their own observations. Under existing conditions in this country it is unquestionably true that some government employees who have never been to an institution of higher education are better administrators, better managers, than some who have had higher education. Until the

educational institutions have demonstrated that their methods of recruiting and training students produce a fairly consistently superior product, it is scarcely the part of wisdom for a democratic government to make higher education a prerequisite for classes of positions that do not require the knowledge and the skills that are obtained almost exclusively through such institutions.

Unquestionably in America the prestige of the college and university teachers has in general been higher than that of government employees. Whenever a university professor or a distinguished foreign visitor feels disposed to disparage the public servants, he is reasonably certain to strike a responsive chord in most American audiences. Proponents of the merit system naturally tend to cite the worst in America and contrast it with the best abroad, particularly in England. Unfortunately, they have been less inclined to cite the best in America. Occasionally one encounters university professors who have had intimate contact with good public agencies and gladly bear witness that the best of the public servants are the peers of the best university men. These university professors are not the ones who are going to revolutionize the public service by a wholesale injection of university trained men. They know that for years schools of education, engineering, law, agriculture, forestry, and social work and departments of chemistry, physics, economics, and sociology have been sending their men into the public service and that in many fields there has been a mutually helpful exchange between universities and the professional, scientific, and technical departments of government.

The time has come not to repeat without question things which were written about our American public service by eminent authorities almost half a century ago,

but to recognize that certain agencies that have developed under the merit system since 1883 have achieved a large measure of success and have developed and are developing practical, successful relationships with the institutions of higher education. It seems idle to talk about the public service as a whole without discrimination, as if there were in reality such a thing as an average public service. Real progress lies along the line of discussing specific services and the needs of those services. Training for the public service, in-service training in the public service, are average conceptions. Before the accused can answer to the charges of the critics of the public service, he is entitled to a bill of particulars. If the critic is possessed of the facts that permit him to give a bill of particulars, he rarely makes general indictments but discusses particular situations. Progress lies along the line of improving particular situations. Modern governments are too large and have too many distinctive services to yield to much over-all generalization.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ORGANIZATION FOR PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

In the introduction to this book public personnel administration was divided into the following main categories:

1. Operating Personnel Administration
  - a. Functionalized
  - b. Non-functionalized
2. Control Personnel Administration
3. Developmental Personnel Administration

In the chapters that followed the introduction, different problems of public personnel administration were discussed without any specific consideration of these major divisions. In this concluding chapter we are to deal with organization for public personnel administration, a subject that necessitates some review of the earlier chapters with special reference to these significant divisions.

*The conflict between responsibility and control.* The question of a suitable form of organization for public personnel administration presents a dilemma.

On the one hand, the experience of English-speaking countries, especially that of the United States, seems to have demonstrated fairly conclusively that if the country is to have a highly qualified permanent civil service, the political officers who control for the moment the operation of the executive branch of the government must be largely regulated, through a merit system, with respect to their powers to appoint and remove.

On the other hand, executive officers and managers of

administrative agencies must be held responsible for results, and it is contended that an officer cannot fairly and properly be held responsible for results unless he has power and freedom to act. Carried to a logical extreme, this argument would negative all controls, for every control restricts the administrator's power and freedom and often, in the administrator's own judgment, lessens his power to do a good job. In the United States even chief executives of our governments are controlled and limited by laws, constitutional or statutory, and especially by appropriation limitations, for in the main our governments are based on a division of powers. In the national government subordinate executives are limited and controlled not only by the Constitution and the general laws but (1) by their administrative superiors in the official hierarchy which has the President at its apex, (2) by the Congress which acts as a board of directors and is the appropriating body, and (3) by the courts which may review administrative acts in certain cases and make decisions that are binding on the administrative officers. More narrowly they are controlled (1) by the Budget Bureau in matters of appropriation estimates and the expenditure of appropriated funds, (2) by the Civil Service Commission with respect to original appointments and to some extent with respect to salaries, (3) by the Procurement Division in purchasing, and (4) by the Comptroller General with respect to the legality of expenditure.

This matter of administrative power commensurate with administrative responsibility, or the administrator's freedom from control, is not, under our system of government, anything absolute or complete: it is a question of degree. Questions of degree moreover are generally questions of judgment.



Nothing which has been said should be construed to mean that preservation of administrative freedom, initiative, and resourcefulness is not an important factor to be considered in organization: quite the contrary, it is one of the major factors. It is a factor that should be considered not only with respect to the relationship between the executive and the legislature but also with respect to superior and subordinate all down the administrative hierarchy. The subordinate way down at the bottom of the hierarchy, the man doing the actual work of government, should have the maximum possible freedom, the largest practicable chance to display initiative, resourcefulness, and inventiveness, the best opportunity to produce results commensurate with his ability.

The extent to which freedom way down the line is practicable is again a matter of degree and a matter of judgment. The degree may be determined in whole or in part by the nature of the work or it may depend very largely on the capacity of the subordinate officer. Thus the new, untried, inexperienced subordinate may be subjected to strict control and regulation, which is gradually lessened as he demonstrates capacity and sound judgment. He is, as has been said, broken in like a colt, a little more each time until he carries full load. As human beings differ in capacity, it often happens that two successive holders of the same position will be afforded very different degrees of freedom. Power commensurate with responsibility has a counterpart: responsibility commensurate with capacity. In developing and maintaining a working organization, responsibility commensurate with capacity is perhaps as important a factor in securing efficiency. It leads to decentralization of power through the process of delegation. In the national government, with its vast expanse of territory, this question of decen-

tralization of power through delegation is particularly important because of the danger of over-centralization of power in Washington, which means that administration may get out of touch with the people. As more and more governmental functions pass from local government to state government and from state government to national government, preservation of close relationships between the people of a locality and local representatives of the national government become increasingly important. These contacts cannot be very satisfactory if the local representatives are mere puppets whose every move is controlled by strings worked from the central office in Washington.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Another matter is not without significance in this connection. Centralization of great administrative responsibility and power in the President or in a small number of top administrators means that the President or the top administrators must either assume the burden of a volume and variety of work that would tax supermen or they must delegate a considerable part of the powers vested in them. Though a chief executive or his immediate lieutenants may delegate some of their powers, they cannot escape the responsibilities that are placed squarely upon them by law. Thus, if they are made legally responsible for the details of administration, they cannot escape responsibility for those details. They must review details on a scale quite beyond ordinary human capacity. The surprising thing is not that occasionally an overburdened executive fails to get the facts straight or exhibits administrative ineptitude but that a mere human being does so well under an impossible burden.

Much is to be said in favor of legislation which places the primary responsibility on the heads of the operating agencies and relieves the chief executive officer and his major lieutenants from legal responsibility for details. Under such legislation if some of the details go wrong, as they almost inevitably will in a structure as diverse and far-reaching as the national government, the chief executive is not immediately responsible, although he may be indirectly responsible. Under his constitutional powers as chief executive he is authorized to take such action as he may deem necessary to see that the laws are faithfully executed. Since this constitutional power includes that of removing any officer of the executive branch of the government he already has power commensurate with his responsibility. The duty of exercising broad general supervision over the vast administrative structure of the national government is enough to tax the abilities of an able executive especially since he must also participate in the formulation of broad national policies. There is a significant distinction between a chief executive and an operating manager.

If one horn of the dilemma is necessity for control, whereas the other is the desirability of power commensurate with responsibility, the obvious conclusion is that control should be held to the lowest practicable minimum. In the field of public personnel administration the practicable solution from the standpoint of organization appears to be, to the maximum possible extent, a clear-cut division between the control functions and the purely managerial functions. The control functions would be vested in an agency with maximum feasible independence of the party in power, because it is designed to be the trustee of the people's civil service and to protect it from partisan raids. On the other hand it should have no power to interfere with management unless such interference is necessary for the preservation of the integrity of the merit system or for the enforcement of other control legislation administered by it. Wherever possible, managerial aspects of personnel administration would be left in the hands of management free from control, and the central control agency in exercising its powers would go no further than necessary to achieve its objective of protecting the integrity of the merit system and enforcing other control legislation.

*The necessary controls in public personnel administration.* What are the necessary controls in public personnel administration? The answers can in the main be derived from the preceding chapters and therefore only a review need be attempted here. The central control agency should have power:

1. To determine what positions are properly political in nature and thus entirely within the uncontrolled appointing power of the government of the day. These positions will be the upper ones through which the re-

sponsible political executive exercises supervision over and directs the permanent civil servants.

2. After consultation with management, to classify positions on the basis of duties, responsibilities, and necessary qualifications and to establish the qualifications requisite for entrance into the several classes.

3. After consultation with management, to select eligibles for appointment to any non-political position in the civil service or to prescribe the rules and regulations in accordance with which power to select, subject to approval of the control agency, may be delegated to management. For most classes of positions eligibles for initial appointment will be secured by open competitive examinations conducted by the central control agency. In the case of promotions, transfers, or reinstatements, according to the principle of minimum control, the power to nominate will be delegated to management under the rules and regulations but the nomination will not be confirmed by the control agency unless management has faithfully observed the regulations. The selection by management of a person not possessed of the requisite qualifications or the selection of a person on the grounds of politics or personal pull would be a violation of the regulations. In case of violation of the regulations the central control agency would itself determine the basis for the selection of eligibles to be certified to management.

4. If the legislative body decides that management should be controlled with respect to removals and other disciplinary actions, to investigate removal and disciplinary cases and to render a decision which under such a statute would be binding on management.

5. If the legislative body decides that management should be controlled with respect to salaries by an independent personnel agency, to enforce the salary

standardization act. This procedure will involve appeals to the control agency from employees who believe they have been unfairly treated by management in the salary standardization processes, and in all probability it will necessitate an internal appeal procedure within the control agency, whereby management may take an appeal from the findings of the central control agency's primary examiner to the head of the agency.

6. If the legislature establishes a general retirement system applicable to the whole or a large part of the service, to perform the quasi-judicial work incidental to its administration.

#### ORGANIZATION OF A CENTRAL CONTROL AGENCY

In considering the organization of such a central agency four factors appear to be of dominant importance: (1) the agency, if it is to control political officers, must have the maximum degree of independence of them; (2) it must have quasi-legislative powers, because in most jurisdictions it is impracticable for the legislature itself to go into the minute details without destroying necessary flexibility; (3) it must exercise quasi-judicial powers; and (4) it must be so organized as to command popular respect and support.

Some students of public personnel administration advocate placing at the head of such an agency one man who shall be an expert in personnel administration, preferably chosen through open competitive examination and given a high degree of independence through a long fixed term of office. The theory is that thereby the government will get independent, prompt, and expert action. The proponents of this plan reject the old proverb of public administration, "The expert should be on tap but not on top."

*The difficulties of selecting the one man expert per-*

*sonnel administrator by competitive examination.* One who has had experience in dealing with legislative bodies in matters pertaining to public personnel administration will perhaps have no little skepticism regarding the practicability of getting the legislature to entrust such duties to an independent expert selected by open competitive examination. Somehow the idea of a governor or a president being required to make a selection from three names certified to him through an examination, and, more important, the idea of a governor or a president being controlled by an expert carried over from a preceding administration, whatever their academic or theoretical value may be, do not seem to appeal to the legislative mind.<sup>2</sup>

*The dangers of having the expert compromise.* Quite aside from political expediency, the assumption that the controlling personnel agency should be under a single expert personnel administrator is open to serious question. Successful control administration involves human relationships and hence adjustments, even compromises.

<sup>2</sup>The late Hon. Frederick R. Lehlbach, long chairman of the Civil Service Committee of the House of Representatives, became an outstanding legislative engineer in the field of national public personnel administration and as much of an expert as most of the specialists. Many personnel experts and students took advantage of his willingness, even eagerness, to listen to them and discuss problems with them. The writer on one occasion in the early twenties was working with Mr. Lehlbach when a visitor called to present a new bill for reforming the national civil service. It embodied the proposal for a one man expert administrator appointed by the President from a register of eligibles certified as the result of open competition. When the proponent of this plan left, Mr. Lehlbach, in forceful but entirely unquotable language, expressed his opinion of the common sense of a person who could assume that such a proposal would be passed by the Congress. Mr. Lehlbach himself was against it and said that no member of his committee would favor it. Mr. Lehlbach frequently rejected proposals that he personally favored because the time was not ripe for them; the explosion in this instance was, so far as the writer's experience went, unique, and strengthened the writer's own opinion that such a proposal was politically impracticable.

Experts, specialists, technicians are frequently far better equipped for determining the point they desire to reach than for knowing how to navigate the political waters to make the point. Tacking against the political wind is often not one of their arts. They may be quicker to accept the Euclidian axiom, "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points," than the old proverb, "The longest way round is the shortest way home."

Experience and observation suggest the danger to intellectual integrity and morality when the expert, the specialist, or the technician is placed in a position where he himself, by himself, has to determine upon compromises and adjustments. The nature of the specialist's work tends to make most of them have convictions, pretty deep-rooted convictions. When they reach a conclusion that expediency requires them to abandon their convictions and to do and say things contrary to their beliefs, their moral and intellectual hazards are far greater than those of the layman who has no particular convictions in the technical field but a strong desire to do the best possible job under the circumstances. When the expert of his own motion, because of expediency, casts loose from his convictions, he generally loses his old guiding principles and he often finds it difficult if not impossible quickly to acquire new ones.

The expert or the technician working under a political head or a lay board is in a far less hazardous moral position. In many instances he has the opportunity to present to his lay superiors his own point of view with all the force and skill he possesses, and although they may not accept his recommendations in toto they are often materially influenced by them. They decide on the adjustments and the compromises that are essential, because it is their job to do so. Generally, although not invari-

ably, the expert can accept the decision that his superiors have made and go on with his task of carrying it into effect in the best possible manner. Occasionally, of course, the expert finds it entirely impossible for him to accept the decisions of his superiors and he has the feeling that in implementing and giving effect to these decisions, he is a mere scientific or technical prostitute. Such a situation brings him to a real crisis in his career and indeed he is fortunate if he finds it possible to save himself by making a new connection or, after frank discussion with his superiors, by getting an entirely new assignment that permits him to continue in the service without sacrifice of self respect. Payment of a very high salary to an expert who has himself to make the compromises and adjustments often means simply an additional hazard, because it increases his difficulties in escaping to a new position without financial loss.

Experience suggests therefore that there are three reasonably safe positions for the expert or specialist who has intellectual integrity: (1) as a subordinate to the persons who decide political policy and make compromises and adjustments, (2) as a member of a governmental staff agency whose duties are investigational and advisory only, and (3) as an independent consultant or a member of an institution which occasionally serves in an advisory or consulting capacity.

*The necessity for compromise and adjustment.* Some good people will very properly question the assertion that the head of a central control agency must adjust or compromise. An idea is prevalent in some quarters that the experts in public administration know the exact line which should be taken, and that the job of an expert head of the central agency should be to hew to that line, letting the chips fall where they may. That philosophy



carried to its extreme leads to what has been said to be the most efficient form of government, "absolutism tempered by assassination." At present the governments in the United States are democracies and to a considerable extent the lines to which officers are to hew are determined by democratic process and not by expert fiat. It may be worth while therefore to discuss briefly some of the activities of a central control agency that call for adjustment or compromise.

Since the legislative bodies in our American democracies constitute the board of directors for the administrative branch, they decide what it shall do, how much it shall spend, and, to the extent to which they see fit, how it shall be organized and what its business practices and procedures shall be. The assertion—or if it be preferred, the fact—that the legislative bodies often go much further than they should in the detailed regulations of administration is here beside the point. The fact is that they do have the power. The head of the central personnel agency must therefore adjust to that power, attempting to persuade the legislature to utilize it wisely, and after the legislature has acted, doing the best possible job under the conditions laid down. Persuading a legislature, educating a legislature, is not a one-time act: it is more a continuous evolutionary process, though not a straight line. It has its ups and downs, its crises and its periods of relatively smooth sailing. Not infrequently the worst examples of unduly harsh legislative interference with administrative discretion are the direct result of a single instance of gross abuse of administrative discretion by an impatient administrator. To prevent the repetition of the abuse, the legislature ties the hands of all administrators by restricting their discretion.

*Political pressure on the one man administrator.* Unfortunately, in America, the fact that such great power over administration is vested in the legislative body permits individual legislators to exert a great deal of personal power over administrators. Thus the central personnel control agency may be, and often is, subjected to pressure from individual legislators. The pressure may even be to circumvent the legal acts of the legislative body as a whole. If such pressure comes from a member of the legislature who is on a committee that passes on the control agency's appropriation or its requests for new legislation, the head of the agency is in a difficult position. Experience suggests that a board is better able to resist this pressure than is a single administrator, for the very reason that responsibility for resistance is divided. Division of responsibility has its virtues as well as its vices. It must be admitted, however, that even the board form of organization is not a complete protection. Under the American system of division of powers, complete protection does not seem possible unless the central control agency is made constitutionally independent, and that solution has its difficulties because of the necessity for adjustment between the agencies among which the powers are constitutionally divided. The responsible ministry form of government, with the legislature in control of the executive, seems to afford a better solution; but a discussion of that subject lies beyond the scope of the present undertaking.

The central control agency is established to regulate the upper administrative political officers, if not the chief executive officer himself. Thus in the national service a one man, professional personnel administrator would be regulating and controlling the Postmaster General, who in many administrations has been chief lieutenant for

the President in patronage matters. Here again is a dilemma: if democratic control is to be exercised over the civil service, the President must have some removal power over the personnel administrator, but if he possesses that power, he may exercise it to make the one man administrator accede to the requests of his politically powerful department heads. Thus the one man personnel administrator would have undivided responsibility for opposing political officers of great influence, and it would seem that his success in doing so would depend largely on the support given him by the chief executive.

*Handling clashes of interest.* In the administration of the central personnel agency questions of policy frequently arise that involve clashes of interest between different groups of citizens. Among them may be mentioned:

1. The extent to which veterans shall be given preference and the interpretation and application of laws giving such preference.

2. Whether tests shall be open to both sexes on like conditions or whether the tests shall be open only to one sex—usually the male.

3. Whether graduation from a college or university, with appropriate specialization, shall be an absolute prerequisite for entrance into a given competition; whether equivalents in experience shall be permitted as substitutes for formal education; or whether the educational requirements shall be kept low so that many may take the tests.

4. Whether the age requirements shall be kept low for original entrants, with the idea of establishing a career service, or whether they shall be kept high so that persons nearing the retirement age may qualify for positions they are at the moment competent to fill.

5. Whether the government shall adopt as its standards for entrance into certain classes of positions, the standards adopted by private voluntary associations of persons engaged in such work, such as labor unions or professional associations; or whether the government shall adopt a lower standard, thereby admitting persons whom the private voluntary associations would reject as members.

6. Similarly, whether the government shall adopt the qualifications established by the highest class professional schools, or whether it shall adopt lower standards. This question arises with respect to law schools, medical schools, schools of social service administration, and so on.

The expert in personnel administration tends to have convictions on these subjects, if not prejudices. Some leaders, influenced by British experience, as has elsewhere been discussed at length, want to recruit brilliant young university men for an administrative career service. A few of them would at least handicap in the competition for such positions the non-college man who has gained his qualifications in the school of experience. Many personnel experts would adopt low age limits for original entrance as a prerequisite to a career service. The experts often display some queer prejudices when dealing with association and union standards. On a university campus one occasionally finds rivalry between different departments, a tendency for the older schools and disciplines to look more or less askance at the newer schools and disciplines. Somehow this same thing crops up among experts in public administration and they display distinct prejudices in dealing with certain classes of positions. Sometimes the differences are due to emphasis. Some experts wedded to the principle of wide open com-

petition would minimize all educational and experience requirements and trust to the formal tests; whereas others, emphasizing the practical side of holding the number of competitions down to reasonable limits, would establish high educational requirements as a prerequisite. Some specialists have a distinct prejudice against organized labor, whether the organizations are trade unions or professional associations; whereas others are distinctly in favor of such organization. The existence of these clashes of opinion among the specialists is one of the factors that lead some of them to prefer the lay board in control, because it generally brings different points of view on such controversial matters and relieves the expert of undivided responsibility in decisions which often must be compromises.

*Quasi-judicial work.* In the quasi-judicial work of the central control agency convictions and prejudices again may play an important part. Under American public personnel practice, few agencies have developed elaborate detailed codes of offenses and penalties, and thus rarely does the quasi-judicial agency merely have to determine the facts as to guilt or innocence. More often it has to apply broad general provisions to a particular case under a law that leaves it with a wide measure of discretion, not only as to what constitutes an offense but also as to the penalty which shall be imposed for an offense. In operating personnel administration, supervisory officers exercise a wide discretion in this field. They may condone serious breaches of discipline and not even report them, or they may make an issue of an offense which other supervisors would regard as trivial. Sometimes it is the last straw that breaks the administrative camel's back, and the immediate offense which occasions drastic action is trivial. The employee

is really brought to book not for this one offense but on his whole record. When disciplinary cases come before the central control agency, it often must consider the whole record and thus has wide room for discretion and for the display of convictions or prejudices.<sup>8</sup>

To the writer it has never seemed that good personnel action in disciplinary cases can ever be taken on a criminal law basis with clearly defined offenses and precisely prescribed penalties. The whole record and all the circumstances must be taken into consideration. Justice may even be tempered with mercy, and the mercy may be shown not to the offending employee but to the wife and children who are dependent upon him. The private employer, close to his employees, has the right in most cases to give an employee another chance. In many actual

<sup>8</sup> Quite by accident the writer got into board action on one disciplinary case. In an informal conference on retirement legislation he was contending that the government's contribution toward the old age security of an employee should not be forfeited if the employee withdrew or was separated from the service but should be on the same basis as a private employer's contribution under the Social Security Act, non-forfeitable. One board member suggested that there should be a forfeiture on dismissal for cause. The answer to that was that under such circumstances the government not only dismissed a man, taking away his job, but also fined him by the amount of its contribution toward his own old age security and that of his dependent wife, if he had one. The amount of this fine in the case of a veteran employee might run into thousands of dollars.

Then it developed that the board had pending before it a case of undue political activity on the part of a veteran employee close to the retirement age with many years of service to his credit. The fact of guilt was apparently fully established, but the board was divided with respect to its recommendation as to penalty. One member stood for dismissal whereas another favored a less drastic penalty. The two persons familiar with retirement details who were present agreed that the amount of fine involved in this case would probably be not less than ten thousand dollars. This retirement aspect of the case had apparently not previously been considered by the board member advocating dismissal, and he indicated his intention to join in the recommendation of a lesser penalty. The other member present laughingly remarked that the court would be able to present a unanimous decision instead of another two to one, as he and his other colleague thought dismissal in this case too drastic a penalty, even disregarding the fine involved by loss of retirement rights.

criminal cases a court may place the offender on probation, conditionally relieving him of actually paying the legal penalty for his offense. Quasi-judicial work in personnel control seems to call for a large measure of discretionary power.

*The problem of representation.* The board form of organization permits some consideration to be given to the factor of representation. The legislature, for example, may prescribe that not more than a majority of the members shall belong to one political party and hence members of the opposition party occupy positions on the board and know what is going on. Practically every student of the subject agrees that such a provision does not assure independence and non-political action; it is doubtful if any form of organization can in and of itself insure independence and non-political action. The kind of action will depend on the character of the persons who make up the board. If the appointing power selects or the voters elect subservient persons, the board will be subservient; if independent persons are selected, the board will be independent. It is probably true, however, that if both major political parties are represented on the board, the charge of purely partisan action is less likely to be raised.

A one man personnel administrator would of course have to be of no political party or else of some one political party. If the ideal is to get a man without political affiliations through an open competitive examination, then political affiliations become a proper subject of inquiry. What constitutes party affiliation: running for elective office on a partisan ticket, holding an appointive political office under a given party, working for the party openly and notoriously, working for the party quietly and secretly, being registered as a party member on the

election books, voting for the party candidates more or less consistently over the years, voting for the party candidates at the last election, contributing to the party campaign fund? Any one of these things may be regarded as evidence of party affiliation. The true independent or non-partisan may wish to establish his right to the title, by proving not that he has lived in cloistered seclusion, abstaining religiously from all party activity and even from performing his civic duties at the polls, but that he has never been consistent in party affiliations over the years and that his major consistency has been in voting a split ticket at most elections. He may, however, be met with the specific question: "For whom did you vote for President [or governor or mayor, as the case may be] at the last election?" His answer may be regarded as destroying his claim to independence, if not establishing his party affiliation. Unfortunately even the true independent is open to the suspicion of party affiliation and his actions may be attributed to partisan motives. If he denounces the politicians in power, he is a political opponent; if he sides with the administration, he is with the party at heart.\*

Although the law may make no requirements regarding representation other than to require that the board be bi-partisan, the appointing officers or the electorate may make it representative in certain respects. The national Civil Service Commission, for example, since the

\* In one instance an employee who was as nearly independent as any person with whom the writer has been associated over the years was mentioned as a possibility for a certain position. Questions were asked regarding his political affiliations, as they would have a bearing on his relationships in the new position. The fact that he came from a state normally strongly for one party would, it was contended, cause him to be regarded as of that party in the absence of positive evidence to the contrary. There was no evidence to the contrary—in fact, no evidence either way except the state of his residence.



days of Woodrow Wilson has always contained one woman member. The first woman United States commissioner was Mrs. Gardener, who had been a leader in the suffrage movement, and she took an especial interest in overcoming discrimination against women in civil service selections. In the national service the board form has moreover often been used, consciously or unconsciously, to give sectional representation. Often it permits representation of different professions and different points of view. Although one might well oppose formal legal requirements making the board formally representative, yet it seems highly desirable to avoid an arrangement that would prevent it from being representative.

The United States Constitution and many of the state constitutions provide that no religious tests shall ever be established for public office, yet it is a matter of common knowledge that religion does play a part in nominations and elections. Likewise, it may play a part in selections for appointment to administrative positions. Occasionally one encounters the whispered accusation that some public officer in high place is practicing religious discrimination. If a board form of control has been established for the merit system, the official who is making the appointments may informally take this danger into consideration and see that his board is so constituted that the chance of discrimination in the central control agency is kept to a minimum. On the other hand, if full power is vested in one personnel administrator this opportunity is gone. If whispers of religious discrimination on the part of the one man administrator become disturbing, adjustment to correct the situation will be difficult. In states and municipalities where the people are racially and religiously fairly homogeneous this factor

is of course of no great practical consequence, but it is important in those jurisdictions where wide religious differences exist and where the political parties are seeking to keep religion out of politics through the informal device of having the different groups represented on the tickets and in the appointments.

*Advantages of board practices and procedures.* Differences between the business practices and procedures of a board and those of a one man administrator deserve special consideration. In favor of the one man administrator it may be said that on occasion he can act quickly and efficiently without prolonged argument, deliberation, and delay. Although he may straddle an issue, all his decisions are inevitably unanimous; there is no embarrassing dissenting opinion to furnish arguments and support for those who dislike and would combat his rulings. In the internal administration of the central control agency, the staff must, at least officially, remain united behind the one man administrator or else be insubordinate. There is no such thing as an officially defensible division within the staff, one group supporting the majority of the board and the other group, occasionally the larger group, supporting the minority. Staff members cannot play one board member off against another, occasionally taking advantage of the almost inevitable human frailties of individual board members. Jockeying and log-rolling are eliminated. Things move with swiftness and dispatch either in the right direction or the wrong direction, depending on the ability, the integrity, and the independence of the administrator. The pendulum may swing through a wider arc, with greater extremes of either good or bad.

Deliberation, debate, division, and even delay have

their distinct merits in the case of independent regulatory and controlling agencies. Minority members of boards generally have the privilege not only of having their negative vote recorded but of getting into the record the facts upon which their opposition is based and their arguments based on those facts.<sup>5</sup> Not infrequently a militant board member, by the simple device of inserting in the record a full statement of all the adverse facts, can force his fellow board members to vote with him. In the face of the record they cannot vote otherwise without obviously stultifying themselves. The late George Wales, a career man in the United States Civil Service Commission who ultimately became a commissioner, frequently stressed the importance of this phase of board procedure. He said that in many cases political pressure would be withdrawn when the advocates of a particular candidate were shown the facts that would be spread upon the record. The political backers of the candidate would appreciate not only that militant commissioners would have to vote "no" but also that their own position would be indefensible if the record ever became public. With a single militant commissioner on the board, publicity is always possible. Subordinate staff members with conscience and ideals can support the minority member without being insubordinate. The contacts between the strong member and the staff may be

<sup>5</sup> The adverse facts, if they cannot be successfully controverted, are an extremely powerful weapon in public administration. Almost the only practicable defense is, in one way or another, to suppress them. If they are in the hands of a person who cannot be controlled and who occupies a position high enough to make his resignation or removal news, suppression is almost impossible. It was this weapon which Miss Julia Lathrop used with such great skill in keeping the United States Children's Bureau free from politics, despite powerful pressure, in the first few years of that organization. Any one member of a civil service commission who has the courage can use it with great effect.

the avenue along which the adverse facts reach the records.

The existence of a board helps out the individual members when they are approached from the distinctly personal side. When influence is to be exerted, it is only human nature that the persons involved should send an emissary to whom, for some personal reason, a board member is under obligation. The device is almost standard practice in any kind of lobbying. The nature of the obligation is not necessarily in the least reprehensible; it may be highly ethical, even idealistic. The board member may find it exceedingly difficult and embarrassing to make a downright refusal but he can say: "My militant colleague will never stand for it. He [or she] will put into the record all the adverse facts and we shall all be embarrassed if publicity results." An intimation that a colleague is a publicity seeker is not resented by the colleague, for of course at times board members have a mutual understanding that any of them may use this device of the militant colleague to combat these personal approaches that are otherwise so hard to resist gracefully.

The one man personnel administrator has of course undivided responsibility and authority. He controls the records; and of course there are no votes unless he sets up on his own authority internal committees or boards which do vote. If he does that, he is responsible for their action and for referring cases to them. In dealing with political pressure and with the difficult personal pressures, he must assume the entire burden, because he has undivided power to act. A good many persons who have had experience with political and personal pressure believe that undivided responsibility and authority would make the position of a one man administrator practically

impossible, except in a millennium, when the chief executive completely foregoes all patronage, and legislators, especially appropriation committee members, support the personnel administrator even when it seems to them he is not being entirely fair to their constituents or is being academic and idealistic in his administration.

In the national service, since 1883, the Civil Service Commission has consisted of three members who give full time to the work of the Commission and are paid an annual salary. Because of the size of the service and its geographical distribution, full-time commissioners are essential if they are really to know what is going on. Under present practice the Commission meets almost every afternoon to consider matters of general policy and to pass on individual cases of one kind or another, many of them quasi-judicial in nature. During the mornings individual commissioners study the matters that are pending before the commissioners and receive visitors of all sorts who are interested in the work of the Commission: administrative officers, employees, representatives of employees' unions or professional organizations, members of civic organizations interested in civil service reform, representatives of the press, and so on. Their lunches and dinners are often quasi-official, and they are frequently speakers at organization gatherings. Members frequently serve on official committees with members of the operating agencies working out new plans and procedures some of which may be within the Commission's jurisdiction, whereas others are entirely outside it, although related to it. They may attend congressional hearings either as witnesses or as spectators.

Persons who have business with the Commission not infrequently initiate it by taking it up first with a single

commissioner. If one wishes to be formal and officially perfectly correct, one goes first to the president of the Commission but that is not necessary, nor do the rules of the Commission require it. If one happens to know a certain member, or to be informed that a certain member is especially interested in a particular phase of the Commission's work, it is common practice to call on him to discuss the subject. Occasionally it will be a matter of common knowledge that the Commission is divided on a given issue. Persons who are supporting what may seem to be a minority view, and perhaps have vital factual evidence to present, naturally call on the member who is on their side and give him the facts. The minority member may be the president of the Commission or he may be one of the two members of the dominant party. Rarely have the divisions within the Commission been politically partisan. Thus with a board of three it rarely happens that even a severe critic of the Commission cannot find at least one member who will afford him a reasonable opportunity to present his views or to air his grievance. Commissioners naturally vary in their willingness to listen to persons with whom they disagree and in their tolerance of criticism.

When a single commissioner, generally with the approval of the Commission itself, is serving on an inter-departmental committee or is devoting himself to the study of a particular subject, it naturally follows that he has most of the contacts in that field. He may give a great amount of time to it, far more than the Commission as a whole could give. Not infrequently, selected members of the staff of the Commission will be associated with him on the project. From time to time he reports progress to his associates, formally or informally, and he presents the subject to the board when the time comes for formal action.

Under our American form of government with its division of powers it occasionally happens that the Congress is working on some legislative proposals affecting personnel administration in which the President is not particularly interested or to which he is actively opposed. Since the Civil Service Commission, like other administrative agencies, is subject both to the President and to the Congress, it follows that it is the duty of the Commission to supply the Congress and its members with such material as they may request. To a certain extent such cooperation is discretionary, unless the Congress or one of its houses adopts resolutions formally calling on the Commission for a report. Under such circumstances, unless the President intervenes, the Commission probably has no discretion. As a matter of common practice individual commissioners follow their own discretion in discussing pending proposals with members of Congress and occasionally they give their individual personal views in formal testimony before committees, making it plain that the views are personal and not necessarily those of the Commission as a body. Of course no one can give the views of the Commission as a body unless the Commission has acted, a fact which places the Commission in a good strategic position in controversial matters, because it can avoid them by the simple device of postponing action, and any member can likewise avoid them by a simple statement that the Commission has taken no action. The position of a one man personnel administrator under such circumstances would be vastly more difficult, because he would have no ground on which to withhold an answer to an embarrassing question energetically pressed by a member of Congress hostile to the President. The American system of divided control over administrative officers at times puts the administrators in an embarrassing position but board members

can escape more readily than can single administrators.

*Lay commissioners and professional techniques.* The extent to which United States Civil Service commissioners participate in the technical and professional work of examination, classification, and efficiency rating apparently varies with the individual commissioners. As a body the Commission confines itself in the main to general policy determination and supervision but individual commissioners may take a very great personal interest in special problems. In this field it is not unusual for a commissioner to work closely with a staff group either with or without the formal approval of his colleagues. The more a commissioner is equipped as a technician, the more likely he is to take an interest in technical matters, and naturally if he does so he exerts a powerful influence on the staff. Whether this influence is good or bad apparently depends on the judgment and technical ability of the commissioner. Some theorists occasionally propound a definite principle on this subject, to the effect that commissioners should leave the technical work to the experts, but occasionally a commissioner will be as well qualified an expert as any member of his staff, as was the late Commissioner Wales, for example. It would have been absurd to contend as a matter of principle that when Mr. Wales became commissioner he should have withdrawn from all active participation in technical work and that staff members should have ceased going to him to profit from his long experience and sound judgment. The truth seems to be that each new appointment to the Commission means a certain amount of readjustment.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The writer rather likes to see on the United States Commission one member who is sufficiently familiar with the techniques to follow them and to be critical of them. In most governmental agencies with which he is familiar, staffs, both professional and clerical, tend to divide into two camps, progressive and conservative, with possibly a considerable neutral



*The problem of small jurisdictions.* Small jurisdictions have neither the money nor the work to justify the employment of three full-time commissioners and a technically equipped chief examiner. Yet for broad policy determination, quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial work, the board form of organization seems to be desirable. Two solutions seem practicable. The first is to have a part-time board of three and a full-time chief personnel officer chosen by the board through an open competitive examination. The professional chief executive officer is responsible for all purely administrative tasks. The board supervises his administrative work much as a board of directors of a corporation supervises the work of the president or general manager of a private corporation, but reserves to itself all policy making and all quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial work. The other alternative is to have one full-time commissioner who directs the administrative work from day to day but who has two part-time associates who join with him from time to time for policy making and for quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial tasks. Of these two forms, the writer prefers the first, the independent board that supervises and directs the professional examiner who thus has no vote on the board.

The major advantage in keeping the chief executive officer off the board arises in the quasi-judicial field. Appeals will inevitably be taken from the action of the chief executive officer or from that of subordinates under

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element in the middle. The job of the Commission is often to find the safe middle way, avoiding the stagnation of the extreme conservative and the over-optimism of the extreme progressive. Some things do not actually work out in practice as they do in theory and an initial experiment tried on a small scale may be wiser than a sudden wholesale commitment to a new program. One commissioner with sound judgment who knows the techniques is an asset. The question may be raised as to whether one is not plenty.

his administrative control, in such matters as testing, classification, and disciplinary action. It seems fairer to all concerned that the executive officer from whose action an appeal is taken shall not sit on the review board and have a vote. The United States Commission now has a single chief executive officer who is a career man in the executive civil service. He is directly in charge of administration, but he has no power or authority over the board of appeals which reports directly to the Commission. Complaints against administrators go directly to the board and a further appeal lies from the board to the Commission *en banc*. This form of organization seems eminently sound for administrative bodies which exercise quasi-judicial functions, as it tends to conform to American ideals of due process of law. If the executive officer from whose action an appeal is taken sits as a member of the court hearing the appeal, the appellant may be excused for feeling that the court is stacked against him. If the press or the public attacks an act of the chief executive officer, it seems fairer and more convincing if the resulting investigations and hearings are made by a board of which the executive officer is not a member. In rule making and policy determination the board may have the advice of the chief executive officer and ordinarily it will be strongly influenced by him.

Permanency of tenure, which is highly desirable for the technical and professional administrator of the central agency, would, it would seem, be more attainable if he were not a member of the board which determines policy and exercises control over administrative officers. If he is a member the chances are that he will be regarded as primarily responsible for the acts of the board and hence he is likely to find his position untenable on a change of administration or if some policy of the board

proves unpopular. Much is to be said in favor of the British national system whereby the permanent officials are subordinate to the temporary ones who carry the responsibility for matters of policy which may prove highly controversial.

How the part-time board members shall be chosen is a problem to which there appears to be no single standard answer, because of differences in local conditions. Two related major objectives are sought in establishing a board: (1) the elimination of the spoils system and (2) the establishment and maintenance of public confidence in the board. In some jurisdictions a provision for appointment of the board by the chief executive, even for staggered terms, means a purely political board; failure to achieve either objective; and possibly the discrediting of the merit system itself. In some jurisdictions where certain public officers have great permanence of tenure and high prestige it might be possible to establish an *ex officio* commission. Since coordination of the educational system with the recruiting system is desirable and has proved successful in several foreign countries, and since in several of our states the public educational system is fairly well divorced from partisan politics, the use of state superintendents of public instruction and presidents of state universities as *ex officio* part-time board members appears worthy of consideration. American experience to date indicates that there is no standard answer, but rather that we should take advantage of our federal form of government which permits of intelligent experimentation and variation to meet local conditions.

Small jurisdictions do not have a sufficient number of employees and a large enough payroll to justify more than a small permanent staff in the central control

agency. The staff is generally too small to permit of a minute division of labor and the development of specialists. Indeed it would even seem that the staffs are too small to develop a maximum of efficiency. Much is to be said from the standpoint of technical efficiency in favor of having the state central personnel agency perform all the professional and technical work for the counties and municipalities within the state, if and when the local governments vote in favor of the merit system or if the state decides that local units must use that system. If a single agency performs all the necessary technical work for state, county, and municipal positions, the volume may be great enough to warrant a fairly diversified technical staff. The national law should provide that the staff of the United States Commission may render aid and assistance to the state and local governments. It can be of particular assistance in the fields of personnel research and examining for technical, scientific, and professional positions. In many fields the national government performs much of the research and developmental work for the other governments because it can do so with far greater economy and efficiency than can the several states acting independently. There appears to be no reason why the same thing should not be done by the national Civil Service Commission.

#### ORGANIZATION FOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION UNDER MANAGEMENT

*The trend toward functionalized personnel offices.* Both in public and private enterprises the size of operating units has grown larger and a tendency has developed to integrate operating units into elaborate hierarchies or to assemble them under parent corporations or government departments of the parent corporation type. Many

functions relating to personnel administration have been taken away from the subordinate operating officers and vested high up in the operating hierarchy or in the parent corporation or the department of the parent corporation type. Among such functions may be: determination of general personnel policies; classification of positions and the determination of salaries and wages or the rules governing the fixing of salaries and wages; selection for original appointment or for promotion or laying down the rules that shall govern in such selection; dismissing or laying down the rules that shall govern in dismissing.

As these personnel functions have been taken away from subordinate operating officers, the tendency has been to centralize them in a special personnel organization close to the top managerial officers. The persons in this organization are specializing in personnel functions and thus whatever their qualifications on initial assignment to this work, they tend to become personnel specialists concerned with a considerable number of specialized techniques, several of them highly developed.

*The reasons for the trend.* Why has this development taken place? Perhaps the major explanation is that labor is one of the most important elements in production, if not the most important, and in many respects it is one of the most flexible, adjustable elements. In many private enterprises and in some public enterprises the number of employees must be adjusted to the demand for goods and services, employees laid off in periods of depression, hired and trained in periods of increasing activity. Hours of labor and wages are likewise subject to adjustment. Organization of labor has made management face the problem of how it will deal with labor: stand for the open shop with no collective bargaining, organize company unions, recognize outside unions in certain instances

while still preserving the open shop, or recognize the outside unions and run a closed shop. These broad questions of personnel administration are highly important to general overhead management.

*Interrelationship between functionalized central and operating units.* When overhead management attempts to deal with the broad aspects of personnel administration, it finds that the broad aspects involve and are inseparable from a host of minor details. Salary fixing and wage adjustments run down into the most minute details. The firing of one or two workmen by an irate foreman may be the origin of a dispute with a union that raises major conflicts of policy affecting the entire enterprise. Inability to find a sufficient supply of trained workers for a particular unit may give rise to major problems of transfers between operating units and of employee training. The different aspects of personnel administration are so linked together that it appears to be impracticable to find a dividing line which separates personnel activities into just two classes: those which belong exclusively to overhead management, and those which belong exclusively to subordinate officers responsible for the successful supervision of operating units.

*The importance of the operating supervisor.* Down in the operating units at the base of the hierarchy are a number of personnel activities that are inseparable from the other activities of supervision necessary to get the work out with dispatch. Occasionally in such an operating unit each position involves precisely the same duties and responsibilities and the supervisor is scarcely more than a monitor preserving order, seeing that each employee is supplied with work and does it, and once in a while instructing and training a new employee. More frequently the duties and responsibilities of the several

positions or classes of positions within a unit are different, requiring different degrees if not kinds of ability. The duty of the supervisor is to fit duties to capacities in such a way as to get maximum production. Differences in assignments may mean at once differences in wage rates or actual earnings or ultimately differences in pay rates and chances for advancement. If the productivity of an individual is not measurable both as to quantity and quality, the reports of the supervisor may be an important, if not the dominating, factor in the evaluation of an employee.

Even when a unit supervisor approaches the mere monitor and is just carrying out detailed instructions and enforcing detailed rules and regulations, he may as a matter of fact be exercising no small measure of discretion. An employee violates a rule or regulation in such a way that the violation leaves no record. Shall the supervisor notice it? Shall he distinguish between sporadic violation and habitual violation, between violations by his best and most productive employees and those of his poorest employees? How far shall he go in enforcing regulations that he considers picayunish if not nonsensical, how far in enforcing regulations that all his workers resent? What shall his manner be in dealing with his subordinates—hard boiled or friendly and cooperative? Shall he pitch in and work with his men or shall he confine himself to supervision? His actions will in no small measure determine the morale, good will, and efficiency of his force. He may either cause or prevent conflicts, often small in themselves, which may develop into serious difficulties affecting the entire organization. As the degree of discretion vested in the unit supervisor increases, his influence for good or bad necessarily increases.

Unit supervisors ordinarily have some responsibility for training, although it may not be recognized as training. Giving employees instructions as to how a particular job is to be done often involves training. When an employee is given a new and more difficult assignment, he is getting training, whatever the conscious intent of the supervisor may be. It is one of the oldest forms of training and still, if well done, is one of the best. Progressive educators have introduced the project method into the schools, copying what the best supervisors have long done, consciously or unconsciously. In a good many organizations some one unit supervisor wins a reputation for being good at training, or "breaking in," new employees, and his unit becomes a sort of vestibule training school for the organization.

As one proceeds up the hierarchy from the operating unit at the bottom, one ordinarily finds that higher administrative officers have two types of personnel responsibilities in the complex of their duties: (1) responsibilities for their own individual force that closely resemble those of the immediate supervisor of a primary operating unit, and (2) responsibilities for the forces of those subordinate supervisors who report to them and are under their direction and control. These personnel responsibilities are again an inseparable part of the complex of the administrative duties—an inseparable part of management.

*The relation between functional specialists and general administration.* Again and again in the field of organization, both in public and private business, we are confronted with a comparable situation where general administrative officers must be responsible for the performance of a complex of duties in which are included some highly developed specialties. The general adminis-



trators are not, and cannot be expected to be, experts in each of these specialties. The experts often must have made their specialty their life work, their intellectual goddess. Forsaking all others they have devoted themselves solely unto her. It reminds one of the distinction between the general practitioner and the specialist in the field of medicine, where it is said that the general practitioner learns less and less about more and more, whereas the specialist learns more and more about less and less. The problem in organization is how to unite the specialists and the general administrators to secure efficiency and accuracy in day-to-day operation, and yet to keep abreast of developments in the scientific field.

Demand on one's time is a vital factor in this situation. The executive or the manager must get things done; hence the familiar definition of a good administrator as one who can decide instantly and be right more than half the time. Prompt decisions, if not instant decisions, are vital in a going concern where the wheels must slow down or even stop until a decision is made. It follows, therefore, that the administrator responsible for keeping the wheels moving must be constantly on the job, ready to drop whatever he may be doing when a question which demands an immediate answer is presented to him. The question may be on a minor detail, but doubt even as to a minor detail may hold up production. Thus it is often said that the job controls the administrator's distribution of his own time.

The specialist must in a large measure be free to give to a project or a case such time as is necessary to work out a solution. The amount of time required depends on the problem, the ability of the investigator, and the resources at his command. Although expert opinion may occasionally be given off-hand, the solving of many

problems requires investigation and research. These differences between administration and research explain why the two types of workers so frequently misunderstand each other, and why individuals find it so difficult to be at one and the same time administrators and research workers or specialists.

The general administrator whose duties involve several different fields has, moreover, two other problems: (1) how to apply and carry out practically the recommendations of the specialists; and (2) how to coordinate his work in the particular field of the specialist with his other duties. Not infrequently the recommendations of the specialist, if carried out, would consume all the time of the administrator and his staff, and occasionally the recommendations of specialists in overlapping fields are inconsistent.

Experience in many different fields of endeavor have demonstrated the difficulties that arise if specialists in several different fields have authority individually and personally to give orders to a subordinate general administrator as to exactly how he shall perform such of his complex duties as lie in the specialist's particular field. If he follows these orders, they may affect other parts of this supervisor's work not within the specialist's field and may even necessitate his disobeying the orders of other specialists.

*Line and staff organization.* The solution of the problem which has been worked out in many different fields is often called the principle of the line and the staff. Administrators responsible for management and operation are arranged in a definite hierarchy with definite well-established lines of authority and responsibility running from top to bottom. No one has authority to give an order to a subordinate officer except a higher

officer in that immediate line. The subordinate officer acts in accordance with the orders of his line superiors. If these orders leave him discretion, he is responsible to them for the manner in which he exercises that discretion. Having entrusted a subordinate with discretion, the supervisor is responsible for the manner in which the discretion is exercised. Responsibility and authority are within the line, complete and undivided.

Specialists in this form of organization are not in the administrative line at all. They are in a completely independent unit, the staff attached to the office of the head of the agency or an important unit of it; and they have no authority to give an order to any one unless they have their own subordinates within the staff agency. Their power is to investigate, report, and recommend. It is for the line officers to determine to what extent they will accept the recommendations of the staff agency, each within the scope of his discretionary authority. Obviously if the chief executive or managerial officer accepts a suggestion which is within the discretion allowed him by law, or by the action of his board of directors, he can issue the necessary order which must be obeyed all down the line, just as would any other order regardless of its origin. If a member of the staff agency is making a study way down at the bottom of the hierarchy, he may, if he has been authorized to do so, offer suggestions to the subordinate line supervisor as to how that line supervisor should exercise such discretion as has been delegated to him. The subordinate line supervisor is free to accept or reject the suggestion or to accept it with modification. If the suggestion of the staff officer is in conflict with existing regulations or instructions, the subordinate line officer cannot accept it. The staff officer must carry his suggestions farther up the hierarchy until he reaches

the officer who has authority to modify the regulations and instructions.

Although staff men under this system have no authority to give orders to any one, they are in a highly influential position first because of their professional equipment and second because through their organization they have direct access to the chief. Their duty is to report the facts to him and to make recommendations. Subordinate line officers know that if they reject the recommendations they must be in a position to make a strong case for their position. Staff men know that the system gives the line men their day in court before the chief and that they may be represented by influential top line officers. The forces in the situation tend toward cooperation between the two groups. The staff men do not want their recommendations turned down because they are administratively impracticable and hence they seek to get the operating officer's point of view and to fit theory to practice. The operating officer on his side generally wants the work to be technically sound and up-to-date, provided he can still keep up the production schedule for which he is responsible.

From the standpoint of the head of the organization the system is ordinarily fairly satisfactory. He continues to get the customary reports and recommendations coming up the line and to send orders down the line in the same old way, and is still with fairness able to hold his line officers responsible for results. He has, however, an independent check on the reports and recommendations of his line officers, made by persons specially equipped for investigation with reasonable time to study the situation adequately. He appreciates that each distinctive group is educating the other, that the system of checks tends to improve the accuracy of both sets of reports,

and that he himself is still left free, for he can accept either recommendation or he can develop a compromise of his own.

*The desirability of the staff form of organization in functional personnel administration.* The staff form of organization is particularly appropriate for specialists in personnel administration, because so many duties involving personnel are inseparably interwoven with ordinary operating management. They cannot be separated out; and if the personnel specialists can give direct orders to subordinate operating officers with respect to them, then the personnel officers are controlling other aspects of management, and the ordinary managing officers can no longer be fairly held responsible.

Two psychological factors in the situation demand comment. The relationships between the operating supervisory officer and his subordinates are ordinarily close, continuous, and often personal. So many details are involved in this relationship that they cannot be covered by rules and regulations. Such rules and regulations as there are must be interpreted and applied by the supervisor. He may misinterpret them, and unless he himself is under constant surveillance, even ignore them. Orders that do violence to his judgment, his intelligence, and his principles can rarely produce the hoped-for results. The ready answer, "Fire him and get somebody who will," ignores the fact that personnel administration is but a part of the complex of an operating supervisor's duties and that in respect to his other duties he may be excellent, perhaps even almost irreplaceable. The approach must therefore be the slower one of trying to reach him through his intelligence and thereby modifying his judgment. When and if he gets the spirit of the newer practices, then the minute details

are handled reasonably well without surveillance. Orders may not achieve any spiritual reformation; instead they may be resented, resisted, even sabotaged. The answer in many instances is cooperation.

Supervisory officers frequently have personnel questions, often problem cases, that perplex them. Sometimes an employee to whom the supervisor is personally attached and who has an excellent past record gets into trouble in one way or another. The supervisor does not know quite how to handle the case. He is sure of just one thing: that he is not yet prepared to report it or to make a concrete recommendation. For the time being it lies within his discretionary authority and he wants to keep it there, although he does not know quite what to do about it. If the organization has a personnel officer with whom the supervisor has had cooperative dealings in the past and for whose qualifications he has respect, he may feel free to have a confidential, off-the-record conversation with him. He may find that the personnel officer has diagnostic abilities and resources and suggestions for treatment that were quite beyond him. In this case they become cooperators, because the element of control is absent and because the personnel officer's ethics in such a situation require him to respect confidences and to work out a solution with the supervisor and with such others as are brought in with the supervisor's knowledge and approval.

If the personnel officers have no direct administrative control it is easier for the organization to adopt the desirable policy of permitting individual employees in confidence to talk over their own problems with the personnel officer. If the personnel officer has authority to give orders and himself to take action, the situation is from the employee's point of view little different from

going over his immediate superior's head up the regular administrative line. It means bringing an issue to a head and perhaps forcing a decision one way or the other, and many employees hesitate to do it. If they know that the personnel officer occupies only an advisory position and that he is an adviser for them as well as for the officers, they will ordinarily feel freer to go to him, especially if he has the reputation for skill in handling individual cases. Through these individual cases the personnel officer may learn what is wrong with individual employees, what is wrong with the officers and the organization, and what is wrong with the community; and knowledge of what is wrong is the first step toward correction.

The information that comes to the personnel officers from the line officers and the employees permits them to play a leading part in stimulating activities, official or voluntary, designed to overcome defects and to advance the interests of the service and the employees. In this connection it should be pointed out that, in the opinion of the writer, it is a great mistake to conceive of the personnel office as primarily concerned with records, forms, and statistics or with personnel techniques such as classification and efficiency ratings. Such activities are a necessary part of the work of the organization but they are only a part. One of the major objectives of the functionalized personnel unit is to restore those human relationships that are based on intimate understanding and that are so largely lost when organizations become large, hierarchies long, and line administrators so busy that they have little time to give to individual cases. If the functionalized personnel agency is to achieve this objective, the personnel officers must be selected on the basis of their skill in human relationships and their constructive imagination more than on their mastery of a

few rather simple techniques which can fairly readily be learned from textbooks.

*Size of organization as a factor.* How large does an organization have to be before it needs at least one staff officer as an adviser to the chief in matters of personnel? If the major objective is the preservation of satisfactory human relationships, based on knowledge of the facts and understanding, the personnel officer becomes desirable when the organization gets so big that the chief no longer has the time to do this sort of work for himself, even if he has the inclination. It comes even sooner if the chief dislikes personally to give time to such problems and would delegate them to assistants. In the very small agencies the chief who lacks either the time, the inclination, or the particular skills required may delegate the duties to a subordinate possessed of these skills so that the personnel work becomes a part of such subordinate's complex of duties.

Observation and some experience suggest that when, in a small organization, the specialized personnel functions are delegated to a subordinate as part of his complex of duties, certain conditions are necessary for success. Among them are: (1) the person selected should have real skill in human relationships; (2) adequate time should be allowed for the personnel activities and they should ordinarily have a priority over other duties; and (3) no duties inherently inconsistent with the personnel duties should be included in the complex. A subordinate who himself has a considerable number of employees under his direction and is a line officer can only with great difficulty function also as a staff officer. Success seems more probable if the complex of duties is made up almost exclusively of staff functions and if the officer is recognized as an administrative assistant to



the chief. The time factor is extremely important because so many personnel difficulties arise from the fact that no one has given the time really to get at the facts.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

*The diversity in large organizations.* In the independent operating organization the personnel officer or the personnel unit, subject of course to the approval of the executive officer, is responsible for educational developmental work designed to keep the personnel administration functioning smoothly and to advance it. The allocation of educational promotional work does not become much of a problem until operating agencies are assembled under a parent corporation or under a government department of the parent company type. The parent company, or the department of that nature, naturally has a great concern regarding the personnel work in the subsidiary operating units. Yet the parent company form is ordinarily used either because of the diversity of activities of the subsidiaries or their geographic distribution, or because the parent company believes that highest efficiency will be secured if responsibility and authority are largely decentralized and left in the hands of the men controlling the operations of the subsidiaries. The directors of the parent company are not disturbed over variations to meet local conditions; they may look with favor on some experimentation by separate units; they may even regard some competition between subsidiaries as a stimulating force. They may even refuse to apply the principle of unifunctional organization and deliberately refrain from centralizing certain functions in the parent company, leaving them in the operating companies, despite the duplication. Decentralization, even duplication of function, may give far greater efficien-

cy than centralization and unifunctional organization.

In most governments one finds a wide diversity in the objectives and activities of the different agencies which necessitate considerable variation in conditions of labor and personnel practices and procedures. A mere cursory examination of a book of class specifications describing the positions in a modern municipal or state government or in the national government will demonstrate this diversity. In the presence of such diversity in duties, responsibilities, and qualifications, it is futile to expect uniformity in detail. Uniformity under like conditions is the most that can be expected; if conditions are unlike, the details must be different.

If conditions differ widely as between different services of the same government, or, as is often the case in the federal government, between comparable units of the same service located in different parts of the country, centralization of the details of educational work becomes complicated and costly, if not impracticable. The solution appears to be for the parent company organization to confine itself to determining broad matters of general policy and to furnishing a few general services, leaving to the subordinate units the detailed application of the principles and the furnishing of specialized services. To promote understanding and cooperation it appears desirable to have formally or informally an organization through which the personnel officers of the operating agencies meet with the personnel officers of the overhead agencies at least for an exchange of views. General policies are likely to be better considered if the men in the operating units who are to carry them out have had an opportunity to discuss them, and they are more likely to be applied intelligently if the operating officers know the objectives. "Theirs not to reason why; theirs but to do

or die" is perhaps sound for a single battle to achieve an immediate objective, but is scarcely applicable where objectives are complex and are to be attained only through a long, developmental movement.

*The educational value of committees.* Committees play an important part in promotional personnel work, because they furnish a device for bringing together for a common objective representatives of the several groups who are interested in a particular problem and who will be affected by any solution ultimately promulgated as a rule or regulation. That a committee made up of representatives of groups having an interest will debate at length is admitted, as is also the fact that the committee members may be a thorn in the flesh of the expert who knows in advance the theoretical answer and wishes it forced on the service without loss of time. Even if the expert happens to be one hundred per cent right on all the details, as he rarely is, he has the problem of convincing and educating the persons who will have to apply the new plan. This educational work can be done with great psychological effect in committees where objections are raised and difficulties presented while the plan is still in its formative stage. If the trouble lies in misunderstandings, they get cleared up in the discussions, so that the resulting report is clarified. If an objection is raised which on discussion proves to be outweighed by offsetting advantages, it is helpful if the fact that this objection was considered is stated in the report with the reasons why action was taken in spite of it. Perhaps other persons who did not participate in the debates will have this same objection and will be influenced by the fact that the committee considered it.

On a committee of this type it not infrequently happens that the education and conversion of an operating

representative are effected not by the expert or the specialist but by his fellow members from other operating units. Without the participation of the expert, they advance the arguments that carry conviction.

Not infrequently the objectives of the expert, or the overhead personnel man, are eminently sound, but he lacks the detailed knowledge of subsidiary operating units to devise a practice that will be effective under the conditions actually prevailing. His plan would meet opposition and might fail, either because of its inherent defects or because of unsympathetic or antagonistic enforcement. If in the formative stages these objections are raised it is often possible to modify the details without any modification of the real objectives, and thus start with a working plan that the representatives who are to carry it out will have said in advance will work well. If they have predicted success, it is up to them to make good on their own predictions.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Persons experienced in group work know the curious psychological effect of the inclusion in a report of something which is the brain child of an individual member. Somehow the inclusion helps to identify the author with the entire report. A ghost writer for a prominent official once said that his principal never accepted a product without making some changes; that the act of revising was a part of accepting the product for use as his own. Thus the ghost writer and his colleagues deliberately left some obvious faults, because correction of them satisfied that need for self expression. Recently a keen observer said that one group member made the mistake of having his proposals too perfect in form and detail before he presented them to his colleagues, that he did not leave them enough chance to feel that they were making a real contribution. One unusually successful man in group work frequently presented to his colleagues several possible solutions with the arguments pro and con, leaving to them the question of the best solution. The one they selected was almost invariably the one he himself favored but it became theirs because they had gone through the mental processes of selecting it from among the choices. The elimination of a proposal may have the same effect as the inclusion of one. Where there has been a misunderstanding or a misinterpretation, a committee member may be asked to restate the thing in his own words and his statement may be even better for his colleagues than the original.

Not all the effect is produced by recognizing the ego of the committee

Representatives from operating agencies who have served on such committees return to their agencies with an understanding of the new proposals and thus may become centers for spreading the gospel. In this type of educational promotional work the factors of personal acquaintance and confidence are important. The fact that a leading member of an operating agency's own staff has played a part in developing a new program and believes in it helps toward its acceptance.

Observation in the federal service leads to the conclusion that committees which bring together men from different agencies to consider a common problem are highly advantageous. In a highly organized, highly compartmentalized structure such as the federal government, a man's official contacts are mainly with those

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member, although that is often a factor. Part of it apparently results from the fact that many of us reach our conclusions by actually working on a problem. We may not be ready to accept a conclusion when it is presented to us all cut and dried, yet when we have worked over the problem in our own way we come out with the same answer, and then it is our own, although we did not originate it.

In the days of the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries, one commissioner, Mr. Hamlin, very appropriately from Missouri, was never prepared to trust an expert or a specialist. On one occasion he came into the writer's room and began with the remark: "You and I have one point in common; we both like figures." He then went on to explain that using the basic figures prepared by the statistical unit [he had inspected that unit and its methods], he had made some calculations according to his own methods and had come out with the same answer the statistician had presented. He said: "I could vote for my own answer; I want you to look it over and see if there is anything wrong with my method." The reasoning in both cases was identical: the only difference was in the order in which the different processes were carried out. In the absence of an arithmetical error, identical answers were inevitable. That afternoon he voted with his colleagues for a unanimous report on what was perhaps the most vital issue before the Commission. In this instance there was no question of ego; it was just a matter of constitutional unwillingness to accept a conclusion without working through the problem in his own way. Undoubtedly men so constituted slow things up, but while they may delay progress in the right direction, they may prevent mistakes and force more deliberate consideration.

in his own organization and he may have few contacts with persons of like interest in other departments. Thus we may find a department like Agriculture forging ahead in personnel administration whereas others have made few advances. Devices that will bring together the men from different agencies for the consideration of common problems get them acquainted and permit those who possess the qualities of leadership to extend their influence beyond the confines of their own compartment.

Membership on committees should by no means be confined to personnel specialists but should include operating officers for two reasons: first, operating officers will bring to the committees a definite point of view and a knowledge of detailed facts; second, they will take away an understanding of the objectives and the methods.

Some persons with experience in such committee work may object that what has been said is too optimistic and too idealistic; that some committee members will prove recalcitrant, and will slow up progress or block the program. That, of course, is true; but they may be recalcitrant and block the program anyway, if not in committee, then after it has been put into effect. They may cause it to fail. The fact that they are stubbornly opposed to it is an important element in the situation and should be known in advance. Advance knowledge of such opposition may lead to modifications or even to postponement. Most operating agencies are going concerns which must be kept going. They generally have to be modified through evolution and not through revolution. Anyone who has watched the national government over say the last quarter of a century appreciates how much progress in personnel has been achieved through the evolutionary process. The fact previously cited

should be constantly borne in mind—that some invaluable, irreplaceable employees are at times bitterly opposed to some reform that seems highly important to the personnel specialist and yet is relatively unimportant compared with the maintenance of efficiency in the operating agencies. Many things take time because they can only be effected through educational processes.

The personnel specialists occupy a position of leadership. In politics and in public administration leadership connotes a following. The independent research worker and writer may prove a leader because he acquires his following gradually over the years, possibly even after his death. He is a leader in the realm of ideas rather than in action. The administrator must be a leader in action, which generally requires an immediate following. Such a leader is like the spark plug in an automobile engine. He is useless if there is no gap between him and his followers; he is equally useless if that gap is too wide. The most difficult task for the specialist who occupies a position affecting administration is to maintain an efficient working gap. To do so he must maintain close relationships with those he hopes to lead. If he does this and has understanding, he may then adjust the gap and occasionally learn that his own theories and ideals demand no little modification. He may appreciate the truth of that sentence, "With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do." Consistency in general purpose is probably a virtue, but one cannot throughout life be consistent in details of administration unless one is to refuse to learn through experience. The public administrator must be a realist.

## APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX A

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7915 OF JUNE 24, 1938 AMENDING CIVIL SERVICE RULES

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution, by section 1753 of the Revised Statutes (U.S.C., title 5, sec. 631), by the Civil Service Act of January 16, 1883 (22 Stat. 403), and as President of the United States, the Civil Service Rules are hereby amended, effective February 1, 1939, to read as follows:

#### RULE I. POLITICS AND RELIGION

1. *No interference with elections.* No person in the executive civil service shall use his official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election or affecting the results thereof. Persons who by the provisions of these rules are in the competitive classified service, while retaining the right to vote as they please and to express privately their opinions on all political subjects, shall take no active part in political management or in political campaigns.

2. *No disclosure or discriminations.* No question in any form of application or in any examination shall be so framed as to elicit information concerning the political or religious opinions or affiliations of any applicant, nor shall any inquiry be made concerning such opinions or affiliations, and all disclosures thereof shall be discountenanced. No discrimination shall be exercised, threatened, or promised by any person in the executive civil service against or in favor of an applicant, eligible, or employee in the classified service because of his political or religious opinions or affiliations.

3. *Recommendations not considered.* No recommendation of an applicant, eligible, or employee in the classified service involving disclosure of his political or religious opinions or affiliations shall be considered or filed by the Civil Service Commission, hereinafter called the Commission, or by any officer concerned in making appointments or promotions.

#### RULE II. CLASSIFICATION OF THE SERVICE

1. *Extent of the classified service.* The classified service shall include all persons who have heretofore or may hereafter be given a competitive status in the classified civil service, with or without competitive examination, by legislative enactment, or under the civil service rules promulgated by the President, or by executive orders covering groups of employees with their positions into the competitive classified service, or authorizing the appointment of individuals to positions within such service. It shall include all positions now existing or hereafter created by legislative or executive action, of whatever function or designation, whether compensated by a fixed salary or otherwise, unless excepted from

classification by specific affirmative legislative or executive action. No right of classification shall accrue to persons whose appointment or assignment to classified duties is in violation of the civil service rules.

2. *Examination required.* No person shall be appointed, employed, promoted, or transferred in the classified service, or perform the duties of any position therein, until he passes the examination prescribed by the Commission in his case, unless especially exempted.

3. *Appointment without examination.* (a) Schedules A and B of the civil service rules are continued as a part of the said rules as amended by this order, and positions named in such schedules are excepted from the classified service.

(b) Appointments to the excepted positions named in Schedule A may be made without examination or upon non-competitive examination.

(c) Appointments to the excepted positions named in Schedule B may be made upon such non-competitive examination as the Commission shall prescribe.

(d) The proper appointing officer may fill any position named in Schedule A or Schedule B, or any other excepted position, as classified positions are filled, in which case the person so appointed shall be eligible for transfer, reinstatement, or promotion to positions in the classified service, subject to the provisions of these rules. The incumbent of any excepted position so filled will not be entitled to protection against removal afforded by these rules; nor will the incumbent of any excepted-by-law position so filled be entitled to the benefits of the Civil Service Retirement Act solely by virtue of such employment.

4. *Assignment of excepted employees.* A person appointed without competitive examination under section 3 of this rule or by authority of an act of Congress shall not be assigned to the work of a competitive classified position without the approval of the Commission or specific provision of law.

5. *Laborers.* Laborers who, in connection with their usual duties, are to perform work of the grade performed by classified employees shall be appointed upon certification by the Commission from appropriate registers of eligibles in the manner provided by these rules; and a person employed merely as a laborer or workman without examination under these rules shall not be assigned to work of the grade performed by classified employees. Unclassified laborers may be assigned to classified work incidentally, but not as a part of their main work, in cases where such work cannot be conveniently and economically done by classified employees, but not without the prior consent of the Commission obtained before such assignment.

6. *Excepted employees—when classified.* Except as provided in section 7 of this rule a person holding a position when it becomes classified or otherwise subject to competitive examination shall, upon recommendation to the Commission by the head of the department or establishment in which he is employed, have all the rights which he would acquire if appointed thereto upon competitive examination: *Provided* (a) that he was appointed at least six months prior to the effective date of the change in the status of the position; (b) that he has performed satisfactory active

service during at least three months of the year immediately preceding the change in the status of the position; (c) that he shall pass such appropriate non-competitive tests of fitness as the Commission may prescribe; and (d) that he is not disqualified by any of the provisions of section 3 of Civil Service Rule V or of any provision of the Civil Service Act and rules, or of any other statute or executive order. Any such person who fails to meet the foregoing requirements of this section shall be separated from the service within thirty days (exclusive of leave to which he is entitled) after the Commission reports that he is ineligible for classification unless the head of the agency concerned certifies to the Commission that such person has rendered satisfactory service and that he should be retained although without acquiring a competitive classified status.

7. *Classification in post offices.* The Postmaster General shall promptly notify the Commission of each order for the advancement of any post office from the third class to the second class, or for the consolidation of any post office with one in which the employees are classified as competitive. On the date of effect of such order, section 6 of this rule shall apply to the positions, officers, and employees of the offices affected, and all other provisions of these rules shall become applicable to all officers and employees who so qualify and to all such positions thereafter filled in the same manner as they apply to those in offices now classified. The Postmaster General shall, upon the date he reports the advancement of any post office from the third to the second class, or as soon thereafter as is practicable, notify the Commission as to which of the employees in such office he recommends for classification.

8. *Appointment without competitive examination in rare cases.* Whenever the Commission shall find that the duties or compensation of a vacant position are such, or that qualified persons are so rare that in its judgment such position cannot, in the interest of good civil service administration, be filled at that time through open competitive examination, it may authorize such vacancy to be filled without competitive examination, and in any case in which such authority is given, evidence satisfactory to the Commission of the qualifications of the person to be appointed without competitive examination shall be required. A detailed statement of the reasons for its action in any case arising hereunder shall be made in the records of the Commission and shall be published in its annual report. Any subsequent vacancy in such position shall not be filled without competitive examination except upon express authority of the Commission in accordance with this section.

### RULE III. EXAMINATIONS

1. *Competitive examinations.* The Commission shall prepare, recruit for, hold, and rate open competitive examinations for admission to the classified service, and in all other cases required by these rules or by executive order, which examinations shall be of a practical and suitable character, and shall be held at such times and places as may most nearly meet the needs of the service, with due consideration for the convenience of applicants.

2. *Non-competitive examinations.* The Commission may give non-competitive examinations to test fitness for (a) reinstatement, (b) appointment to positions excepted from the classified service under these rules or by executive order; and shall give non-competitive examinations for transfer or promotion when competitive promotion examinations are not held.

3. *Examinations.* Examinations shall whenever practicable be assembled and include written or practical tests; the rating of experience when part of the test shall, so far as practicable, follow personal interview and be qualitative as well as quantitative. Whenever the announcement of any examination in which education, training, or experience is prerequisite shall so state, and the applicants are given opportunity to file detailed sworn statements of their qualifications, a preliminary competitive rating may be given on the basis of the duties, requirements, and conditions of work in the position to be filled before any applicant shall be required to travel for further tests. Applicants rated highest on such preliminary rating, to a number not incommensurate with the number of vacancies expected during the life of the list, shall be afforded opportunity to assemble or otherwise compete in such further competitive tests as the Commission may require. The character, record, and physical fitness of applicants shall be tested or investigated and approved whenever practicable prior to certification.

4. *Examinations for professional or technical positions.* All examinations for professional or technical positions or positions which under existing executive practice are filled only by persons having professional or technical training shall be formulated by the Civil Service Commission in collaboration with the head of the affected department, independent establishment, or corporation, or his designated representative, and shall make due allowance for the particular training, experience, and skill regarded as requisite under existing administrative practice.

#### RULE IV. BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

1. *Appointment and duties.* (a) The Commission shall designate from among persons in the federal service, after consulting the head of the department or office in which such persons serve, such boards of examiners as it shall deem necessary. Their members shall perform such duties as the Commission may direct, in connection with the execution of the Civil Service Act and these rules, and in the performance thereof they shall be under the direct and sole control of the Commission. Such duties shall be considered part of the duties of the office in which they are serving and time shall be allowed therefor during office hours. No such board shall be composed solely of adherents of one political party when other persons are available and competent to serve.

(b) Where qualified special examiners are not available in the federal service, the Commission may, by unanimous vote, designate individuals outside the service specially qualified by experience and training and of outstanding reputation in their own field to serve on a board of examiners for a particular examination and compensate them for such service on a *per diem* basis.

2. *Cooperation with other boards, commissions, and agencies.* The Commission shall render all practicable assistance to the Philippine and Puerto Rico civil service boards, and such other federal, state, or local agencies as shall request its cooperation and offer like cooperation or adequately provide its share of the expense, and shall conduct or join in conducting examinations, upon their request, under such regulations as may be jointly agreed upon. Where the Commission has joined in the conduct of such examinations, it may certify eligibles from appropriate resulting registers to fill vacancies in the United States civil service.

3. *Executive officers to facilitate examinations.* Persons in the executive civil service shall facilitate the holding of examinations and other work of the Commission; and executive officers in charge of public buildings shall permit and arrange for the use of suitable rooms under their charge, and for heating, lighting, and furnishing them.

#### RULE V. QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANTS

1. *Citizenship.* No person shall be admitted to examination unless he is a citizen of or owes allegiance to the United States, and no person shall be examined or certified for appointment if his appointment would be contrary to law.

2. *Form of application.* Application for examination must be made under oath, in such form and manner and accompanied by such certificates as the Commission may prescribe.

3. *Disqualifications.* The Commission may, in its discretion, refuse to examine an applicant for appointment or reinstatement or to certify an eligible for any of the following reasons: (a) dismissal from the service for delinquency, inefficiency, or misconduct; (b) physical or mental unfitness for the position for which he applies: *Provided*, that the Commission may, in its discretion, exempt from the physical requirements established for any position a disabled honorably discharged soldier, sailor, or marine upon a certificate of the United States Veterans Administration attesting that he has completed an appropriate and sufficient rehabilitatory course of training for the duties of the class of positions in which employment is sought; *and provided further*, that the Commission, may in its discretion, waive the physical requirements in the case of a disabled veteran not so trained to permit his examination; (c) criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct; (d) intentionally making a false statement as to any material fact, or practicing any deception or fraud in securing examination, registration, certification, or appointment; (e) refusal to furnish testimony as required by Rule XIV; and (f) the habitual use of intoxicating beverages to excess.

Any of the reasons stated in the foregoing clauses (b) to (f), inclusive, shall also be good cause for removal from the service.

4. *Age limits.* The Commission may, with the approval of the proper appointing officer, change by regulation the existing age limits for entrance to the examinations under these rules, but persons entitled to veteran preference may be examined without regard to age except for such positions as the Commission shall by regulation specify: *Provided*, that they have not reached the retirement age for the position sought.

5. *Trades positions.* Applicants for positions in the recognized mechanical trades must have served as apprentices or journeymen for such periods as the Commission may prescribe.

#### RULE VI. RATINGS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. *Rating.* Examination papers shall be rated on a scale of 100 and the subjects therein shall be given such relative weights as the Commission may prescribe. Honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, and marines shall have 5 points added to their earned ratings in examinations for entrance to the classified service. Applicants for entrance examination who are honorably discharged and who establish by official records the present existence of a service connected disability, or who are over fifty-five years of age and, because of disability, are entitled to pension or compensation under existing laws, and widows of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, and marines, and wives of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, and marines who because of service connected disability or who are over fifty-five years of age and because of disability, are themselves not qualified but whose wives are qualified for appointment, shall have 10 points added to their earned ratings; and this shall also apply to retired officers and enlisted men who establish through official sources the present existence of a service connected disability in the same manner as is required of others who are granted disability preference. In examinations where experience is an element of qualification, time spent in the military or naval service of the United States during the World War or the war with Spain shall be credited in an applicant's ratings where the applicant's actual employment in a similar vocation to that for which he applies was temporarily interrupted by such military or naval service but was resumed after his discharge. The Commission, not oftener than once each quarter, may reopen examinations to applicants granted disability preference.

Employees in any positions in the classified service who are qualified to enter any open competitive examination shall, upon earning a passing mark therein, be placed also upon a separate list of eligible government employees, which list may be certified separately in accordance with the civil service rules to fill vacancies occurring in the positions for which the examination is held. Age limitations may be waived for employees otherwise eligible to compete in such examinations. Employees eligible to compete in any such examination shall be granted leave of absence for the time required to take such examination.

Competitors shall be notified of their ratings, and upon their request, they shall also be notified of their standing on the list.

2. *Eligible registers.* All competitors rated at 70 or more shall be eligible for appointment, and their names shall be placed on the proper register according to their ratings; but the names of persons entitled to disability preference as defined in section 1 of this rule shall be placed above all others.

3. *Term of eligibility.* The term of eligibility shall be one year beginning with the date on which the name of the eligible is entered on the

register. This term may be extended, in the discretion of the Commission, for one additional year, and thereafter a register may be certified only for such eligibles as continue to meet all examination requirements, and where experience was part of the test only after supplementary examination of additional and interim experience and rerating of such experience. All eligibles on a list more than two years old who fail to file additional experience data as required by the Commission or who fail to meet the requirements or receive a passing mark on rerating shall be dropped from the list. No register hereafter established shall be used for more than two years unless it has been extended and revised in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

#### RULE VII. CERTIFICATION

1. *Method of filling vacancies.* All vacancies in any position or employment not excepted from examination shall be filled as hereinafter provided: (a) by transfer upon requisition to and certificate of the Commission, of any employee employed anywhere in the service holding a position in the same class of the same grade, or otherwise eligible for such transfer under Rule X; (b) by reinstatement upon requisition to and certificate of the Commission under Rule IX or by certificate without requisition under section 4 of Rule XII in the discretion of the Commission; (c) by competitive promotion upon requisition to and certificate by the Commission from a competitive promotion register of eligibles in the department or establishment where the vacancy exists, or if there are no such eligibles, then from such a register of eligibles in other departments or establishments having the same status in the service, such certification to be in the order of standing on such eligible register unless the Commission shall determine that a selective certification is necessary pursuant to the rules; (d) by non-competitive promotion upon requisition to and certificate of the Commission following non-competitive examination when competitive promotion examinations are not held; (e) by transfer from a lower to a higher position of any employee eligible for such transfer upon requisition to and certificate of the Commission following examination; and (f) from open competitive eligible registers upon requisition to and certificate by the Commission.

2. *Method of certification.* Certification for original appointment and competitive promotion shall be made as follows:

(a) *Certification.* The nominating or appointing officer shall request the certification of eligibles, and the Commission shall certify, from the head of the appropriate register of eligibles, a number of persons sufficient to permit the nominating or appointing officer to consider three persons in connection with each vacancy. When so provided by regulation of the Commission, selection shall be made from the register by the nominating or appointing officer without preliminary certification of the Commission. Where the Commission finds that there is no register in existence appropriate as a whole to fill a particular existing vacancy, the Commission in its discretion may certify selectively from the most nearly appropriate existing register, in the order of their ranking, the names of any individuals thereon found by it to be adequately qualified to fulfill the

particular requirements of the vacant position. Certification of an eligible for temporary appointment shall not affect his eligibility for certification for probational appointment. Certification shall be made without regard to sex unless the sex desired is specified in the original requisition.

(b) *Selections.* The nominating or appointing officer shall make selections for the first vacancy from not more than the highest three persons certified, or on the register, with sole reference to merit and fitness, unless objection shall be made and sustained by the Commission, to one or more of the persons certified, for any of the reasons stated in Rule V, section 3. For the second vacancy he shall make selection from not more than the highest three remaining, who have not been within his reach for three separate vacancies, or against whom objection has not been made and sustained in the manner indicated. The third and any additional vacancies shall be filled in like manner. More than one selection may be made from the three persons next in order for appointment, or from two persons if the register contains the names of only two, subject to the requirements of section 3 of this rule as to the apportionment.

An appointing officer who passes over an eligible veteran and selects another eligible with the same or a lower rating shall file with the Civil Service Commission a written statement setting forth in detail his reasons for so doing, which reasons will not be made available to the veteran or any one else except in the discretion of the appointing officer. The Commission will review these reasons and in every instance where they are not regarded as adequate will so advise the head of the appropriate department or independent establishment for his consideration.

Any eligible who has been within reach for three separate vacancies in his turn may be subsequently selected, subject to the approval of the Commission, from the certificate on which his name last appeared, if the condition of the register has not so changed as to place him in other respects beyond reach of certification.

(c) *Probationary appointment.* A person selected for appointment shall be duly notified by the appointing officer and upon accepting and reporting for duty shall receive from such officer a certificate of probational appointment. The first year of service under this appointment shall be the probationary period unless a shorter period, not less than six months, is provided by regulation. If and when, after full and fair trial for not less than one month, the conduct or capacity of the probationer be not satisfactory to the appointing officer, the probationer may at any time thereafter during this period be so notified in writing, with a full statement of reasons, and this notice shall terminate his service. Efficiency rating reports of all probationers shall be periodically filed with the Commission at such time and in such form as the regulations of the Commission shall provide. If at the end of the probationary period the probationer's service rating has been satisfactory, to the extent required by regulation, his retention in the service shall confirm his absolute appointment. If, however, his service rating has been unsatisfactory as so provided, his service shall be terminated at the end of the probationary period.



A probationer separated from the service without delinquency or misconduct may be restored to the register of eligibles in the discretion of the Commission for the remainder of any period of eligibility thereon.

3. *Apportionment.* Certification for appointment in the departments or independent offices at Washington shall be so made as to maintain, as nearly as the conditions of good administration warrant, the apportionment of appointments among the several states and territories and the District of Columbia upon the basis of population, but eligibles who have been granted military preference shall be certified without regard to apportionment, and the appointments of persons covered into the classified service by executive order or otherwise, or exempted from the restrictions of the quota provision in certification, shall be excluded from the apportionment figures: *Provided*, that appointments to the following positions shall not be so apportioned:

(a) In all departments and offices: Apprentice, electric lineman, electric wireman, engraver, gardener, helper (if approved by the Commission), skilled laborer (female), student, telephone operator, and mechanical trades and allied positions of the non-educational class incumbents of which are retirable at not over 65 years of age.

(b) In the Government Printing Office, mail equipment shops (now field), local offices in the District of Columbia, field service of the military staff departments, and at Army headquarters: All positions.

(c) In the Bureau of Engraving and Printing: Plate printer and skilled helper.

4. *District certification.* The Commission may arrange the territory of the United States into appropriate districts for the purpose of certification to positions in parts of the service not subject to apportionment, and certification to any such position may be confined to residents of the district in which such position is located.

#### RULE VIII. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT

1. *Pending regular filling of vacancy.* Temporary appointment without examination and certification by the Commission shall not be made to a competitive position in any case, except when the public interest so requires, and then only upon the prior authorization of the Commission; and any appointment so authorized shall continue only for such period as may be necessary to make appointment through certification of eligibles, and in no case, without prior approval of the Commission, shall extend beyond thirty days from the date of the receipt by the appointing officer of the Commission's certificate. When a vacancy is to be filled by promotion or transfer under the civil service rules and a temporary appointment is authorized by the Commission under the provisions of this section pending the promotion or transfer, such temporary appointment shall in no case continue beyond the period of thirty days without prior approval of the Commission.

2. *Pending establishment of register.* Whenever there are no eligibles upon a register for any grade in which a vacancy exists and the public interest requires that the vacancy be filled before eligibles can be provided by the Commission, the Commission may authorize temporary appoint-

ment without examination. Such appointment shall continue only for such period as may be necessary to make appointment through certification, and in no case, without prior approval of the Commission, shall extend beyond thirty days from the date of the receipt by the appointing officer of the Commission's certification of eligibles.

3. *Pending full certification.* Whenever there is at least one eligible and not more than two eligibles on a register for any grade in which a vacancy exists, the Commission shall, upon requisition from the proper appointing officer, certify the one eligible or the two eligibles, as the case may be, who shall be considered by the appointing officer with a view to probational appointment; and if the appointing officer shall elect not to make probational appointment from such certification, and temporary appointment is required, such appointment shall be made from such certification unless reasons satisfactory to the Commission are given why the appointment should not be so made. Such temporary appointment may continue until three eligibles are provided. If selection is not made from the certification for either probational or temporary appointment under the provisions of this section, then temporary appointment, if required, may be made under the provisions of section 2 of this rule.

4. *Job employment.* When there is work of a temporary character, at the completion of which the services of an additional employee will not be required, a temporary appointment may be made with the prior consent of the Commission for a period not to exceed three months, and may with like consent of the Commission be extended for a further period of three months. Such temporary appointment shall be made through certification from the Commission's eligible registers unless the Commission shall decide, in a particular case, that there are no available eligibles. Such temporary appointment shall not extend beyond six months, unless there are no eligibles available for the additional period or under unusual circumstances which seem to the Commission to justify an extension beyond six months; and in no case shall such temporary appointment extend beyond six months for any purpose other than to complete the job of work for which the person was originally employed. The Commission may restrict certification for temporary appointment to such eligibles as by reason of residence or other conditions are immediately available.

5. *Temporary appointment made permanent.* The acceptance by an eligible of a temporary appointment shall not affect his standing on any register for permanent employment, and experience gained as a temporary appointee shall in no way vary the order of certification for permanent appointment. A temporary appointment may be made permanent when the temporary appointee is within reach for permanent appointment at the time of his temporary appointment or in case he is so within reach during his temporary service. In such case the probational appointment may date from the time when he became within reach for probational appointment. A person who has been temporarily employed under the provisions of one section of this rule shall not for that reason be ineligible for employment under any other section. Any appointment under sections 1, 2, or 3 of this rule shall be promptly reported by

letter to the Commission, as made, with a statement of the action taken for making a permanent appointment.

The Commission is authorized to inspect the records of any department or office to aid it in observing and enforcing the operation of the provisions of this rule and reporting thereon to the President.

RULE IX. REINSTATEMENT

1. *Certificate required—conditions.* A person separated without delinquency, misconduct, or inefficiency from a civilian position in the federal service after absolute appointment may be reinstated upon certificate of the Commission subject to the following limitations:

(a) Upon requisition for reinstatement by the appointing office having a vacancy to fill, made within one year of separation if the period of service was less than two years; within two years if the period of service was two years or more but less than three years; within three years if the period of service was three years or more but less than four years; within four years if the period of service was four years or more but less than five years; and without time limit if the period of service was five years or more: *Provided*, that the applicant is otherwise eligible under the conditions of the executive order of June 2, 1920.

(b) A former classified employee entitled to military preference in appointment may be reinstated without time limit.

(c) A former classified employee retired upon annuity under the Civil Service Retirement Act by reason of total disability who is eligible for reinstatement by reason of recovery and termination of annuity, shall be eligible for reinstatement subject to the conditions and limitations of the civil service rules.

(d) No person may be reinstated to a position in the classified service who did not have a classified status at the time of separation, or eligibility for such status through examination.

(e) No person may be reinstated to a position in the classified service without passing an appropriate non-competitive examination testing fully his present fitness for the position when the Commission shall so require.

2. *Probationer.* A person separated during or at the end of his probationary period unless separated solely by reason of reduction in force may not be reinstated, but if he has been restored through the discretion of the Commission to the eligible register he may be certified for a new probational appointment therefrom; and if said register has been terminated and separation was without fault on his part, he may be certified in the discretion of the Commission, during a period of one year following separation, for a new probational appointment upon requisition from any appointing officer for such certification to fill any vacancy for which he was originally eligible.

3. *Removed person.* A person removed from the service, may, in the discretion of the Commission, be certified for reinstatement to any vacancy in any position for which he was formerly eligible to any other department or establishment pursuant to the provisions of Rule XII, section 4.

## RULE X. TRANSFER

1. *Transfers subordinate to promotions.* No transfer shall be made to a position above the grade in which the proposed transferee has served unless the position cannot practicably be filled by promotion.

2. *Transfers from excepted to competitive position.* No person appointed without competitive examination to a position classified at the time of such appointment, and no person serving in an unclassified position or in a position excepted from the classified service under these rules or by executive order, not appointed by competitive examination, or by transfer or promotion from a classified position, shall be transferred to a classified position, except as hereinafter provided in this rule.

3. *Retransfer.* Any person may be retransferred to a position in which he was formerly employed or to any position to which transfer could be made therefrom if, since his transfer, he has served continuously and satisfactorily under any of the following conditions:

(1) In the executive or judicial civil service of the United States or of its insular possessions.

(2) In the legislative service.

(3) In the service of a state, county, municipality, or foreign government in a position in which he has acquired valuable training and experience.

(4) In a training course approved by the Commission in any educational institution of recognized standing.

Such retransfer may be made without compliance with clauses (b), (c), and (d) of section 6 of this rule.

4. *From the office of the President.* Any person who has served for at least two years in the office of the President of the United States may be transferred to a classified position upon such tests of fitness as the Commission may deem proper.

5. *Without certificate.* Transfers within the same branch of the field service of a department or office, and transfers among the military staff departments and from the War Department to any military staff department, subject to the rules and regulations regarding promotions, may be made without certificate of the Commission unless different tests are prescribed for original entrance to the position to which transfer is proposed and unless otherwise provided by regulations of the Commission.

6. *Certificate required.* Unless otherwise specifically provided in this rule no person shall be transferred except on certificate of the Commission previously obtained and subject to the following limitations:

(a) *Absolute appointment.* Such person must have received absolute appointment and have served at least six months in the position from which transfer is sought; but this limitation may be waived by the Commission in any cases where reduction in force is involved.

(b) *Examination.* Such person must pass an appropriate examination whenever different tests are prescribed for original entrance to the position to which transfer is proposed.

(c) *Qualifications and experience.* Such person shall not be transferred unless, in the judgment of the Commission, he possesses experience, quali-

fications, or training which are required for the proper performance of the duties of the position to which transfer is proposed and unless promotion in the manner provided by the civil service rules is not practicable.

(d) *Apportionment.* The apportionment must be observed unless waived by the Commission upon the certificate of the appointing officer that the transfer is required in the interests of good administration, setting forth in detail the reasons therefor.

7. *Residence.* The person to be transferred from a non-apportioned to an apportioned position shall be required, previous to his transfer, to prove his residence in the same manner as for original appointment.

8. *Philippine service.* An officer or employee occupying a competitive position in the Philippine classified service who has served three years or more therein, may be transferred to the federal classified service, subject to the provisions of these rules; but the Commission may authorize the transfer of an officer or employee who has served two years in the Philippine classified service and who has been separated by necessary reduction of force or by displacement by a Filipino, if he is especially recommended by the War Department because of his efficiency and good character. In all cases of proposed transfer from the Philippine classified service the War Department shall furnish the Commission, for its consideration, all relevant information contained in its files, together with the service record of the employee.

9. *Puerto Rican service.* The Commission may, in its discretion, authorize the transfer of employees from the civil service of Puerto Rico to that of the United States, subject to the limitations respecting transfer within the civil service of the United States.

10. *Panama Canal service.* A citizen of the United States in the service of the Panama Canal on or before January 1, 1915, in an excepted position may if recommended by the Panama Canal, be transferred to any position in the classified service for which he can qualify, provided:

(a) This section shall not apply to a person appointed to a competitive position in accordance with the civil service rules, the transfer of such person to be governed by the general provisions of the rules.

(b) This section shall not apply to a person appointed without examination to perform the duties of clerk of any grade, bookkeeper, stenographer, typewriter, surgeon, physician, trained nurse, or draftsman.

(c) The transferee has rendered at least two years of service in a position above the grade of unskilled laborer in the service of the Panama Canal or of the Panama Railroad by transfer from the Panama Canal.

11. *Service beyond seas.* In a case of exceptional merit where an employee has rendered long and faithful service beyond seas in a civil capacity, under conditions such that his appointment and services were not in contravention of the civil service rules or executive orders, he may be given a classified status by the head of the department or office in which such service was rendered on certification by such officer that the case is one of exceptional merit and with the approval of the Commission. The provisions of this section may be applied in the case of Philippine constabulary officers who have rendered at least seven years of efficient and satisfactory service.

## RULE XI. PROMOTION

1. *Competitive tests.* In addition to the method of competitive promotion provided by Rules III, VI, and VII, competitive examinations for promotion and transfer may from time to time be held under the direction of the Commission to test fitness for promotion and transfer, subject to the following limitations:

(a) No employee during probation shall be eligible to participate in a promotion examination or be promoted to a position higher than that for which he was eligible at time of appointment; and eligibility to participate in each such examination shall be limited to employees declared by the Commission to be in line of promotion and to employees declared by the Commission to be eligible for transfer to the position for which the examination is held and who are otherwise qualified.

(b) The service ratings of the employee in the position from which he seeks promotion, when declared by the Commission to be in line of promotion, shall be given due weight in any such examination, which weight shall constitute at least 50 per cent of the final rating.

2. *Limitations.* Promotion registers shall be prepared by the Commission in the order of standing in such examinations. Employees eligible for promotion upon any register shall be certified in the order of their standing on the register to a vacancy in the bureau or department in which they have been serving before certification of eligibles who are serving in any other department or independent establishment shall be made. The apportionment and requisition as to sex shall be observed in certifications for promotion, and upon cause shown that particular experience or qualification is required for the position to be filled selective certification may be made by the Commission in its discretion, but otherwise certification for promotion shall be made from the first three eligibles in the order of standing on the promotion register.

3. *Improper recommendations.* No recommendation for promotion except in the regular form of periodical service-rating reports or unless it be made by the person or persons under whose supervision such employee has served shall be considered by any officer concerned in making promotions. Recommendation in any other form or by any other person, if made with the knowledge and consent of the employee, shall be sufficient cause for debarring him from the promotion proposed, and a repetition of the offense shall be sufficient cause for removing him from the service.

4. *Promotion of substitutes.* Substitutes shall be promoted to the first vacancies occurring in regular positions in the order of their original appointment, whenever there are substitutes of the required sex who are eligible and will accept, unless such vacancies are filled by promotion, transfer, or reinstatement.

5. *Promotion to former grade.* A person who has been reinstated in the classified service in a grade lower than that from which he had been separated may be promoted to his former grade without examination.

## RULE XII. REMOVALS AND REDUCTIONS

1. *Reasons to be furnished.* No person in the classified service of the United States shall be removed therefrom except for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the service and for reasons given in writing, and

the person whose removal is sought shall have notice of the same and of any charges preferred against him and be furnished with a copy thereof, and also be allowed a reasonable time for personally answering the same in writing; and affidavits in support thereof; but no examination of witnesses nor any trial or hearing shall be required except in the discretion of the officer making the removal; and copies of charges, notice of hearing, answer, reasons for removal, and of the order of removal shall be made a part of the records of the proper department or office, as shall also the reasons for reduction in rank or compensation; and copies of the same shall be furnished to the person affected upon request, and the Commission also shall, upon request, be furnished copies of the same.

2. *Like penalties for like offenses.* In making removals or reductions, and in other punishment, like penalties shall be imposed for like offenses, and no discriminations shall be exercised for political or religious reasons.

3. *Suspensions.* Pending action under section 1 of this rule, or for disciplinary reasons, a person may be suspended for a period not to exceed ninety days, but the reasons for such suspension shall at the time of the suspension be filed in the records of the proper department or office and copies shall be furnished the Commission upon request. The period of suspension may be extended beyond ninety days with the prior consent of the Commission.

4. *Power to investigate.* The Commission shall have no jurisdiction to review the findings of a removing officer upon the reasons and answer provided for in section 1 of this rule, nor shall the Commission have authority to investigate any removal or reduction, unless it is alleged, with offer of proof, that the procedure required by section 1 of this rule has not been followed, or that the removal was made for political or religious reasons. The Commission may, however, receive or hear the statement of any employee removed on charges, and may, in its discretion, certify the employee to any other department or establishment for reinstatement to a vacancy in any position for which the employee is qualified, and in the event of such reinstatement the employee shall retain his former status and tenure in the service for all purposes.

5. *Retention of soldiers and sailors.* In harmony with statutory provisions, when reductions are being made in the force, in any part of the classified service, no employee entitled to military preference in appointment shall be discharged, dropped, or reduced in rank or salary if his record is good, or if his efficiency rating is equal to that of any employee in competition with him who is retained in the service.

#### RULE XIII. REPORT OF CHANGES

1. *Reports by appointing officer.* Every nominating or appointing officer in the executive civil service shall report in detail to the Commission whenever and in such manner as it may prescribe, all changes in the service under his authority, whether they affect positions or employees that are classified, unclassified, excepted, permanent, temporary, or subject to contract.

2. *List of positions.* Such officers shall also furnish to the Commission, when requested, and in such manner as it may prescribe, information as to numbers of employees, payroll data, and a list of all the positions, and

employments under their authority, together with the names, designations, compensations, duties, and dates of appointment or employment of all persons serving therein.

3. *Statement of duties.* Reports of appointments and changes in status of laborers or workmen shall be supplemented, when requested, by a statement, setting forth specifically the kind of labor performed, in detail sufficient to enable the Commission to determine the status of each position as classified or unclassified; and a similar statement of duties performed by any employee or pertaining to any position in the executive civil service shall be furnished to the Commission on request. All essential changes of duties pertaining to persons appointed as laborers or workmen without examination under the civil service rules shall be reported at once to the Commission.

#### RULE XIV. TESTIMONY

*Duty of officers and employees.* It shall be the duty of every officer and employee in the executive civil service, and of every applicant or eligible for a position therein, to give to the Commission or its authorized representative all proper and competent information and testimony in regard to matters inquired of arising under the Civil Service Act and rules, and to subscribe such testimony and make oath or affirmation thereto before an officer authorized by law to administer oaths.

#### RULE XV. WITHHOLDING SALARY

*Legal appointment necessary to compensation.* For the proper supervision and enforcement of its functions, the Commission shall, if it finds that any person has been appointed to or is holding any position, whether by original appointment, promotion, assignment, transfer, or reinstatement, in violation of the Civil Service Act or of the rules promulgated in accordance therewith, or in violation of any executive order or any regulations of the Commission, or that any employee subject to such Act, rules, orders, or regulations is taking active part in political management or political campaigns, after notice to the person affected and opportunity for explanation, certify the facts to the proper appointing officer with specific recommendation for discipline or dismissal; and such appointing officer shall carry out the recommendation. In the event of any continued violation for ten days after such recommendation, the Commission shall certify the facts to the proper disbursing and auditing officers, and such officers shall not pay or allow the salary or wages of such person thereafter accruing.

#### RULE XVI. REGULATIONS

1. *Authority to make regulations.* The Commission shall have authority to make regulations for the execution of these rules.

2. *Regulations.* No executive department or agency shall make any modification of its civil service regulations without the approval of the Commission.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 24, 1938



## APPENDIX B

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7916 OF JUNE 24, 1938 EXTENDING THE COMPETITIVE CLASSIFIED CIVIL SERVICE

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution, by section 1753 of the Revised Statutes (U.S.C., title 5, section 631), by the Civil Service Act of January 16, 1883 (22 Stat. 403), and as President of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

SECTION 1. Effective February 1, 1939, all positions in the executive civil service, including positions in corporations wholly owned or controlled by the United States, which are not now in the competitive classified civil service and which are not exempted therefrom by statute, except (1) policy determining positions and (2) other positions which special circumstances require should be exempted, are covered into the competitive classified civil service: *Provided*, that this section shall not be deemed to apply to positions filled by appointment by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; *and provided further*, that no positions shall be exempted from the competitive classified civil service under clauses (1) and (2) above except such as shall be designated in subsequent executive orders issued after investigation showing the necessity and justification for such exemptions. This section shall also apply to positions affected by statutes which exempt them from the competitive classified civil service but authorize the President in his discretion to cover them into such service.

SECTION 2. Within ninety days from the date of this order the heads of all departments and independent establishments, including corporations wholly owned or controlled by the United States, whose personnel or any part thereof is affected by section 1 of this order, shall certify to the Civil Service Commission for transmission by it with its recommendations to the President the positions in their respective departments or agencies which in their opinion should be excepted from the provisions of section 1 of this order as policy determining or for other reasons.

SECTION 3. The incumbent of any position which is covered into the competitive classified civil service by section 1 of this order shall acquire a classified civil service status (1) upon recommendation by the head of the agency concerned and certification by such head to the Civil Service Commission that such incumbent was in the service on the date of this order and has rendered satisfactory service for not less than six months, and (2) upon passing a suitable non-competitive examination prescribed by the Civil Service Commission under the civil service rules: *Provided*, that he is a citizen of the United States and is not disqualified by any provision of law or civil service rule. Any such incumbent who fails to meet the foregoing requirements of this section shall be separated from the service within thirty days (exclusive of leave to which he is entitled)

after the Commission reports that he is ineligible for classification unless the head of the agency concerned certifies to the Commission that such incumbent has rendered satisfactory service and that he should be retained although without acquiring a competitive classified status.

SECTION 4. New appointments to any positions covered into the competitive classified civil service by section 1 of this order shall not be affected by the provisions of said section until the Civil Service Commission shall have established registers of eligibles for such positions as a result of examinations held in accordance with the civil service rules and regulations and with this order.

SECTION 5. The Civil Service Commission shall, subject to the Civil Service Act, the rules thereunder, and the Classification Act of 1923, as amended, initiate, supervise, and enforce a system as uniform as practicable, for the recruitment, examination, certification, promotion from grade to grade, transfer, and reinstatement of employees in the classified civil service, other than employees therein excepted by executive orders, issued pursuant to clauses (1) and (2) of section 1 hereof, which system shall, so far as practicable, be competitive, with due regard to prior experience and service.

SECTION 6. Effective not later than February 1, 1939, the heads of the executive departments and the heads of such independent establishments and agencies subject to the civil service laws and rules as the President shall designate, shall establish in their respective departments or establishments a division of personnel supervision and management, at the head of which shall be appointed a director of personnel qualified by training and experience, from among those whose names are certified for such appointment by the Civil Service Commission pursuant to such competitive tests and requirements as the Civil Service Commission shall prescribe: *Provided*, however, that if the head of a department or establishment requests authority to appoint a presently acting personnel or appointment director, officer, or clerk, as such director of personnel, such personnel or appointment director, officer, or clerk may be appointed upon certification by the Civil Service Commission that he is qualified therefor after passing such tests as the Civil Service Commission shall prescribe. It shall be the duty of each director of personnel to act as liaison officer in personnel matters between his department or establishment and the Civil Service Commission, and to make recommendations to the departmental budget officer with respect to estimates and expenditures for personnel. He shall supervise the functions of appointment, assignment, service rating, and training of employees in his department or establishment, under direction of the head thereof, and shall initiate and supervise such programs of personnel training and management as the head thereof after consultation with the Civil Service Commission shall approve, including the establishment of a system of service ratings for departmental and field forces outside of the Classification Act of 1923, as amended, which shall conform as nearly as practicable with the system established under the said Act. Subject to the approval of the head of such department or establishment and of the Civil Service Commission he shall establish means for the hearing of grievances of employees and present appropriate recom-

## ORDER EXTENDING CIVIL SERVICE 409

mendation for the settlement thereof to the head of his department or establishment. He shall serve as a member of the Council of Personnel Administration hereinafter established, and perform such other functions as the head of the department or agency after consultation with the Civil Service Commission shall prescribe. A director of personnel may be transferred from one department or establishment to another from time to time, subject to the provisions of the civil service rules and with the approval of the head of the agency to which transfer is proposed.

SECTION 7. Effective February 1, 1939, there is established a Council of Personnel Administration consisting of the directors of personnel of the several departments and independent establishments, one additional representative of the Bureau of the Budget, one additional representative of the Civil Service Commission, and such additional members as the President shall designate. The President shall designate one of the members of the Council to act as chairman thereof, and the Council may designate an executive director. The Council shall advise and assist the President and the Commission in the protection and improvement of the merit system, and recommend from time to time to the President or the Commission needed changes in procedure, rules, or regulations. When directed so to do by the President or the Commission, the Council shall hold hearings and conduct investigations with respect to alleged abuses and proposed changes. The Council shall carry on programs of study to coordinate and perfect the executive personnel service in all its branches, and shall report upon the progress of personnel administration throughout the service. The Council shall have an executive committee of five members: one representing the ten executive departments to be chosen by the Directors of Personnel thereof; one representing the independent establishments and agencies to be chosen by the Directors of Personnel thereof; one representing the Bureau of the Budget to be chosen by the Director thereof; one representing the Civil Service Commission to be chosen by it; and one to be designated by the President. Executive Order No. 5612 of April 25, 1931, is hereby revoked.

SECTION 8. The Civil Service Commission shall, in cooperation with operating departments and establishments, the Office of Education, and public and private institutions of learning, establish practical training courses for employees in the departmental and field services of the classified civil service, and may by regulations provide credits in transfer and promotion examinations for satisfactory completion of one or more of such training courses.

SECTION 9. Schedules A and B of the Civil Service Rules, as presently existing, relating to positions excepted from examination and positions which may be filled upon non-competitive examination, will be superseded by schedules designating policy determining positions and other positions which special circumstances require should be exempted, which schedules will be set forth in subsequent executive orders as provided in section 1 hereof.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 24, 1938

## APPENDIX C

# A PLAN FOR A PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION SURVEY INCLUDING QUESTIONNAIRE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Devised for the Territory of Hawaii by the United States Civil Service Commission, 1925

U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C.  
December 18, 1925.

Hon. W. R. Farrington,  
Governor of Hawaii,  
Honolulu, T.H.

My dear Governor Farrington:

In previous correspondence it has been understood that the Commission would suggest a plan for a survey of the personnel of the Territorial Government as a basis for recommendations which you wished to make to the legislature in 1927 that a civil service system be established.

We have had the advantage of the presence here of the Hon. Raymond C. Brown, Secretary of State for the Territory, and he with a representative of the Institute for Government Research and members of our staff have worked out the following plan of procedure which is submitted for your consideration:

1. (a) Specific information regarding each individual position will be collected by questionnaire.  
(b) General information as to functions of departments and their subdivisions and operating organization with lines of authority will be collected in the form of statements by department heads supplemented by organization charts, departmental reports, statutes, etc.
2. This material will be forwarded to the Commission at Washington for preliminary analysis.
3. A representative of the Territorial Government will be assigned to come to Washington for a period of three months or thereabouts to assist in this preliminary analysis and to acquire technical information concerning civil service administration in general.
4. There will be prepared:
  - (a) A draft of legislation to create a civil service commission, including a classification plan and proposed salary schedules.
  - (b) A report setting out the results of the survey and presenting data in support of the proposed legislation showing among other things the immediate result either in increasing or de-

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creasing the cost of personal services by applying the proposed salary schedules.

5. A member of the group who has been engaged in this preliminary analysis, together with your representative will return to Hawaii with the material, drafts of legislation, and reports, where they will clear up any points that remain in doubt by securing additional information and complete the material for submission to you.
6. Subject to your pleasure the representative from Washington may remain in Hawaii until the legislature meets to serve as technical adviser before the committees of that body.

The purpose in suggesting that you have a representative here during the time this material is being examined and classified is two-fold: first, he will be able to furnish many items of general information that may not otherwise be brought out, and second, he will have opportunity to acquire first hand the principles underlying personnel classification and experience in their actual application as well as much technical knowledge as to civil service procedure in general which he may bring back to your organization and put to use should the legislative program be carried out.

It has been the experience elsewhere that the administration of civil service and classification functions have either staggered dangerously or fallen down because of the lack of the technical knowledge of the subject at the outset.

The person so assigned, therefore, should be of mature judgment and broad experience, familiar with the organization and functions of the Territorial Government, temperamentally capable of interesting himself in this type of problem, and available for later assignment in some responsible capacity to the civil service commission if established.

In connection with the proposal that some one from Washington come to Hawaii and spend several months in completing the material to be presented to you, and if you desire, appear before the legislative committees, it may be said that if a member of the Commission's staff can be made available it may be that the Commission will have sufficient business needing attention to justify it in paying the transportation of this representative, but it would scarcely be proper to pay from federal appropriations his salary and expenses during the time he was actually engaged on the work in Hawaii.

If a member of the Commission's staff were not available and it should be necessary for the member of the staff of the Institute for Government Research who is to participate in the work here to serve in that capacity, it is our understanding that it would be necessary for the Territorial Government to pay salary and all expenses. This is a matter that cannot be determined finally so far in advance, but it is presented as a part of the plan developed.

It is hoped that the plan of procedure outlined will meet with your approval, at least in its general aspects.

There are being forwarded, herewith, drafts of forms and instructions suggested for use in collecting the desired data, as follows:

1. A questionnaire to be filled out by or for each employee.

2. Instructions for filling out the questionnaire which are to accompany it.
3. Instructions to heads of departments as to the distribution, preparation, and collection of the questionnaire.

These forms have been prepared in collaboration with Mr. Brown and have his approval, which he has communicated to you separately, but they are none the less submitted as suggestions only with the expectation that they will be revised or altered to meet your own views on any material point.

When approved by you in final form your office should have a sufficient supply of the questionnaire and instructions for filling it out printed, allowing one copy of the instructions for each questionnaire. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire should then be proceeded with as expeditiously as possible. Mimeographed copies may be made of the instructions to heads of departments as but a small number will be needed.

It will be noted that it is proposed to have the questionnaires filled out in duplicate, the original copy to be collected and forwarded here and the duplicate copy to be retained by the heads of departments for reference purposes. The paper to be used for the original copy should be of light card-board that will permit of making a carbon copy with the typewriter, and the duplicate of some good paper of lighter weight. The paper for the original may be white or light cream in color, while the paper for the duplicate should be of some distinctive color, a light blue being preferable. By the use of distinctive colors accuracy in separating copies to be forwarded from those to be retained is assured. Samples of paper stock that would be suitable are transmitted herewith.

The matter of collecting organization charts, statements of functions of departments, etc., has been discussed with Mr. Brown who will take it up with you upon his return.

In this connection it is suggested that it would seem advantageous to plan for the distribution of questionnaires and instructions to the various departments to begin upon Mr. Brown's return to Honolulu. The details of procedure have been discussed with him and this detailed information would no doubt be helpful in passing upon many minor questions such as invariably arise in connection with a project of this kind.

You will no doubt find it desirable to designate some representative to be responsible to you for the preparation, distribution, and collection of the material, and space is left in the suggested instructions to heads of departments for the insertion of the name of such representative.

An effort has been made to arrive at some idea of a time schedule for the prosecution of this work and the following represents our present view of a possible schedule that might be set up to aim at, realizing that such a schedule may require change to meet actual conditions as the work develops:

- 1926 Jan. 1. Suggested forms reach Honolulu.  
 Feb. 1. Approved copies ready for printer.  
 " 15. Printed questionnaire and accompanying instructions distributed to departments.

## PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION SURVEY 413

- Apr. 1. Completed questionnaires returned to representative designated by you for the purpose.
- May 1. All material, including questionnaires, charts, and information as to functions, etc., of departments to be forwarded to Washington in the custody of your representative who is to assist in this study.
- Sept. 1. Your representative, together with member of working group, return to Honolulu with material and drafts of legislation and report.
- Dec. 1. Completed drafts to be presented to you.
- 1927 Feb. 16. Revised drafts to be presented to legislature.

It will be noted, too, that in these instructions to heads of departments spaces have been left for the insertion of dates for completion of the work of preparing the questionnaires for distribution, for their distribution, for return to department heads, and for forwarding to your representative.

If the foregoing time schedule should meet with your approval, the dates to be inserted in these instructions would come within the period February 15 to April 1, probably allowing about ten days for the first step, five for the second, fifteen for the third, and the remainder for the fourth.

The Commission is pleased to have the opportunity of cooperating in what it considers to be an effort to place the personnel administration of the Territorial Government on the same advanced ground as is being undertaken with relation to its fiscal operations, with which it is so closely linked.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) William C. Deming  
President.

Enclosures 1, 2, 3, and 4.

**THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII**  
**SURVEY OF POSITIONS, SALARIES,**  
**AND WORKING CONDITIONS**  
 (To be filled out in accordance with the detailed in-  
 structions which accompany this questionnaire)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

**TO BE FILLED OUT FIRST BY DEPARTMENT, INSTITUTION, OR AGENCY**

Department, Institution, or Agency.....  
 Name of employee ..... Title of position .....  
 Organization unit ..... Rate of pay \$..... per ..... Pay roll No. ....  
 Is this a permanent, full time position which is to be kept filled the year round? ..... If the answer is no, give the facts regarding the  
 employment. (Yes or No)

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY EMPLOYEE (TYPEWRITING PREFERRED)**

1. (a) What is the name of your immediate official superior? (see instructions) .....  
 ..... (b) What is his title? .....
2. Where is your place of work? ..... Your telephone number ..... Branch .....  
 (City, town, or post office, name of institution or building or street and number)
3. (a) Do you hold any city, county, territorial, federal or other public position in addition to the one named in the heading above? .....  
 (Yes or No)  
 (b) If your answer is yes, give the name of the agency employing you, the title of the position, the salary and the amount of time you give to that  
 work .....
4. (a) Is any part of your salary paid by the federal government or by any agency other than the Territory of Hawaii? ..... (b) If  
 your answer is yes, give the name of the agency contributing to your salary ..... (Yes or No)  
 the amount it contributes, not including the amount paid by the Territory of Hawaii, \$..... and the aggregate amount you receive  
 from all sources for the work of your position, \$.....
5. What is your present rate of pay? \$..... per ..... (month, week, day, or hour).
6. What yearly rate is equivalent to your present pay? \$..... per year (see instructions).
7. (a) Are you paid for overtime work? ..... (b) If your answer is yes, give the rate, \$..... per .....  
 (Yes or No)
- (c) Give your best estimate of the amount received for overtime work in the past twelve months, \$.....
8. (a) Do you receive in addition to your salary any allowance, perquisite, or privilege? ..... (b) If your answer is yes, indicate the  
 (Yes or No)



allowance, perquisite, or privilege by placing a cross after each of those received: Furnished house ( ), Unfurnished house ( ), Furnished room ( )  
Unfurnished room ( ), 3 Meals daily ( ), 2 Meals daily ( ), 1 Meal daily ( ), Laundry ( ), Light ( ), Heat ( ), Fuel ( ), Uniforms or  
clothes ( ), Use of automobile (see instructions) ( ), Any other allowance ( ) (Specify). (c) Are the allowances for yourself  
only, or for yourself and family? Self only ( ), Self and family ( ). (c) What do you estimate the allowances are worth per year? \_\_\_\_\_

9. (a) What supplies, uniforms, equipment, if any, must you furnish at your own expense? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What did you spend for them in the past twelve months \$ \_\_\_\_\_

10. What are your regular hours of work (exclude overtime and time off for meals)? (a) Number per regular day \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Time of be-  
ginning regular day \_\_\_\_\_ (c) Hour of ending regular day? \_\_\_\_\_ (d) Time off for meals? \_\_\_\_\_ (e) Number of working  
hours on Saturday or other short day? \_\_\_\_\_ (f) Hour of beginning short day? \_\_\_\_\_ (g) Hour of ending short day? \_\_\_\_\_  
(h) Number of hours regularly worked on Sunday? \_\_\_\_\_ (i) Net regular working hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_

11. (a) How much overtime do you estimate you work? \_\_\_\_\_ hours per \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Does overtime come at regular periods?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (c) If your answer is yes, state when it comes and give briefly the nature of the work which requires it \_\_\_\_\_  
(Yes or No)

12. (a) Are you customarily allowed some vacation leave with pay? \_\_\_\_\_ (b) If your answer is yes, give number of days per year \_\_\_\_\_  
(Yes or No)

13. (a) If you are kept from work by illness, do you customarily receive sick leave with pay? \_\_\_\_\_ (b) If your answer is yes, give  
(Yes or No)  
the number of days you were absent with pay on account of illness in the past twelve months \_\_\_\_\_

14. (a) Are you charged for tardiness? \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Are you charged for brief periods of time off? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Yes or No) (Yes or No)

15. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ 16. When were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ 17. What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, town, or county of Hawaii, state of continental U. S. or country if foreign born) (Month, day, year) (Male or female)

18. (a) Are you single ( ), married ( ), widowed ( ), or divorced ( )? (b) If you are or have been married how many children under 18 years  
of age are dependent on you for support? \_\_\_\_\_

19. (a) Have you a husband, wife, father, mother, son or daughter, brother or sister in the employ of the Territorial Government? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Yes or No)

(b) If your answer is yes, give name of relation, relationship, title of position held, and salary \_\_\_\_\_

20. In what year did you first enter the employ of the Territorial Government? \_\_\_\_\_ 21. How many years in all have you been  
in the employ of the Territorial Government? \_\_\_\_\_ 22. How long have you been in your present position, performing substantially  
your present duties? \_\_\_\_\_

23. (a) Have you served in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps? \_\_\_\_\_ (b) If your answer is yes, give branch of service, dates of en-  
(Yes or No)  
listment and discharge, rank held, and foreign service if any \_\_\_\_\_

24. What has been your education? (draw ring around highest year completed in each type of school)

(a) Elementary School, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8      Business School  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1, 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2, 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 3      College, 1, 2, 3, 4  
 High School, 1, 2, 3, 4      Normal School, 1, 2, 3, 4      Professional or Graduate, 1, 2, 3, 4

Other schools, extension courses, or correspondence courses (specify type and years) .....

..... (b) If you hold any degree from a college or professional school, give degrees, the names of the institutions conferring them, the dates conferred, and your field of specialization if any .....

25. By filling in the form below show your previous employments, if any, before entering your present position.

Name of employer	Business	Kind of position held	Length of employment	
			Years	Months
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

26. (a) Do you in any way direct or supervise other employees? ..... (b) If your answer is yes, indicate briefly the nature of the supervision or direction you exercise (see instructions) .....

(c) Show the number of persons you supervise by filling in the following form (see instructions).

Name of employee, kind of position, or organization unit	Number	Name of employee, kind of position, or organization unit	Number
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....

27. Describe in detail the work you do. Give a separate paragraph to each distinct duty, task or process. If they follow each other in a natural sequence describe them in that order. If they are not related, describe first those that require most of your time. Put occasional duties last. Number each paragraph and in the column to the left opposite the paragraph number enter the approximate percentage of your working time devoted to the work described in that paragraph.

Percentage of  
working time

I hereby certify that all my answers to questions numbered 1 to 27 inclusive on this questionnaire are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date .....

.....  
Signature.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY SUPERVISING OFFICERS OF EMPLOYEE**

Question	(a) Answer of Immediate Superior	(b) Answer of Department Head or Representative
<p>28. Are the statements of the employee substantially correct? If not indicate in what respect they require modification.</p>		
<p>29. What minimum education must an employee possess to fill such a position at all?</p>		
<p>30. What education is it desirable that employee should possess to fill such a position with complete satisfaction?</p>		
<p>31. What, if any, prior experience must an employee have had to fill such a position? Indicate nature and extent.</p>		
<p>Signature _____</p>		
<p>Title _____</p>		

THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII  
SURVEY OF POSITIONS, SALARIES, AND WORKING  
CONDITIONS

MEMORANDUM TO EACH EMPLOYEE IN THE SERVICE OF THE  
TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT

Subject: Detailed instructions regarding filling out questions 1 to 27 inclusive of the questionnaire describing the position occupied by the employee.

INSTRUCTIONS TO EMPLOYEES

HOW TO FILL OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE

At the next session of the legislature matters affecting the personnel of the government of the Territory of Hawaii will come up for consideration. So that the legislature may have the essential facts regarding conditions of employment, salaries, wages, and so forth, a general survey is being made of all positions in the government of the Territory.

The most important part of this survey is a fairly complete description of the position and the conditions pertaining to it, to be furnished by the person who occupies the position. This description is to be secured through answers to the questions contained on a questionnaire. With this sheet of instructions you will receive two copies of the questionnaire.

You will note that the heading has already been filled out with your name, your department, institution, or agency, your title and salary rate. If you do not find this information correct, take the matter up with your immediate superior.

Any other questions which arise in connection with filling out the questionnaires should be taken up with your immediate superior. He is instructed to give you whatever help you may need in connection with it.

Before you attempt to answer any of the questions on the questionnaire read these instructions and all the questions on the questionnaire thoroughly. Be sure that you understand all the questions as they apply to your position before answering any of them.

When you are sure that you know what is wanted, prepare the answers to the questions.

*If you typewrite*, you should type your answers on the questionnaire, making the ribbon copy on the heavier cream colored copy and a carbon on the lighter weight blue copy. You may find it better to write a first draft of your answers on ordinary paper before copying them on the questionnaire. In such case you may keep the first draft if you wish to. Both copies of the questionnaire itself are to be turned in to the person who gave them to you.

*If you do not typewrite*, you should, if possible, prepare your answers on separate sheets and have them copied by some employee who does

typewrite. You may then retain your hand-written copy of the answers. The typewritten copies will be turned in. If it is impossible or very inconvenient for you to get your answers typewritten on the questionnaire, you may fill them out in longhand.

Your full cooperation is asked in order that the questionnaire may be an accurate description of your position. The following instructions deal specifically with the separate questions asked on the questionnaire.

In question 1 you are asked to give the name of your immediate official superior. The name to be given here is that of the person who is directly over you, who assigns you work or tells you what you are to do or gives you general directions. Do not give the name of the head of the department or his principal assistant unless you do, as a matter of fact, work directly under him and receive your instructions and your work assignments directly from him. If you are one of a group over which there is a group head, group leader, section chief, division chief, foreman, forewoman, or other similar administrative person, give the name of that person. The answers to this question are used principally to show how the different positions fit together in the organization. To report that you receive instructions from some one other than the head of the office, or his assistant, does not detract from his prestige or from your own. In large well-organized offices, the head of the office and his principal assistant work through others in exercising supervision over the office.

If your immediate superior has an official title, give that. If he has no formal official title, give the ordinary descriptive title that is used for his position in the office.

In question 2 you are asked where you work and what your telephone number is so that in case it is necessary to get in touch with you to secure further information it can be done easily. Give the city, town, or post office where you work; the name of the building and the room number if you work in a large office building; the street and number if in a small building; the name of the institution, if at an institution.

Question 3 asks if you hold any public position other than the one named in the heading of the questionnaire. It sometimes happens that an employee will give part of his time to one public position and part to another so that he is on two different public payrolls, filling two distinct positions. One may be a territorial position and the other federal, county, or municipal. If you hold another public position either regularly or occasionally you are asked to give the name of the agency employing you, the title of this other position, the salary you receive in it, and the time you give to it. You are asked to give this information even if the work in the second position is done entirely outside of the regular office hours of the position named in the heading.

Question 4 asks if any part of your salary is paid by the federal government or by any agency other than the Territory of Hawaii. In some cases cooperative agreements are entered into under which the state or territory will pay part of the salary and the federal government part for the sake of supporting a position in the work of which each has an interest. Sometimes private organizations will agree to pay part of the salary for work in which they are particularly interested. Question 4 re-

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lates to such arrangements, in which the employee holds only the one position but gets his pay from two different sources. If you work under such an agreement your answer to question 4a should be "Yes"; and under 4b you should give the name of the agency which contributes to your salary, the amount which that agency contributes, and the total amount which you receive for the work of this position from all sources.

Question 5 asks for your present rate of pay. If you are paid by the hour, give your hourly rate; if by the day, your daily rate; if by the week, your weekly rate, or if by the month, your monthly rate.

Question 6 should be answered by figuring out what yearly rate of pay would be equivalent to your present pay. If you are paid a daily rate, multiply this daily rate by the number of days a year which persons in your kind of positions ordinarily work under normal conditions. If you are employed by the hour, multiply your hourly rate by the number of hours you ordinarily work per week and the weekly rate thus obtained by the number of weeks a year which persons in your kind of positions ordinarily work under normal conditions. Do not include overtime. Overtime is provided for under question 7. What is wanted is an estimate of the annual rate of pay for a person in a position such as you occupy. You are not asked to give your actual earnings. You should not take out periods in which you were unemployed or absent without pay unless these periods were due to a normal and customary shutting down of the work. If the work was going on and others were employed in it, that time should be counted although you yourself were not employed.

Question 7 asks if you are paid for overtime work. If you are, you are asked to give the rate at which you are paid and your best estimate of the amount you have received in overtime pay in the past twelve months. You need not go back over payrolls or other records to be exact in your statement. A close estimate will be sufficient.

Question 8 asks if you receive any allowance, perquisite, or privilege in addition to your salary. The commoner allowances, perquisites, or privileges are listed on the questionnaire and if you receive any of them you should indicate which ones by making a cross after each of those which you receive. You will note that one of the allowances is "use of automobile." You should only mark this allowance with the cross in case a car is furnished for your exclusive use or for use under your exclusive direction or for the use of yourself and one or two others so that you have it frequently and can use it more or less as you need it. Do not report the use of a car if there is one assigned to your office or institution in which you ride occasionally or which is sometimes assigned to you for a special trip or in connection with a particular job. If you have the "say so" regarding the use of the car, report it, but if you can only use it when specially directed, do not report it.

You are asked to give an estimate of the total amount of the allowances, privileges, or perquisites you receive. How much in your judgment do these allowances, privileges, or perquisites add to your salary? What is wanted is your best estimate of what they are worth to you as part of your total compensation.

Question 9 asks about what you have to furnish at your own expense

in connection with your work. You are asked to write in the blank space a list of the things, if any, which you must use on your work and pay for out of your own pocket. You are asked for an estimate of what you spent for such supplies, uniforms, or equipment in the past twelve months.

Question 10 relates to your regular, normal hours of work. In answering this question do not include any overtime. Provision for overtime is made in the following question. Report Sunday hours only if you regularly and normally work on Sunday. In no case include in your working hours the time which you are off for meals.

Question 11 asks how much overtime you estimate you work. You may give the number of hours per day, per week, per month, or per year, whichever you can report most easily. If overtime comes at regular periods you are asked to report what these periods are and indicate briefly the particular part of your work which makes necessary regular periods of overtime.

Questions 12, 13, and 14 relate to leave of absence with pay. Question 12 covers vacation leave with pay; question 13 sick leave; and question 14 petty leave, for tardiness or brief periods of absence. Note that question 12b, regarding vacation leave, calls for the amount of vacation leave which you are customarily allowed in a year whereas question 13b, regarding sick leave, calls only for the amount of sick leave with pay actually taken in the past twelve months. Regarding vacation leave you yourself may not have taken that amount in the past twelve months. Regarding sick leave you are asked to report only the time which you were actually absent with pay because of illness in the past twelve months.

Question 15 asks where you were born. If you were born in Hawaii you should report the city, town, or county in which you were born. If you were born in continental United States, it is sufficient if you report the state. If you were born in a foreign country, give only the name of the country.

In answer to question 16, give the date of your birth.

Question 17 asks your sex. Answer by writing either male or female in the blank space.

Question 18a asks whether you are single, married, widowed, or divorced. The appropriate answer is to be indicated by a cross after the term that applies to your marital condition. Question 18b asks how many children under 18 years of age you have who are dependent upon you for support.

Question 19 is concerned with any close relatives you may have in the employ of the Territorial Government. It asks if you have a husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister in the service. If you have any relatives of these degrees of relationship in the service you are asked to give their names, the titles of the positions they hold in the Territorial Government, and their salaries.

Questions 20, 21, and 22 relate to the time you have been in the employment of the Territorial Government. Question 20 asks the year in which you first entered the service. If you have been in the service and then have resigned or otherwise separated from it and returned again, give



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the date you first entered and not the date of your re-entry. Question 21 calls for the sum total of all your periods of employment by the Territorial Government. If you have been in the Territorial service at different times, add all the periods of service together. Of these three questions, 22 requires the most thought to answer. It asks, "How long have you been in your present position, performing substantially your present duties." Do not give weight to the small changes that take place in your work from time to time, changes that would not make an impression on an outsider studying your position to learn its general nature. Give the time since the last change, if any, in your work which made you feel that your duties or responsibilities had been so radically altered that others would regard the change as material.

Question 23 asks if you have served in the Army, the Navy, or the Marine Corps. If you have served you are asked to give the branch of the service, the approximate dates of enlistment and discharge, the rank you held at the time of discharge, and if you have had foreign duty, a brief statement of that duty. If you served in the Army or Navy of one of the allies of the United States in the World War you should report that service under 21b, giving the name of the country with which you served.

Question 24 calls for a full statement of your education. You are requested to answer this question fully and with special care. To make it somewhat easier to answer, the different kinds of schools are listed in a column and opposite each are figures representing the grades or years in such schools. After the name of each kind of school you have attended, draw a ring around the figure which represents the highest grade or year you completed in that particular kind of school.

If you have attended some type of school not included in the list or have taken correspondence or extension courses, record the facts regarding them in the blank space after question 24a.

If you hold any degree from a college or professional school you are asked to give the degree, the name of the institution conferring it, the year conferred, and if you specialized in any particular field of study, a brief statement of that field.

If you have taken courses which in your opinion are essential or especially valuable as training for the position you occupy, it will be helpful if you will describe them briefly on a separate sheet and paste it to the upper edge of the back of the questionnaire.

In question 25 you are asked to record your previous employments, if any, before entering your present position. A form is provided in which you should enter the name of each employer, the kind of business in which the employer was engaged, the kind of position you held while you worked for him and the time you worked for him. If you have not room in the form to list your previous positions, you should record them on a separate sheet to be pasted to the upper edge of the back of the questionnaire.

If you have had so many different jobs with so many different employers that it seems to you impossible to remember them all or to record them, you need not attempt to make the list complete. Enter those that in your judgment are most important as giving you valuable experience for

your present position and over the form write "Partial List."

Question 26 asks, "Do you in any way direct or supervise others?" If you do, you are asked to indicate briefly the nature of the direction or supervision you exercise. It may be of some assistance to you in making your answer if certain of the commoner types of supervision are here briefly described.

1. Routine supervision: assigning routine work, preserving order and application to work, keeping time records.
2. Simple instruction and supervision: instructing employees in the details of their work according to plans laid down by official superior, reviewing work for conformity with instructions; assigning work to individual employees.
3. Planning work of employees and directly supervising the employees in their performance of it.
4. Planning work and exercising general direction over its performance by supervising assistants who are immediately in charge of the direct supervision of the employees.
5. Exercising general direction, passing on major matters of policy, reviewing plans and decisions of assistants and subordinates.

These descriptions are given merely as suggestions to indicate the type of answers desired. If one of them fits your work, use it. If one would do with some changes, make those changes. If none seems to fit your particular position, write one that does.

Part c of question 26 contains a blank to be filled in to show exactly how many employees are under your supervision and what they do.

*If you have supervision over less than nine employees, write the last name of each of these employees on a line in the form and then give the title of his work so that the filled form looks like this:*

Example:

Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number	Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number
Jones—Stenographer	1	White—Messenger	1
Smith—File Clerk	1		
Green—Bookkeeper	1		
Brown—Typist	1		

*If you have supervision over more than nine employees in the same organization unit write the title of each class of position you supervise on a separate line and give the number of each class so that the filled form will look like this:*

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Example:

Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number	Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number
Stenographers	3	General Clerks	3
Typists	3	Adding Machine Operators	2
File Clerks	2	Messenger	1
Bookkeepers	2		

If you have supervision over more than one organization unit write the name of each organization unit on a line in the form and give the number of employees in that unit so that the filled form will look like this:  
Example:

Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number	Name of Employee, Class of Position, or Organization Unit	Number
Immediate Office	3	Registration Division	15
Bookkeeping Division	8	Drivers' Permits Division	10
Title Division	10	Files	15

Question 27 asks you to describe in detail the work you do. It is the most important question on the questionnaire. Go into detail. If you have not space enough on the questionnaire for all your answer write it on separate sheets and paste it to the upper edge of the questionnaire at the back. Do not use broad general terms without modification. They are not definite. Here are suggestions for certain kinds of work. Read them even if you do not do that kind of work because they may help to suggest the kinds of answers wanted.

*Stenography:* Never say stenography without further amplification. Tell from whom you take dictation. Describe the general nature of the subject matter. If the subject matter is varied, describe. If you compose some of your own letters, state that fact. If you report any meetings or conferences, tell what conferences and give briefly their nature. If your position requires you to have unusual speed and accuracy as a stenographer, so state and tell why. If you are a stenographer-secretary to an official, tell what you do as secretary in addition to stenography.

*Typing:* Never say typing without further amplification. Tell what you type, whether name cards, tabular forms, rough draft, scientific manuscripts, or whatever it is. If you believe that the typing is particularly difficult, show what makes it difficult. If you compose your own letters and typewrite them be sure that you state that fact clearly.

*Filing:* Never say filing without further amplification. Tell what you file, correspondence, application forms, title registration cards, vouchers,

certificates, or whatever it may be. Tell how you file them, numerically, alphabetically, geographically, or by subject. If you keep an index, a "follow up," or a charge system, so state and describe it briefly. If you have to summarize or brief the material, report that fact. If you think your position requires the exercise of judgment, tell what you do that requires judgment.

*Bookkeeping or Accounting:* Never say bookkeeping without further amplification. Tell what books you keep, what bookkeeping, adding, and computing machines you use. If your work requires you to know thoroughly some particular subject matter, so state clearly. If you feel that your position is specially responsible, give the facts that show that responsibility.

*General Clerical Work:* Describe your general clerical work with particular care. Tell exactly what you have to do and if your work requires you to know some particular subject matter or procedure thoroughly, show what you do that requires that knowledge.

*Technical, Professional, or Scientific Work:* Answers such as "engineering work," "chemistry," or "forestry" are absolutely unsatisfactory. Go into detail so that another engineer, another chemist, or another forester could understand the position. If you do work requiring an advanced knowledge of your subject, describe that work so that the requirement will be apparent. If your work involves special responsibility, give the facts. Sometimes the best way to make the duties statement clear is to use typical tasks as illustrations. Avoid the unusual or exceptional task that occurs once in a lifetime as they cannot serve as the basis for classification. The tasks used as illustrations should be such as are typical of the duties occurring time and time again.

In the column at the right you are asked to show the percentage of your time given to your different duties. Everyone understands that ordinarily you cannot distribute your time exactly. Give your best estimate. Try to put on paper the best possible picture of your job.

Enclosure No. 3

THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII

SURVEY OF POSITIONS, SALARIES, AND WORKING  
CONDITIONS

Subject: Instructions regarding the preparation of the questionnaires describing the positions in the department, institution, or agency.

At the next session of the legislature questions regarding the personnel administration of the Territorial Government will come up for consideration. So that these questions may be considered in the light of the facts, it is proposed at this time to make a survey of the positions in the Territorial Government, the salaries paid, and the conditions under which the work is done. The necessary facts are to be secured by having a questionnaire filled out by or for each employee who is on the payroll of the Territorial Government as of . . . . . These questionnaires will be analyzed and classified and from them statistics will be prepared so that when the legislature meets it will have all the data necessary for a thorough consideration of the various matters relating to personnel administration.

Responsibility for having the questionnaires properly filled out will be placed upon the heads of the several departments, institutions, or agencies. The head of the department, institution, or agency or some one he designates to act for him will be expected to furnish a questionnaire, properly filled out, for each and every employee on the payroll of his department, institution, or agency, together with a transcript of the payroll as of that date.

The first step should be the preparation, in duplicate, of the necessary transcript of the payroll. Carbon copies of the actual roll will be entirely satisfactory. If the names on the roll are not already numbered, they should be numbered in sequence as they come on the roll.

When the transcript of the payroll has been completed, preliminary entries should be made upon the questionnaires, in duplicate, in order to prepare them for submission through the customary channels of authority to each employee. To prepare the questionnaire for submission, fill in on a typewriter the name of the department, institution, or agency, the name of the employee, the organization unit in which he works, the title of his position, his rate of pay, and his number on the transcript of the payroll. The ribbon copy should be made on the heavier cream colored questionnaire, the carbon copy on the blue light weight one.

By the term "organization unit" is meant the first major subdivision of the department, institution, or agency.

The rate of pay should be the normal or usual rate. Generally it is the amount which the employee is actually paid according to the roll, but it sometimes happens that in a few cases the actual payments are less than

the rate of pay. New employees may have worked less than the full payroll period. Some old employees may have been absent without pay. In such cases the rate of pay is wanted, not the actual amount paid.

You are then asked to state whether the position covered by the questionnaire is a permanent full-time position which is to be kept filled the year round. If the position is temporary, seasonal, part time, or a combination of any of them, your answer should be "No."

If the position is temporary, give its duration to date and its probable duration.

If the position is seasonal, give the months during which the position is filled.

If the position is part time, give the time worked and a brief statement of the reasons for a part-time position.

As the questionnaires are prepared, check the name of the employee on the two transcripts of the payroll using an ordinary (V) check mark.

When the preliminary entries have been made on the questionnaires, they should be distributed to the employees through the usual official channels. Bureau heads, division heads, section chiefs, and foremen should be given an adequate supply of the questionnaires, and requested to distribute them to all the employees working under their direction or supervision. Each employee should receive his questionnaire from his immediate superior.

When the questionnaires are distributed to the employees, the original and the carbon for each employee should be enclosed in a copy of the detailed instructions, copies of which are supplied with the questionnaires. Unless each employee has a copy of instructions "How to Fill out the Questionnaire," he will not be able to execute it properly.

In so far as possible each employee should himself answer all questions from 1 to 27. If the employee is not able independently to fill out the questionnaire, his immediate superior may give him all the assistance he needs. In case of necessity the immediate superior may even go so far as filling it out for the employee; but the statement of the employee himself is preferred. If the employee cannot use the typewriter, he may write out the answers in longhand on the questionnaire and the duplicate thereof, or, preferably, write his answers on a separate sheet and have them typewritten on the questionnaire and the duplicate by some other employee in the organization.

If several employees are engaged on the same work it is better to let each of them describe it in his own way. The several descriptions taken together generally give a better picture of the job than is the case if some one person prepares a description which they all copy. In aiding employees remember that what is wanted is a description of what they actually do, not a statement of why they do it. Administrators are likely to think of the purpose of the work and sometimes describe that instead of what the employees actually do to accomplish that purpose.

After the employee has completed his answers, he should return the questionnaire and the carbon to his immediate superior. The immediate superior should then answer questions 28a, 29a, 30a, and 31a. In case

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the space on the questionnaire is not sufficient for the answers of the immediate superior he should have them typewritten on a separate sheet which should be pasted to the upper edge of the back of the questionnaire.

Each person should return his own questionnaire and the carbon and those for any persons subordinate to him to his own immediate superior. The head of the department, or some one designated to act for him, should answer questions 28b, 29b, 30b, and 31b.

Question 28 asks, "Are the statements of the employee substantially correct?" If not, both the immediate superior and the head of the department or his representative are asked to indicate in what respect the employee's answers require modification. If the employee has forgotten to mention any duties, the immediate superior or the department head should use this space for amplifying the answer.

Note that question 29 deals with the minimum education necessary for the work whereas question 30 deals with desirable education. Question 29 asks for the very least education which is absolutely necessary. If the minimum is "no education," so state. If it is merely ability to read and write, give that. Under question 30 should be given the education which the immediate superior and the department head think the employee in the position ought to have to enable the employee to give complete satisfaction.

When the questionnaires have been returned to the head of the department or his representative, they should again be checked against the numbered transcript of the payroll. A cross (X) should now be used to distinguish the return from the check mark (V) which indicated preparation of the questionnaire. When all the questionnaires are in, the originals and the carbons should be separated. The originals should be arranged in numerical order according to the payroll number and transmitted, with the transcript of the payroll, to ..... The carbons should be similarly arranged and be retained for reference by the department head.

The questionnaires should be prepared and ready for distribution to the employees not later than .....

Not later than ..... they should be distributed.

Not later than ..... they should be back in the office of the department head.

Not later than ..... they should be returned to .....  
..... with the transcript of the payroll.

Enclosure No. 4

December 18, 1925.

Memorandum for the Hon. Raymond C. Brown,  
Secretary of State for Hawaii.

Subject: Informative material to supplement questionnaires.

The evaluation of the difficulty and importance of a position depends upon the duties performed and the responsibility resting upon the employee for the finality of his product, and in the case of supervisory positions upon the amount of authority delegated to the supervisor and the degree to which he is held responsible for results.

It is necessary, therefore, in undertaking to classify and to determine the economic worth of positions, to have a very clear idea of the location of the position in the organization scheme, and the flow of authority through that organization.

Information is needed in addition to that secured through the questionnaires which cover the duties of individual positions. This information should comprise:

1. Graphic charts showing the type of organization and the flow of authority.
2. Statements of the functions of departments and subdivisions of departments.

Organization charts may be prepared on any convenient size paper. If a department is small the chart can be drawn on one sheet; if large several sheets may be required. Where several sheets are required the first or key chart should show the head of the organization and the major subdivisions. Then a separate chart may be made for each of these major subdivisions. In some cases, where the department is large or finely divided, it may be necessary to show major subdivisions and the sections or units which it is divided into on a separate chart, and the further division of the various sections on separate charts for each section.

In any event the charts which show the smallest units should contain the surnames of the employees in each unit and opposite each name the serial number which has been given that employee on the payroll and entered on the questionnaire. Similarly the key charts should show by name and number the head of department and the head of each major subdivision shown thereon.

Accompanying the organization charts should be a concise statement of the functions of the department, of each major subdivision, and of each of the smaller units. These statements should range from the general for the department as a whole to the particular for the smallest units.

In brief, the idea is to present a succinct description of the duties performed in each unit of the organization, with titles of the various subdivisions corresponding to those given on the charts so that the two can be brought together with the questionnaires and the actual operations of the



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department visualized as to functions, flow of work, and lines of authority.

This material may be supplemented by still more general information such as may be contained in the statutes creating departments and allotting functions among them, reports made by departments discussing their operations, etc.

Samples of a chart are attached which show a convenient method of outlining an organization. [Not included in this appendix.]

No. 1 is a key chart for the Veterans' Bureau.

No. 2 is a detailed chart for one of the subdivisions shown on the key chart.

No. 3 is for another such subdivision.

It will be seen that on these charts a brief statement is made of the functions of each unit and the number and kinds of employees given.

The mechanical difficulties of stating functions on such a chart and afterward reducing it to convenient size makes it desirable in the case of the Territorial Government to submit function statements separately. Instead of number and kinds of employees our suggestion is that surnames and serial number of employees be given on the charts.

(Signed) GUY MOFFETT

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