

Report
Of the Committee on
Broadcasting & Information Media
on
Press Information & Publicity

COMMITTEE
ON
BROADCASTING AND INFORMATION MEDIA

REPORT ON
PRESS INFORMATION & PUBLICITY

C O N T E N T S

		<u>PARAGRAPHS</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
	INTRODUCTION	1 - 14	1 - 3
<u>Chapter</u>			
I.	HISTORY OF THE PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU.	15 - 36	3 - 7
II.	THE FUNCTIONS OF PIB.	37 - 94	7 - 13
	Press Conferences	45	8
	Press Briefings	47	9
	Conducted Tours	61	12
	Publicity in an Emergency	65	12
	The Press Adviser	75	15
	Accreditation of Correspondents.	33	16
	Press and Public Opinion Analysis.	89	17
III.	PIB'S SERVICES	95 - 148	18 - 37
	Handouts	99	19
	Features	106	20
	Background material.	111	21 - 21
	General.	114	21 - 22
	Photo Service and Photo Library.	115	22
	Ebonoid Service.	142	26
IV.	THE REFERENCE SERVICE.	149 - 162	27 - 32
V.	REGIONAL AND BRANCH OFFICES.	163 - 181	32 - 36
VI.	DISTRIBUTION ARRANGEMENTS.	182 - 201	36 - 39
VII.	RE-ORGANIZATION.	202 - 309	39 - 58
	Redefinition of Functions.	227	43
	Relations with Government.	245	46
	Evaluation.	254	48
	Staffing.	259	49
	SUMMARY		1 - xiii
	ANNEXURE		xiv

INTRODUCTION

The operation of government in a complicated modern State needs the machinery of public information as an integral part of its administrative apparatus. The collectivism of the Twentieth Century has given a new meaning and purpose to the State. The regulation of the economic life of the nation has now become one of its more important functions. The gradual acceptance of the welfare concept has enlarged its regulatory functions; and its involvement in the everyday life of the citizen has become extensive and more intimate. This underlines the imperative of keeping people informed of the plans, policies and activities of the State and the considerations which have shaped them.

2. The developed democracies of the West have a well-organised press and a large number of daily newspapers with extensive circulation. Though they have their own comprehensive arrangements for collection of news and other material of interest to the community, they have to be fed continuously with information on governmental activities and the trends of their domestic and foreign policies. This consideration has induced even countries like the United States and the United Kingdom to establish and maintain high-level and competent information units, both centralised and de-centralised.

3. The need for a well-organised official agency of information is more important, even insistent in a comparatively under-developed country with inadequate facilities and difficulties in reaching the people. This need becomes more pronounced in a society embarked on a planned development of its economic and industrial potential and its social services. Government has perforce to play a more positive role in disseminating information, both directly and through the press and through news agencies.

4. In India, the State-controlled All India Radio, the Films Division, the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, the Publications Division and the Song and Drama Division are the agencies created for dissemination of information and education directly by the State. These are supplemented by the Press Information Bureau which utilises the press for the purpose.

5. The bureau has three major functions: first to provide an information service to the press on the activities of various departments and agencies of government, secondly to feed the resident foreign correspondents with news and background material to give them a correct appreciation of happenings in India, their causes and the corrective measures planned, and thirdly to keep government informed of press and public reactions to its activities. Any deficiency in fulfilling these three functions in a responsible and purposeful manner constitutes a reflection on the bureau.

6. In regard to foreign publicity, it may well be that the postures and policies of government do not create a good press in all the foreign countries. But our Ministry of External Affairs, missions abroad and PIB have the responsibility of presenting and explaining events in their proper perspective and meaning. There has been a great deal of criticism of our

foreign publicity and our missions abroad have borne the brunt of this criticism. It has, however, to be realised that a contributory factor has been our inability to explain our domestic policies and developments properly, correctly and in an acceptable form to the foreign press.

7. For one thing, while the coverage of foreign news in our dailies is appreciable, Indian news in most of the foreign papers is scanty and negligible. The importance different countries attach to our country influences the extent of Indian news coverage in their respective presses. But, the fact that the flow of news from India is not continuous, well-organised or convincing, cannot be overlooked or ignored.

8. Most influential foreign newspapers have their own correspondents in India and several news agencies have resident representatives. They rely almost exclusively on the reports sent out by their representatives and agencies. Some of them indulge in sensational journalism and give prominence to isolated events which are of little significance and do not find even a mention in the Indian press. It is here that the PIB should attempt a corrective by giving important information in precise and objective terms, varying the emphasis to meet the requirements of the correspondents concerned, developing cordial relations; mutual understanding and confidence and removing petty inconveniences which cause them irritation.

9. In regard to internal publicity, the deficiencies are many. We confine our observations at this stage only to the inability of our newspapers to serve the rural areas, their need for information and the role PIB should play in filling this void. There is a sizeable English press in India with a respectable circulation. Along with the Indian language press, also based in the major cities, it caters to the city dwellers. The selection of news is, therefore, limited to items which would be of interest to them. By and large, news from small towns and the villages does not find a place in these papers. Conversely, their circulation in these regions is also small.

10. The need remains to inform and educate the rural community, to bring it news of local interest and to educate it in matters vital to its progress and prosperity, such as agricultural production, health and hygiene, family planning and literacy, depicting achievements in these fields both in India and elsewhere. This can be done by small regional and language papers. But their growth has been hesitant and even retarded largely because of illiteracy. Their small circulation and insufficient advertisement revenue come in the way of their becoming self-supporting. They can be sustained only if they are provided with services which are beyond their resources to organise. For example, they cannot afford subscriptions to news agencies or pay for illustrations, photographs, etc. They have also the problem of translating the news and features received from outside sources. They cannot maintain a reference unit or employ correspondents to collect news. It is in these areas that PIB can come to their assistance by providing support and services in a

larger measure. But, in doing so, it should not give any grounds for being accused of interfering with the freedom of expression and editorial policy.

11. The Committee on Small Newspapers has already examined the problem in detail. We do not, therefore, propose to cover the same ground, but in recommending the re-organization of PIB one of the important considerations we have kept in mind is the necessity of its extending to small newspapers a helping hand so as to enable them to develop and grow.

12. In general terms, PIB, to be of use to government itself, must provide factual information faithfully and operate with moderation and judgment to avoid being looked upon as a vehicle of propaganda in support of the political party in power. We appreciate that propaganda has its place. Campaigns would be unquestionably justified on questions above public dispute such as literacy, agricultural production, sanitation, etc. In fact, in a developing economy such as ours, the success of our planning effort depends largely on propagating its objectives and in highlighting its achievements. This must, however, be done without attempting to project even indirectly any individual or any party.

13. Care should also be taken to ensure that in giving assistance to the press, no attempt is made to discriminate and to influence editorial policy. As a necessary adjunct of a democratic State, the purpose of PIB should be to play a useful and constructive role in fostering the growth of a strong and a free press. Our study and recommendations have been designed to ensure that this basic principle is ingrained in the future development of this important medium of communication.

14. In conclusion, we acknowledge our debt of gratitude to our Consultant, Shri Chanchal Sarkar, Director, Press Institute of India. His expert advice and assistance were of great value to us in the study of the complicated subject of the place and purpose of an official information agency in a democratic society.

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

15. It was in 1878, after the passage of the Vernacular Press Act; that the Government of India appointed a Press Commissioner to give official information to the press. But the Commission was short-lived; with the repeal of the Act in 1881 the Commission was abolished. The idea of an official organ of publicity was revived at the end of World War I and a Central Publicity Board with representatives of the Army, the Foreign and Political Department and three newspaper correspondents was constituted and placed under the Home Department. The board controlled and co-ordinated the work of a number of publicity boards set up in the provinces.

16. The Central Board also had a short life and was replaced in June 1919 by a cell in the Home Department primarily to prepare an annual report on India for presentation to the British Parliament. It was given the additional responsibility

of distributing information on all-India questions to the press and the public and to keep departments of government informed on matters on which public opinion was exercised. It had also a supervisory function over the Provincial Publicity Boards which were continued. In 1920, the cell was designated 'The Central Bureau of Information' with Dr. Rushbrook Williams as Director, and in June 1923 it was re-designated 'The Bureau of Public Information'.

17. The Round Table Conference brought home to the British authorities the necessity for establishing a closer contact with the Indian press and to feed it with correct information. The Director of Information in the India Office visited India in 1935 to re-organise the bureau to enable it to present factual material required by the press. He defined the functions of the bureau, outlined the principles to be borne in mind and laid down detailed procedures for the issue of official releases, the provision of background material, the answering of queries, and the holding of press conferences. As a result, a publicity organization, with its staff recruited from among journalists, and the head designated as Principal Information Officer, came into being in 1938. The bureau became the channel for the flow of information from all departments of the Central Government to the press.

18. At the outbreak of the War in 1939, the bureau and All India Radio were brought together under the Directorate of Information and Broadcasting in the Home Department. When in 1941 the Viceroy's Executive Council was expanded and a separate department of Information and Broadcasting was created, the bureau was transferred to its control. The Chief Press Censor, later designated Chief Press Adviser, continued, however, to be attached to the Home Department.

19. It became necessary for the Bureau not only to provide factual information to the press in India but also to advise the British Government on various matters concerning publicity in India. The bureau also instituted a number of special services. Besides the preparation of an increasing number of press notes, it set up a press clippings service, expanded photo publicity, distributed ebonoid blocks on behalf of the British Ministry of Information, arranged press conferences for important foreign visitors and for the Cripps and other Missions, brought out a journal 'Indian Information', initiated some special publicity schemes, classified newspapers according to their editorial policy and evolved certain publicity procedures. Greater attention was given to Indian language papers, which had shown reluctance to accept government material, by a careful selection of material, by the avoidance of propaganda and by raising the level of translation and news presentation. Publicity for the defence services was looked after separately by the Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate. Branch Offices of the bureau were also opened in some of the provinces.

20. After the end of the War, in 1946 the name of the organization was changed to the PIB and after Independence its functions were considerably enlarged. It was required

not only to give factual information about the activities of government but also to interpret news and government policies providing, where necessary, background material designed to obtain public support for programmes and objectives of national development. Information work relating to the armed forces was also re-transferred to the administrative control of the P.I.O.

21. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is responsible for controlling and co-ordinating the working of all the media of mass communication under government control and in particular for giving publicity to the activities and policies of government. The PIB is the agency through which the ministry functions in its relations with the press.

22. The P.I.O. is the head of the PIB. He is supported by three Directors of Public Relations, nine Deputy Principal Information Officers, thirty Information Officers and sixtyone Assistant Information Officers. His functions are extensive and comprehensive. The major ones are broadly (a) to advise government on matters pertaining to publicity through the medium of the press, (b) to act as the spokesman of government to explain and interpret its policies and to provide factual information about governmental activities, (c) to undertake public relations work on behalf of government with newspaper editors, correspondents and others, (d) to provide material for publicity to other media units of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry and to the External Publicity Division of the External Affairs Ministry and also to writers who seek its assistance, (e) to report to government public re-actions to government policies and activities as reflected in the press and (f) to co-ordinate the work of the civil and defence wings.

23. It should be obvious that to fulfil these responsibilities the PIO should be given commensurate authority and administrative and financial powers. But it is not so. He has been given the status only of the head of an attached office. This places an undue curb on his powers and he has to seek the approval of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in many routine matters.

24. Each ministry has been provided with an Information Officer, drawn from the Central Information Service to keep the press informed of the ministry's policies and activities and to function as its spokesman in relation to the press. He is also expected to keep the ministry informed of the trends of public opinion.

25. In the case of certain ministries like Railways, Food and Agriculture, and Education, the officer is of the higher rank of Deputy Principal Information Officer and in the first two he functions as Director of Information ex-officio. As Director of Information, he supervises and co-ordinates publicity through all the media of communication with the help of the staff placed at his disposal by the ministry concerned.

26. The photo publicity unit, the feature unit, the press facilities unit, the Hindi and Urdu units and the public opinion analysis unit, and all work connected with conducted

tours, press clippings and analysis, are under Information Officers.

27. Information Officers are grouped in seven divisions, each under a Deputy Principal Information Officer. Matters of common interest to various ministries are co-ordinated at divisional meetings, while the PIO himself co-ordinates at inter-divisional level.

23. Six service sections, under an officer who belongs to the Central Secretariat Service, provide secretariat assistance, while four sections manned by Secretariat staff, working under Information Officers, provide technical assistance to officers engaged in publicity.

29. Information is purveyed to the press through different kinds of handouts, feature articles, photographs, etc., and also through oral briefings and conducted tours. Through 21 Information Centres, located mostly in the State Capitals, the PIB provides an information service to the general public also.

30. The written services are supplied in English and in 12 major Indian languages to newspapers and periodicals, Indian and foreign correspondents accredited to the Government of India, to units of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry and the External Publicity Division and to the community development information centres. The language versions are especially useful to small newspapers, most of which are in Indian languages and cannot afford to subscribe to the services of the news agencies. The PIB also issues a weekly digest of news to small periodicals.

31. In addition, journalists, authors and others selected from newspapers all over the country are conducted in small parties of about 15, to various development projects in different regions; each tour covering 30 to 40 projects.

32. Besides the news and feature photographs it supplies to papers, the bureau runs an eboid service three times a month for second line papers and periodicals which do not have resources to make blocks made from photos. Exhibition size photos dealing with development activities are also supplied to about 50 centres in the country for public display.

33. Through the daily press clippings service and press review analysis the various ministries are kept informed about public re-action to government policies and performance as reflected in newspaper comments, letters to the Editors, special articles, etc. The public opinion analysis unit draws also on reports from the PIB's regional offices and those prepared by the officers of The Directorate of Field Publicity. A monthly survey of public opinion is issued and special reviews are undertaken from time to time on important current topics. PIB services are also provided to the community development information centres.

34. The bureau's regional and branch offices in different regions are intended to provide publicity for the Central

Government offices located in their areas, to cover the visits of Central ministers and distribute publicity material to the press after translating it in the language of the region. They keep in touch with the local editors and pressmen, answer queries from the local press and analyse news in important papers in their regions for items of interest for transmission to the ministries concerned.⁷ They also maintain liaison with the State Directorates of Information.

35. The bureau has 19 such offices outside Delhi. The list of centres at which they are located is given in the Annexure. The languages in which they function and the areas they cover are also indicated in the Annexure. These offices are connected with headquarters by teleprinter on which important press material is transmitted to them for simultaneous release throughout the country. Four of these offices, located at important news centres, are under officers of the rank of Deputy Principal Information Officer, all the others are headed by Assistant Information Officers with the exception of those at Jullundur and Gauhati which are under Information Officers, and the one at Jammu which is under an Army Public Relations Officer. The regional offices at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras exercise supervision over the branch offices within their territorial jurisdiction.

36. The following table gives a comparative analysis of the growth of the PIB services in the last fifteen years:

	<u>1951</u>	<u>1965</u>
1) Number of releases issued.	9,167	66,335
2) Number of recipients on mailing list for releases.	2,500	4,065
3) Number of accredited press representatives.	65	253
4) Number of regional and branch offices.	3	19
5) Number of recipients of photographs.	127	1,048
6) Number of prints issued.	36,129	4,03,627
7) Number of recipients of ebonoids.	(service started in the year 1954-55)	1,464
8) Number of ebonoid blocks issued.	- do -	43,225**
9) Total strength of staff including Information Staff.	450	977
10) Total strength of Information (CIS) staff.	82	214

** This figure is less than the peak of 50,666 in 1956. The reduction is on account of shortage of ebonoid material, which is imported.

CHAPTER II THE FUNCTIONS OF PIB

37. By far the most important function of the PIO is to act as Information Adviser of Government on the volume, treatment and orientation of information about government's policy and activity through the press. The responsibility of planning

and co-ordinating the output of official information also devolves upon him. In the first place, the PIO has yet to develop and assert his role as the indispensable technical adviser to government on all matters pertaining to press publicity. This is due mainly to the comparatively low status he has been accorded in the official hierarchy. This again is largely responsible for his and his representatives being excluded when policy and other major questions are discussed in the Cabinet and the ministries. PIB is thus unable to prepare the press and the public for a new policy before it is announced. Nor is it in a position to study in detail the major problems of ministries, prepare an information brief on each problem and evolve a strategy to put it across in a purposeful manner. This is a vital lacuna and we discuss later in the chapter on Re-organization how best PIB could be equipped to fulfil its major role effectively.

38. The responsibility to ensure that the various policies of government are given expression in a coherent form, free of contradictions, devolves again upon PIB. But it is unable to fulfil this basic requirement because of organizational deficiencies. The function of co-ordination, which is the raison d'etre of a centralised agency, does not thus come to be realised to the detriment of policy execution. For example, when the declared policy of government is to hold the price line, shortages have to be so reported and phrased as not to lead to hoarding and blackmarketing. Yet this does not usually happen and the policy of government comes to be defeated by faulty publicity. There have also been instances of unseemly public disputes between ministries and attempts to disown and shift responsibility for a reported lapse.

39. The obvious remedy is to treat the Information Officer as a limb of the ministry to which he is posted and to invite him to be present at meetings when policy is discussed. He can thereby make the ministry aware of possible public reaction which should be taken into account in shaping policy finally. This association would also equip him better to plan necessary publicity and to elucidate points when questions are put to him in relation to the material released.

40. PIB itself concedes that in the present situation, it functions more or less in a routine manner releasing press notes prepared by the ministries concerned or handouts based on routine information provided by the ministries. It is not given the opportunity to plan purposeful publicity well ahead of an announcement. It also accepts the criticism that it is not equipped to present and orient material specially for the foreign press.

41. PIB is the purveyor of official information to the press. But its role as such has become circumscribed and limited mainly to being a clearing house for policy statements and recitals of official achievements at the behest of the ministries of government. The volume of its output is, however, considerable, and it remains to assess its worth and extent to which it is availed of by the press.

42. PIB organises publicity by issuing written releases of statements on policy and other matters of public interest

and also gives factual information on day to day activities of government. Its officers keep in constant touch with the press, both formally and informally, supplying answers to their queries, background material to the releases and any other information demanded.

43. In addition, it arranges press conferences for the Prime Minister or other ministers to announce and explain important policies and decisions of government and to answer questions by correspondents to clarify issues and thereby remove doubts and misgivings. Similarly it arranges regular briefings of the press by the Cabinet Secretary, after every Cabinet meeting, to announce and explain decisions taken by the Cabinet and occasional briefings by other senior officials in relation to matters within their competence.

44. The handouts and other material issued require detailed examination which we attempt later. We deal here briefly with press conferences and official briefings.

45. The press considers that the conferences tend to become routine affairs at which trivial matters are discussed to the exclusion of major policies and decisions. It has, therefore, suggested that when Parliament is not in session, all major decisions should be announced at press conferences, by those competent to explain their rationale and implications, and released simultaneously at all important newspaper centres. Even when Parliament is in session, a press conference should be held to explain issues arising out of an important announcement. It is by the adoption of these practices, it is urged, that press conferences can be given meaning and content. We endorse both the suggestions and also consider that the press should be given greater opportunities of meeting ministers to discuss major decisions so that their import can be better appreciated and interpreted and commented upon in editorials in a more informed and analytical manner.

46. We also commend the suggestion that as far as possible the Prime Minister should meet the press once a month, but a suitable procedure should be evolved by the Press Association in consultation with the Prime Minister's Information Adviser and the PIB to ensure that a few correspondents do not monopolise the proceedings and that time is not lost over irrelevant minor questions as often happens at present. Some convention should be established to make the conference really profitable to the press. Radio and TV correspondents should be able to cover such conferences as well as press correspondents. This requires that the hall in which such conferences are arranged should be properly equipped with the latest communication equipment. This is not the case at present. PIB should also have the necessary equipment for Film and TV correspondents to interview ministers and others.

47. The press also regards briefings by senior officials as essential for detailed information on and elucidation of complicated technical matters which are not dealt with by the Prime Minister and other ministers at press conferences.

48. The innovation of briefings by the Cabinet Secretary after Cabinet meetings has been welcomed, but it is urged that

he should deal with important issues leaving out routine legislative and other relatively unimportant matters. The briefings should be more intimate and seek to interpret and elaborate issues under discussion. When technical matters are likely to figure in the discussions, the Secretary of the ministry concerned or some other senior official should also be present to assist the Cabinet Secretary in giving detailed explanations.

49. As elsewhere, so in India, the press prefers to be briefed by the officials of ministries rather than by Information Officers and there is the demand for more frequent meetings with them to obtain more authentic information in greater detail. There is, however, a complaint by some that officials are not always forthcoming and are inclined to be somewhat reticent and guarded in replying to inconvenient questions and questions on matters of the moment of a controversial and delicate nature.

50. But, by and large, the press as a whole does not take this view. A suggestion has thus been moved that rather than expose officials to this situation in which incorrect inferences may be drawn causing embarrassment to government, it would be best to resort to the expedient adopted by the United States and the United Kingdom, that is, to build up and use a team of selected correspondents who can be depended upon to act with discretion without revealing its sources of information. Officials should be able to take it more fully into confidence and be frank in explaining the rationale of decisions, even giving a forecast of policies likely to be initiated. An additional advantage would be that such a team could be assembled at short notice and put in the picture. This would lead to editorials and comments being more precise than speculative.

51. We are somewhat hesitant in recommending this arrangement in an organised way. We would much rather have senior officials give background material, either individually or collectively, to selected editors and correspondents, who are not likely to misuse the confidence given.

52. As a general rule and a principle, we do not consider it healthy that senior officials should undertake frequently functions which correctly appertain to the PIB. The present deficiencies of PIB which give rise to such demands should be removed and it should be enabled to answer questions fully and convincingly. It should lean on senior officials only when the issues are of such importance and complexity as to be beyond the capability of PIB to handle satisfactorily. It is an important part of PIB's function to know when to put ministers and officials in direct touch with the press.

53. Specific arrangements exist to facilitate the work of correspondents who seek information and material from PIB. For example, they are received by the PIO and other Information Officers every afternoon for the purpose. The correspondents, however, complain that they are often unable to meet them as officers are frequently not available. They also make the point that news does not break only when Information Officers are available and there are no arrangements for verification and elucidation in such eventualities. Secondly, if a release is made after 5 p.m. even when an Information Officer is present, he is not able to provide additional information needed by the

press. Another complaint is that it is difficult for a correspondent to meet an Information Officer individually. These complaints should be met by reserving specifically an hour or so for individual meetings by appointment.

54. Another complaint is that when a journalist contacts the Information Officer for material and information for an exclusive story, it is the Information Officer who decides whether it should be exclusive. To avoid criticism of discrimination, he generally decides against it. This discourages individual initiative and a correspondent is hesitant to approach PIO. It induces him to explore other sources of information for a scoop or an exclusive story. It is difficult to suggest a solution, but we feel that generally the confidence of a correspondent should be respected.

55. The Information Officers' capacity to appreciate the technical aspects of the work of the ministries to which they are attached and to interpret them to the satisfaction of the press was questioned by several of our witnesses. This was suggested also as a factor which disinclines the press to rely on PIB for material needed.

56. It is also important that PIB should cultivate and establish more friendly relations with the editors of important and influential dailies. It is in evidence that editors hardly ever seek PIB's assistance. This is largely because PIB is not in a position to give them advance information or even material background information. They find approaches to senior officials more rewarding and informative.

57. In extenuation, we must say that PIB's difficulties are many. It suffers from the major handicap that publicity can hardly be a substitute for policy. The policy itself has to be precise, definitive and in harmony with the needs of the people. When it is not so, PIB can do little to secure its appreciation and acceptance. It would be unreasonable to blame PIB for this failure. We are also informed that PIB does not always receive from the ministries the information it requires and that even the annual reports and reports of committees appointed by government are not made available in sufficient numbers for distribution, giving rise to complaints and exposing PIB to the charge of discrimination.

58. When an Information Officer does not enjoy the confidence of the officials of the ministry, in some cases justifiably, either his role is usurped by the officials or, alternatively, he is required to put out what they want and in the form they demand. This detracts from the prestige of PIB, heightened by the inability of the Information Officer, who has been left out in the cold, to give any worthwhile information to supplement the written handout.

59. In many cases, we are told the Information Officer tends to become more a Public Relations Officer of the minister than of the ministry. And he considers his duties fulfilled in organising exclusive interviews for correspondents in return for personal publicity for the minister. We must deprecate this tendency and stress the importance of giving the Information Officer his rightful place and functions in the organization of a ministry.

60. We would reiterate what we have said in our earlier reports that there must be the realization that effective communication with the people is an imperative in the working of government. It is only when sufficient resources are allocated to the information services and their status made comparable to the administrative services that it would be possible to re-organise them properly, man them with talented people and bring about accord and harmony which can exist only between equals.

61. As a part of its overall responsibility for publicity PIB also organises conducted tours of groups of correspondents to major development projects from time to time. This arrangement has come in both for condemnation and commendation.

62. Those who oppose the scheme contend that the rushed visits do not provide opportunities for detailed study or critical appraisal; they tend as a consequence to degenerate into holiday excursions. It would be better if individual correspondents were given facilities for visiting the projects on their own.

63. Those who support the scheme aver that these organised tours are of great benefit to small and medium newspapers but they complain that invitations are issued to influential correspondents to the exclusion of those who need the facilities most. They suggest that the present policy should be altered, people should not have to seek invitations but be invited on a selective basis.

64. We are of the opinion that the scheme of conducted tours should not be given up but that invitations should be limited to the editors, correspondents and senior members of the journalistic staff of small and medium newspapers, preferably on a regional basis. Correspondents of major papers who ask for them should be given facilities to cover the projects at their own expense. Sufficient time should also be given at each project site to enable them to go round, meet local officials and find out for themselves the purpose of the project and the extent to which it has been fulfilled. PIB considers that the resources allowed for these services are insufficient and should be suitably increased. We feel, however, that were the scope of these services to be limited in the manner we suggest the resources should prove sufficient for the purpose.

65. PIB's responsibilities get greatly enlarged in an emergency. It has to use discretion and judgment in releasing news from all sources, yet inspire public confidence in the reliability and faithfulness of its reporting. And it has to play a part in bringing the country to a state of preparedness and infuse in its people a sense of national unity, determination and purpose.

66. We have had two emergencies in quick succession, the Chinese aggression in 1962 followed by hostilities with Pakistan in 1965. These have given us the opportunity to assess the extent to which PIB was able to meet the needs of the situation in 1962 when it was caught in a state of

unpreparedness and the extent to which it had organized itself to meet the demands on it in the emergency of 1965.

67. Before we do so, we should give a narration of what was attempted and what was achieved. During the period of hostilities in 1962 PIB hastily organised an Emergency Division and concentrated its limited resources on issuing handouts, pictorial material, and on giving other possible assistance to the press. After the fighting ended the emergency unit engaged itself in preparing information relevant to our relations with China and other neighbouring countries and also counter-propaganda material. This unit continued to perform the same functions during the hostilities with Pakistan both in the Rann of Kutch and later along the Western border. Besides undertaking publicity relating to the border areas, it also prepares material intended to promote national integration and unity.

68. While appreciating the effort made by PIB during the Chinese aggression with its exiguous resources, the press complained that though re-organised it was unable to meet the requirements in 1965. The complaint about PIB was that it was slow in movement, rigid in attitude and non-committal in its releases. But it would be unfair to lay the blame wholly on PIB. It is only the handmaiden of Government and acts according to its directions. There was hardly any co-ordination between the Ministries of Defence, External Affairs and Information and Broadcasting, involved in planning publicity and briefing the press. Thus news was not cleared and released in time nor in the detail people expected. Consequently PIB got largely blamed for vending stale, colourless and uninformative material.

69. Though daily briefings for the press were organised, they were looked upon as of little value except when given by the senior officials of the Defence Ministry; others were neither comprehensive, topical nor informative. The Information Officers themselves were not taken fully into confidence and most of them did not have any appreciation of military matters to be able to contribute to their understanding. More often than not officials of the Defence Ministry had to step in. They were more in touch with the war front and had larger discretion in giving news and in explaining the situation developing. Naturally the press welcomed these briefings but this did not do any good to the reputation or prestige of PIB.

70. There were also complaints that the Public Relations personnel in the Ministry of Defence did not have necessary journalistic skill to draw up the publicity material properly and this detracted from the value of the releases. Photographic coverage was scanty and showed little appreciation of the potential of pictorial publicity to generate and sustain a national effort. The facilities provided to correspondents to visit the front were deplorable.

71. There is substance in the complaints we have heard. Before we suggest remedial measures, we should reproduce

certain representations which merit consideration. These are broadly:

a) During an emergency PIB must be given overall responsibility for release of information. Too many sources of information result in the issue of contradictory statements which cause confusion.

b) Whether it is an armed conflict or economic crisis, the press should be taken into confidence on major happenings. There should be no attempt to play down the seriousness of a situation while presenting the official version; the action taken to contain it should be clearly stated.

c) Separate briefings should be arranged for foreign and Indian correspondents. A high-level committee of two or three people, closely in touch with developments, should brief the press in the Capital on the day to day developments.

d) The Briefing Room should have good and detailed maps on which places in the news must be clearly indicated. Modern equipment such as an epidiascope must be available. Tape recorders for keeping a record of briefings are also necessary.

e) PIB should keep its regional and branch offices constantly informed about developments so that dissemination of information in the regions can also be properly organised, and

f) Publicity material relating to the emergency should be sent in special covers to attract the editors' immediate attention.

72. We consider that a plan should be drawn up on the lines of the War Book to be put into operation in an emergency to secure effective and informed publicity. There should be a co-ordinating cell with senior officers from the ministries concerned to direct the strategy of publicity and determine how news should be screened. There is also the need to create a reserve of officers who can function in time of emergency with competence. For the purpose selected officers of the Central Information Service should be put through an orientation course in military matters and similarly a few officers of the Armed Forces should be trained in journalism, particularly those who form the Service Wing in the Defence Information Unit. A corps of cameramen should be built up and called upon when the need arises to visit the battle front and take suitable action pictures. Proper arrangements should be made including telegraphic and telephone facilities for selected correspondents allowed to visit the front so that complaints of harassment are eliminated. The visits to the front should be cleared by and co-ordinated with field officers to avoid difficulties and subsequent embarrassment. Arrangements should be made for developing films speedily and releasing them when they have news value. (It has been suggested that bad publicity for India in the foreign press during the conflict with Pakistan was due largely to the mishandling of correspondents by the Indian authorities.)

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73. A system of training newspaper correspondents as War correspondents should also be devised. Newspapers should be encouraged to send out for training young pressmen who have the aptitude to function as War correspondents. Periodically background and refresher courses should be arranged in the National Defence College; or at some other similar institution, which would familiarise newsmen with different aspects of military subjects they would be required to cover.

74. In other words, we would advocate that the blueprint of a shadow organization should be drawn up and the names of selected officers put on a special list so that necessary expansion in an emergency can proceed smoothly with people who have the requisite training and experience.

The Press Adviser

75. Before we conclude our observations on emergency arrangements, we should refer to the complaints by the press about the Press Adviser's organization. This functions even when there is no emergency but it is in times of stress that the organization reveals its weaknesses. Apart from allegations that it worked unimaginatively and hampered the work of the correspondents, there were accusations of discriminatory treatment. For example, a news story by one news agency was banned by the Press Adviser while the same story from another source was allowed to be published. We discussed this with officials who had been concerned with these arrangements and were told that such instances had occurred because of organizational deficiencies. The Adviser in one shift did not know what his predecessor had disallowed. The obvious solution is to maintain a file of stories disallowed, with reasons therefor, so that there may be some consistency in handling them.

76. News which had found its way in the foreign press and radios was with-held in India allegedly for reasons of security. This ban achieved little as the foreign releases were available to readers and listeners in India.

77. It frequently happened that a story in the press was hastily contradicted by the PIB, only to be confirmed soon thereafter. This occurred because the Press Adviser was himself not fully informed. It supports the point made by some of our witnesses that the Chief Press Adviser must be a high powered officer, with a close link with the Director of Military Intelligence. We understand that during the World War II the Chief Press Adviser to the Government of India shared a room with the Chief Military Censor and acted in concert with him.

78. The Press Adviser or a representative of his was not available round the clock. It must be realised that it was not possible to wait till the morning to ascertain government's re-action on important events during the night. While a 24-hour duty would be impossible, we believe that it should be possible for the Chief Press Adviser to organise the work of his office in shifts, covering the greater part of the day and night, and to be available himself on the phone for urgent and important consultation.

79. The Press Adviser was also hampered by not having access at all times to an authority who could clear military news. Proper advice and guidance was not given to news

agencies on messages sent out by them. It only created misunderstandings and complications when messages sent out had to be later modified at the instance of the government. If the Chief Press Adviser is a high-powered official with direct access to the Minister and Secretary for Defence and to senior military officers, there should be no such difficulty.

80. Another lacuna in the Press Adviser's organization was excessive centralization. It was difficult for persons in Delhi to advise the press on what was happening in Amritsar and Ludhiana. Yet this was the situation. It was suggested, therefore, that press advice should be organised on a decentralised basis. We doubt if this would be possible. Press Advising on military matters must necessarily be centralised. But there would be no trouble if the Press Adviser kept himself fully informed, as he should, of what was happening on the different fronts by maintaining contact intimately with the Defence authorities.

81. We consider that the Press Adviser should plan carefully in advance his line of action in an emergency and the ground organization he requires when the need arises. He should make a detailed study of the type of problems and situations which are likely to arise during an emergency which would be of relevance and importance to newspaper readers. And he should be ready with his list of 'dos' and 'don'ts'.

82. It is obvious that the Press Adviser and his staff should have considerable journalistic experience to exercise their functions keeping in view the requirements of the press.

83. Another important matter is the policy of accreditation of correspondents. The PIB deals with correspondents who have been formally accredited. Under the present procedure the editor of a newspaper or a news agency has to apply to the PIO for the grant of accreditation to his correspondent. The PIO refers the application to a specially constituted committee, the Central Press Accreditation Committee, for advice. In deciding upon an application the committee takes into account in the case of a newspaper, its nature, periodicity, regularity of publication, influence and circulation and in the case of a news agency, its nature, method of distribution of its services and its clientele. To be eligible for accreditation a correspondent has to be a whole-time working journalist of at least five years standing and he must be resident in Delhi.

Accredita-
tion of
Correspon-
dents.

84. The list of accredited correspondents is periodically reviewed. Accreditation is withdrawn from a correspondent if he ceases to represent the paper or the news agency on whose behalf he received accreditation, or if he behaves in an unprofessional manner, uses information and facilities for non-journalistic purposes or violates the conditions on which they are made available.

85. Though all witnesses agreed that accreditation of correspondents should be continued, there were complaints that the present procedure was restrictive and not wholly impartial.

86. The Press Association drew our attention to the

observations of the Press Commission that the then accreditation committee nominated by the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference did not enjoy the confidence of correspondents. The Commission had recommended the constitution of the committee in consultation with different organizations of newspapers. The committee of six to eight proposed was to have half its number working editors elected or nominated by the all-India organizations of editors; the other half being correspondents and working journalists selected or nominated by the all-India organizations of working journalists. Though government accepted the recommendation and the committee was reconstituted, the Press Association considers that it is still unrepresentative. For example, no cameraman is represented in the committee.

87. In view of the study made by the Press Commission we refrain from reproducing and dealing with other suggestions made on the functioning of the committee. Such suggestions should appropriately be considered by the committee itself. We would content ourselves with endorsing the suggestion that correspondents who are accredited in the regions should also be allowed access to sessions of Parliament, press conferences and other functions when in Delhi. The plea of news cameramen and foreign correspondents that they should be given equality of treatment with other accredited correspondents also deserves consideration.

88. We consider that conditions in the PIB press lounge require considerable improvement. There is at present only one typewriter, no direct telephone link and no reference library. The lounge shuts its doors at 6 p.m. It would be more convenient to all if a working press room is provided, in lieu of the present press lounge, equipped with separate tables and shelves. Lockers should also be provided where typewriters, stationery, etc. could be stored by the correspondents, a small charge being made for this additional facility. In view of the long distances in Delhi it is essential that press correspondents should be able to do a part of their day's work in the PIB itself.

Press and
Public
Opinion
Analysis.

89. Another important function of the bureau is to keep government informed all the time of press and public reactions to its policies and other activities as also to bring to its notice grievances ventilated in the press. A popular government has to respond to all reasonable demands of its people and has to be made aware of them. The bureau maintains for these purposes four units at headquarters. Two are engaged in taking clippings from English and Hindi dailies and supplying them to ministries. The third unit prepares a daily press review and analysis, covering selected editorials, articles and letters to editors to apprise the departments of government of public reactions to current happenings; the fourth prepares from time to time a few detailed public opinion analyses on the Five-Year Plans, their contents and performance. This is intended mainly for the information of the Committee for Direction and Co-ordination of Plan Publicity. We should have thought that the third unit could cover this aspect also.

90. The regional and branch offices are also expected to keep the headquarters informed of significant news and comments in the regional press, but they are hampered in doing so for want of funds to purchase all the dailies published in their regions.

91. The supply of clippings to ministries and others is considerable; yet additional demands are made at times, which PIB complains, cannot be met with the number of copies of newspapers it purchases. We feel that many supplies are made as a matter of routine, are not read by anyone responsible and thus serve no useful purpose. It would be much better and attract attention if each Information Officer was required to analyse and prepare a resume of the clippings for the ministry to which he is attached.

92. We were disturbed to hear that in sending clippings to ministries those critical are held back and only appreciative ones are forwarded. This defeats the very purpose of the clipping services which is intended to give a faithful and daily round up of press comments. To be of value special attention should be drawn to those which are critical. We consider that the clipping service may be usefully replaced by the daily summary suggested. The ministry could always ask specially for a particular clipping of interest to it. This arrangement will make for both efficiency and economy.

93. The daily 'Press and Public Reaction Analysis' similarly skirts around criticisms and adverse comments and often misses out the salient points. Secondly, it is based mainly on comments in the English papers and thus does not reflect public opinion as a whole. A senior officer told us that neither he nor his colleagues in other ministries attach any great importance to this analysis. Asked for the reason, he said that it was not a faithful analysis nor was it well prepared. This is an important compilation with a purpose to serve and should not be discontinued. Greater thought and attention should be given to its preparation so that the ministries attach importance to it and look upon it as an essential aid to their proper functioning. The PIO himself should, we suggest, give guidelines and exercise occasional checks to ensure that they are followed. The public opinion analysis unit should be able, when required, to make available public reactions to specific issues on which government may want information before formulating its policies.

94. The Research and Reference Division also undertakes an analysis and assessment of public opinion trends. This is a duplication of effort and an avoidable dissipation of resources. In the interests of efficiency and economy it should be prepared by one or the other. We are of the opinion that the Division is better equipped to prepare this round-up. In discussing its functions and defining its future role later we give reasons for this recommendation.

CHAPTER III

P.I.B.'s Services

95. We now examine in greater detail PIB's handouts, feature articles and other written releases as also photographs issued.

96. Quantitatively the flow of material is considerable; there is hardly any attempt to limit its output to important matters. This in itself detracts from the importance the press attaches to such releases. Secondly, they are often so delayed that their contents prove to be of little value and interest to the press. Thirdly, the presentation is not concise and lacks precision and logical organization. Even when the material is used, it has to be heavily edited and often re-written.

97. The press attributes this to inadequate supervision over the work of the Information Officers. It has been suggested that one or two senior officers should be exclusively assigned to supervisory functions. This would not only improve the quality of the bureau's output but also assist junior officers to develop a feel for news and professional skill for its presentation.

98. The value that the press attaches to the bureau's releases can be gauged from the evidence of some senior journalists. They consider that it is only correspondents who lack initiative and enterprise to seek news and information from the ministries and other sources, who look upto PIB and rely on its releases for their despatches. Despite hindrances from FIB, the others approach the sources of news; it is essential to do so if they are to be of value to their papers. This tendency can be checked at least minimised, if PIB prove its usefulness to the press and is able to report fresh news and developments objectively and in detail, providing also the background information required. It should, however, be added that the government's releases are meant to give the basic substance. They cannot and should not prevent the individual journalist from doing his own ferreting, investigating and interpreting. In the interest of consistency and to eliminate contradictions in news culled from different ministries, the bureau should be placed in a position to function effectively as co-ordinator and spokesman of government. This was the purpose for creating a central agency and it has to be fulfilled.

99. The handouts issued by the bureau are not confined to reporting on day to day events. They also give information and publicity on matters of national importance such as the census, general elections, the emergency, etc. The majority of witnesses consider that the handouts are wanting in information, study, objectivity and even immediacy, and something should be done to increase their utility to the press and the public.

100. News agencies and others dependant on PIB for official announcements complain that the volume releases has increased so considerably in recent years that it has imposed an almost intolerable burden on them to sift and edit the material for transmission. For example, there is hardly any justification for giving publicity to all ministerial pronouncements in extenso. The Bureau should develop a selective sense in reporting them, giving only the substance of the important ones, an exception being made when, for example, a speech as a whole gives a coherent expression of a major policy.

101. We were told that Information Officers sometimes hand over written material, which is heavily biased, to selected correspondents on controversial matters and for which neither they nor the ministry on whose behalf it is issued accept responsibility. We deprecate these tendencies and the government should issue suitable instructions to prevent them.

102. The Press Commission has commented disparagingly on the bureau's tendency to release material which is in the nature of publicity for individual ministers rather than the activities of their ministries. But this exhortation has been largely disregarded and the tendency to indulge in personalised publicity still persists.

103. We consider ~~that the release of a large volume of material of negligible news value is a waste of public funds.~~ Similarly, there is no purpose in spending time, money and effort in taking out copies of 'advance' texts of speeches when, as is frequent, they are distributed long after they have been made.

104. The language of the handouts in English has also come in for criticism. It is said that it is official and stilted, more like a Secretariat minute than a press release. The handouts have to be in simple language and supported by sufficient factual material and data to enable their readers to understand and assimilate their import. Conscious of its shortcomings, the bureau is now considering the establishment of a Central Copy Desk through which all releases should be routed. This unit, it is expected, would be able to exercise editorial functions and regulate and co-ordinate the flow of material. The PIB considers that this Desk should be manned by experienced re-write men working in two shifts. We endorse this suggestion, particularly as the editing of the material would make PIB releases more concise and to the point.

105. The staff of PIB has suggested that to ensure uniformity in spelling, punctuation, typing, etc., a 'Style Book' for technical officers and a 'Guide Book' for typists and distribution section should be prepared. We consider this suggestion worth-while and support it.

106. The features and other articles of the bureau have been stigmatised as dull, indifferent in language and lacking in topicality. They are neither imaginative nor subtle in their presentation and, therefore, they largely fail to carry conviction with the readers. The ministries which insist on clearing features which relate to their work are to be held partly responsible. Their intervention introduces a flavour of propaganda and often makes an interesting feature into a dull recital.

107. PIB itself is aware that its sporadic features have not proved attractive. It considers that they should not be restricted only to conventional occasions like Independence Day and international conferences, etc., but should be more frequent, embracing more topical, informative and educative themes. To improve quality and appeal it should have freedom to commission competent and knowledgeable writers where necessary to prepare the articles. But it has no authority to enlarge its feature production nor has any discretion to employ outside writers without a dispensation from the ministry. It is only during the emergency that a special dispensation to use outsiders was given. We recommend that the PIO should be invested with authority on such questions which are incidental to the efficient day to day working of the bureau.

108. The Ministry of External Affairs, as a client of the bureau, considers that the special features on occasions like Independence Day do not have any appeal in foreign countries except in our immediate neighbouring ones and that they might as well be discontinued. We do not consider that this attitude is justified. The bureau can hardly be expected to prepare different version for

different regions. It does not have the necessary area specialisation. It should be the responsibility of the External Publicity Division and the Information Officers in the embassies abroad to edit, adapt and re-shape the basic material.

109. The Vidyalankar Committee has recommended that the feature services must be strengthened and extended to cover the needs of regional newspapers and periodicals. The Committee on Small Newspapers has also supported this recommendation. And we now add our support to the weight of the recommendations of these two independent committees and trust that they will be taken more seriously by government.

110. We appreciate that this expansion will call for additional feature writers in the regions and provision will have to be made to allow them to travel around to collect material and acquire background knowledge. But we consider that all this should be brought within the sweep of the rationalization we have recommended to give a new look and a new purpose to the feature unit.

111. Background material is essential for journalists, newspapers and periodicals and it is one of the basic functions of PIB to provide it in depth. The bureau proved its ability to do so competently during the Kutch operations but efforts such as these are spasmodic and not sustained. For example, we were told that the background material on the tripartite conference held in Delhi in October 1966 was issued by PIB long after the Yugoslav Embassy had distributed excellent material. It is difficult to appreciate this lapse. It was known for months that the conference would be held in Delhi towards the latter part of the year. Arrangements should have been taken in hand for the preparation and distribution of material well ahead of the meeting to enhance its value. Official witnesses, however, claim that PIB's compilation was excellent and largely availed of. Even accepting this claim we cannot condone the delay.

112. We were given other examples when the press had to obtain material from foreign embassies and agencies because PIB was unable to supply it in time. It was even alleged that in some instances the material ultimately released by PIB was nothing more than a reproduction of material obtained earlier from embassy sources.

113. We consider that all this is due to unimaginative planning. The bureau should develop a sense of anticipation of major events and requisition necessary background material from the Research and Reference Division and docket it for release when the need arises.

114. Here we must comment on the get-up of the releases issued by PIB. They are untidy, partly legible and contain many typographical errors. The get-up of the material compares most unfavourably with releases made even in India by the United States Information Service and the British Information Service. The reason for this deficiency is that PIB has not got modern equipment, typewriters and duplicators. We recommend that PIB should be re-equipped; it will then be able not only to give a quicker service but also a neater presentation. It would also be necessary to use better quality paper, attractive

covers, etc. We would endorse PIB's suggestion that all material which is required for reference and record should be printed as in other countries. It would be more economical and yet more attractive.

115. PIB is responsible for arranging photo coverage of important events and for distributing news and feature photographs to the press to supplement and illustrate textual material issued. It also maintains an ebondid service for small newspapers which do not have resources to make blocks from photo-prints. For these purposes it has to requisition photographs and prints from the Photo Division which is not a part of PIB.

116. Till 1959, all the media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had their own photo units, by far the largest being the PIB one. All these units were integrated in that year to form the Photo Division as a common service agency, and it became a subordinate office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

117. The pooling of resources was expected to lead to economy, improve the quality of work done and provide a more efficient service to the media units. The reconstituted Photo Division assumed responsibility for all photographic assignments, the purchase, maintenance and accounting of all photographic material and equipment, reproduction, research and experimental work and the maintenance of a centralised library of negatives. It meets the photographic requirements of exhibitions organised by the different ministries and until recently supplied photographs to the Department of Tourism for its various publicity pamphlets. It also produces picture postcards and sells these as well as photographs to the public.

118. The Photo Division is administered by a Chief Photo Officer. In addition, it employs a staff of 17 photographers, all located in Delhi. PIB along with other media units places indents on it which it is required to meet without exercising any discretion.

119. It now remains for us to examine the extent to which the purposes, for which a centralised unit was set up, have been fulfilled. In our report on Advertising and Visual Publicity, we have dealt with the complaint of the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity that photographs taken by the Photo Division are mainly of topical interest and do not meet the requirements of the exhibitions the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity arranges and even for illustrating the texts of different folders and pamphlets it issues, on matters of national importance. We had recommended that one or two experienced photographers from the division's pool should be detached and assigned for whole-time duty with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity. This alone would ensure that its specialised needs are met fully and in time, leading also in the process to the development of necessary expertise in the photographers deputed.

120. We now examine the complaint of PIB in regard to the functioning of the Photo Division. The major complaint of

PIB is that while it has responsibility for photo publicity it has no control over the agency producing the publicity material. This divorce of authority and responsibility is not conducive to efficiency and economy. PIB is not always able to obtain suitable news photographs on topical subjects and release them in time to be of value to the press.

121. The Photo Division explained that complaints arise because of flaws in administrative arrangements, further that in any case it has not adequate equipment, staff and accommodation. For example, it has to rely on PIB to provide transport when needed for covering important news events and if transport is not available, all the arrangements are thrown out of gear.

122. Before we make our observations on the organizational aspect, we should examine the quality and character of PIB's photo publicity, taking note of complaints made to us. We find that there is a bias in favour of news photos and a failure to produce necessary illustrations for features. Ninety to ninety-five per cent of its work relates to news and only five to ten per cent to the features. Thirty per cent of news photos and eighty per cent of the feature photos are accepted for distribution. Of the photos taken every day, three or four are selected as suitable for release and about 250 prints are made of each for distribution. There has been a considerable increase in the division's output; about 1,50,000 prints were issued in 1957-58, the number had increased nearly five-fold to 7,38,000 in 1965-66 and it must be even more now.

123. The press has many complaints about the photo service. They relate not so much to technical quality as to the subjects chosen. Often enough an important person is the centre of the shots rather than the project or function which he inaugurates or in which he participates. The main purpose of giving publicity to it is thus lost.

124. The Press Commission has deprecated this tendency to concentrate on personal publicity, but this has not produced any results. The press quite rightly points out that the photo service should concentrate on material which could be used to illustrate the texts of events which the press considers important enough to report. It should, likewise supply relevant sketches, maps and graphs. The photos released should be properly edited and should have adequate captions, the names of people appearing should be given, and in the correct order. This is not always the case now.

125. After a random sampling of PIB's releases and an analysis of the photographs, we endorse the complaint that the selection of subjects is not made with judgment and discretion. Fifty to sixty per cent of the news photographs relate to ministers' activities and important visitors. Their attendance at different functions is photographed as a matter of routine even though these may have no news value. It has become customary for the Information Officers attached to various ministries to requisition, as a matter of course, the photo service for extensive coverage of ministerial and official activities.

126. We have seen the instructions relating to photo publicity in PIB's Technical Publicity Rules. Detailed instructions

exist on the nature and extent of coverage to be provided; their observance would have prevented present misuse. It is evident that the instructions are not being followed by the Information Officers nor are they being enforced by the senior staff. It has been suggested that the PIO is unable to exercise discretion because he too feels he might offend people higher up. It is necessary, therefore, that government should draw the attention of requisitioning authorities to the principles prescribed and also make it clear to officers that violation of the instructions would be penalised. This alone would put a restraint on the ministries.

127. We are also told that as many as 500 prints are requisitioned every day by the Ministry of External Affairs for supply to missions abroad for publicity purposes. There is no information of how many of these prints are used by the foreign press or distributed abroad, or, for the matter of that, whether they are always sent out by the ministry. We urge that a high-level review should be made in collaboration with the External Affairs Ministry to minimise this demand on the exiguous resources of the Photo Division.

128. We cannot stress too strongly the importance of exercising discretion and economy. Raw film and other photographic goods are not produced in India and their indiscriminate use constitutes a drain which is certainly preventible.

129. We endorse the suggestion of PIB that two or three high-level photographers should be delegated for work on illustrating special features. The undue emphasis on news photographs should be given up and a correct balance established between news and feature photographs. After all, newspapers and news agencies are supposed to have their own arrangement for getting news photographs. We also consider that specialisation should be encouraged.

130. We also endorse the suggestion that the Chief Photo Officer should be relieved of his administrative responsibilities so that he can give more time and attention to the supervision of the technical work of his staff.

131. We should deprecate the present tendency to limit coverage to events in and around Delhi. The Vidyalankar Committee has touched upon the need to depict regional events. It is only when PIB sends out a photographer with the Prime Minister or some other senior minister that regional items are included in PIB's releases; otherwise they are ignored. This deficiency should be removed by posting photographers at important centres as early as possible. If the bureau cannot afford many full-time staff photographers in the regions, it should use local photographers on a commercial basis.

132. The photo library which maintains a stock of photographs both for record and issue is not under the control of the Photo Division but is a part of PIB. It is in charge of an Information Officer. It has accumulated over five lakhs of photographs and about 15,000 are being added every year. The library service is intended for local and foreign correspondents and for meeting requests for photos

from newspapers, periodicals and publishers, both inside and outside the country. It is also the source of photographs for all our missions abroad. Similarly, all media units obtain their requirements through the photo library whether for publication or visual publicity and exhibitions.

133. The library, as it is now organised, is hardly able to serve the purposes for which it was established. In the first place, photographs from the Photo Division are not sent to the library soon after they are taken. There is a time-lag and current photographs when demanded cannot be made readily available. The indexing is indifferent and it is difficult to locate a photograph and to supply it on request. Another deficiency is that proper captions are not attached to the photographs and there is no cross-indexing to facilitate the search for a wanted picture.

134. The mounting of photographs in albums has fallen heavily in arrears. As many as 50,000 photographs are lying around to be put into albums. Recent photographs are yet to be classified and requests for them cannot thus be complied with expeditiously.

135. Because of the accent on topicality, news photographs are not in demand after a short lapse of time. A process of weeding out would, therefore, relieve the pressure on PIB's limited storage accommodation. Similarly, important aspects of many developmental projects are not covered systematically, to the extent necessary, or brought up to date. As a result, the photographs retained are several years old. They may have a historical value, but are not of any other use. Here again, a weeding of the material is needed. We would also urge that the number of photographs to be indexed and retained should be drastically reduced.

136. The library is located in cramped quarters, there is not enough space for shelves and no facilities exist for visitors. There is no trained librarian and a reference assistant looks after the library on a part-time basis. We consider that the housing and working of the library should be re-organised with adequate staff and modern equipment to give both efficiency and economy.

137. A major suggestion for the re-organization of the photo service is that the Photo Division and the library should be brought under unified control. Two alternatives suggest themselves: First, the merged organization should continue to be a separate unit under the ministry or alternatively it should be transferred to the major user, PIB. The balance of advantage, in our view, lies in placing it under the administrative control of PIB but the deployment of photographers should be on the lines of our recommendations in our report on Advertising and Visual Publicity. We consider that the same principle should be extended to the Publications Division. This would on the one hand retain all the advantages of pooling of resources and on the other meet the specialised needs of the other media units under the control of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

138. Before we conclude our observations on the Photo Division, we would urge very strongly that PIB should operate in future on a selective basis and curtail heavily its present output of photos, concentrating on qualitative improvement, rather than, as now, on quantitative output. This would also facilitate better

utilization of resources, a wider coverage of events and add to its utility and prestige.

139. Similarly, it should draw up a restricted list of papers to whom a photo service should be provided. Steps should be taken for using the radio photo service to serve areas like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

140. A section of the press has raised the question whether it is necessary to make a free supply of photographs to the newspapers. All larger newspapers have their own staff photographers and are not ordinarily interested in the bureau's releases and printing a picture in common with all other newspapers. If any particular photo is needed by them, they should ask and pay for it. Even for medium-size newspapers, it is urged that free supply should be discontinued. These are profit-making enterprises and, if a newspaper can afford to spend Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 for making a block, it can easily pay Rs. 3/- to Rs. 5/- for a PIB photograph that it uses. Some journalists also suggest that the free supply of pictures by PIB has hampered the growth of professional news cameramen in the country. It should be discontinued in any event curtailed.

141. We do not agree that the photo service should be discontinued. PIB exists to give information about governmental activities and it cannot dispense with illustrative material which should go with it. The suggestion of restricting the free service, however, deserves consideration and should be explored in consultation with the press.

142. We have earlier mentioned that the ebonoid service of PIB has been of great value to small newspapers which have no resources to make necessary blocks from PIB photographs. The service has proved particularly popular with the Indian language press and has the potential of projecting achievements of planned development in small urban and rural communities. But though the usefulness of the service has been fully established it is unable without expansion and rationalization to meet all demands on it.

143. Some of the State Governments have complained that the supply in their regions is insufficient and should be augmented; arrangements should also be made for their more timely release. Some witnesses go to the extent of suggesting that the service should be expanded to the extent necessary even if it involves a curtailment of the photo service. The usefulness of the ebonoid service is not in doubt while that of the photo service is.

144. We were given to understand that an ebonoid block can give about 5,000 satisfactory prints. One block could thus suffice for a small paper with a circulation of approximately 5,000 and two blocks would be necessary for papers and periodicals with a circulation upto 10,000. In our view all such newspapers and periodicals should be supplied with ebonoid blocks provided, of course, that they come out regularly and maintain certain journalistic standards. It is not necessary to provide them to papers with larger circulation, as they should be able to afford to spend Rs. 10/- to Rs. 12/- on preparing a block. While assistance to small papers is legitimate, we do not approve of spoon-feeding those which should be able to stand on their feet.

145. At present the PIB issues about 4,000 ebonoid blocks per month, of about six to nine pictures, to about 1,600 recipients. The number of dailies with a known circulation below 5,000 is approximately 213 and of periodicals dealing with current affairs about 1,200. The number of dailies and periodicals with a known circulation between 5,000 to 10,000 is 105 and 101 respectively. If the supply of ebonoid blocks to papers with a circulation above 10,000 is discontinued, it should be possible for the PIB to supply ebonoid blocks to all small newspapers and periodicals, which are worth assisting, without much additional cost.

146. Our remarks about the photo service on the type and class of illustrations to be supplied apply equally to the ebonoid service. They should have news value and be of interest. Maps and graphs which facilitate the understanding of the textual material should also be supplied. The ebonoid service should concentrate on feature photographs to popularise the developmental schemes and enlist public co-operation.

147. Several of these suggestions have been endorsed by the Enquiry Committee on Small Newspapers. While, according to all assessments including our own, the ebonoid service should be considerably increased, PIB has represented that instead of an expansion it has had to heavily curtail the service because of shortage of foreign exchange. Attaching the importance that we do to this service, we would recommend that until the foreign exchange position improves considerably there should be a reduction in the import of film and other photographic material to release foreign exchange for importing ebonoid material; in our view this is possible without curtailing the utility of the photo service.

148. To sum up we recommend that:

- a) The photo library should be merged in the Photo Division which should be transferred to the control of PIB.
- b) One or two photographers from the pool should be deputed to the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity and the Publications Division on a whole-time basis, using the facilities of the united organization. Regional coverage should be organised by locating photographers at important centres.
- c) The tendency to concentrate on topical events and focus on ministerial activity should be curbed. Features should be adequately covered by two or more photographers specially assigned to the work.
- d) The output of PIB should be drastically reduced and rationalised. The number of newspapers on the distribution list should be similarly reduced. The question of restricting free supplies should be examined and the ebonoid service should be expanded as suggested.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFERENCE SERVICE

149. Basic to effective communication - whether through the

P. T. O.

press or the radio or visual media - is an efficient research and reference service. This service, today being rendered by the Research and Reference Division, is handicapped by paucity of resources and trained personnel, inadequate library and documentation facilities and insignificant research and evaluation programmes. It is in this context that the future shape of the Research and Reference Division needs to be examined.

150. The main functions of the division are to bring out certain publications such as 'India - A Reference Annual', to issue 'Background to the News', a bi-weekly service which gives the background to selected items of current interest and is intended to serve as source material for the media units of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, including the PIB, and to issue monthly Press and Film Bulletins. During the emergency it started a Diary of Events, containing a factual record of day-to-day developments. It also undertakes comparative studies of the organization of mass media of communication in other countries and of methods of publicity there. It maintains an index of selected news items and articles from one daily paper and clippings on national and international affairs from ten Indian newspapers. Selected articles from about forty periodicals are also indexed. The documentation unit maintains official releases of the government and of some of the foreign embassies. The division occasionally undertakes publicity surveys, e.g., it conducted an all-India survey of the impact of Five-Year Plan publicity provided by the different media. It has a library of 25,000 books which is expected to serve the reference needs of all the media units of the Ministry and of accredited press correspondents. It is also called upon to undertake several ad hoc assignments for the Ministry and its media units and other ministries of the Government of India.

151. Our discussions with officials and the evidence led before us by representatives of the press have brought to notice deficiencies in regard to the following:-

a) The functions of the Research and Reference Division have never been clearly defined. In the absence of such an enunciation of its functions, the division has been called upon to undertake numerous miscellaneous and ad hoc assignments, not only by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its media units but also by other ministries. This has not only hampered the normal functioning of the division but has thrown a disproportionate burden on the limited staff which has remained unchanged since 1950. A stage has been reached when the division is unable to prepare much needed background material when it is urgently required.

b) While ad hoc studies are undertaken on specific subjects, there is no machinery for continuous study of national problems in general and communication studies in particular. Much of the work the division has so far undertaken has proved to be of only ephemeral value and of little use as background material at a later stage.

c) The absence of integration of certain services, such as the compilation of press, public and political opinion trends, results in a number of units undertaking the same activity. The PIB, the Research and Reference Division, the

Monitoring Service of All India Radio, the Field Publicity Directorate are all engaged in assessing public opinion trends. There is no inter-media effort at present of compiling and co-ordinating the research undertaken and of properly discerning the trends to be taken note of.

d) The division has at present neither the resources nor the facilities to collect all significant comments on India and Indian affairs in Indian and foreign journals. An intelligent analysis of these comments and criticisms would be invaluable to policy makers, programme planners, etc.

e) There is no effort at present to collect and supply to the media units, and also to Indian missions abroad, material suitable for counter-propaganda. Proper institutional co-ordination with the Historical Division of the Ministry of External Affairs has not been established.

f) The division has not been able to prepare and maintain a comprehensive collection of up-to-date biographies of prominent Indians, living and dead.

g) 'India - A Reference Annual', although popular and useful, does not give sufficient information on developments in the States of the Indian Union.

h) Although the division is expected to serve as an archive for the Ministry, it has no facilities for maintaining press clippings on an extensive and systematic basis. The number of papers available to it is very limited. The PIB also maintains a clipping section involving unnecessary duplication. In the absence of micro-filming facilities material is destroyed in the PIB after three years. Thus, neither the Research and Reference Division nor the PIB has a proper, permanent record of clippings. There is also no regular flow of government publications to the division.

i) Indexing of news items in the Research and Reference Division is not comprehensive, it being confined at present to indexing of one newspaper only.

j) Although the division is expected to serve all media units, each of them also maintains a library and reference service. While this has resulted in waste of scarce financial resources on books, periodicals, staff, etc., none of the units has been able to organise a well-equipped library and reference service.

k) For want of adequate facilities the division has been unable to undertake any significant communication research.

l) The posting of Central Information Service personnel as research staff has not always been governed by the aptitudes and qualifications of personnel.

152. AS in the case of many other spheres of activity of the Government of India, very little thought has been given to the planning, adequate staffing and financing of an important unit like the Research and Reference Division on which the effectiveness of government publicity depends. It is no wonder, therefore, that the division is unable to fulfil its purpose at present and the

staff of the division feels frustrated and discontented because it is not able to function effectively.

153. We are of the opinion that research, reference, library and documentation services now dispersed in many units should be coalesced to form a single organization. The functions of this unit should be clearly defined and ad hoc work of various types entrusted to the present Research and Reference Division, not only by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting but by others, should not be allowed to interfere with its regular and prescribed functions.

154. There must be scope for continuous studies on important problems so that the material that the Division issues is of utility to the press and to other media units. We would also suggest that all referencing and research work and analysis of press, public and political opinion done in the various units of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry should be centralised in this Division. It would be best to have one well-appointed unit rather than three or four scattered units, none of which is suitably staffed or otherwise equipped to function effectively. The analytical studies should identify areas of unrest so that the information and publicity apparatus of the government, instead of being caught unawares, is able to plan intelligently in anticipation of criticism and resistance to government policies.

155. A well-equipped library is indispensable for reference work. A sufficient number of newspapers, books, micro-filming equipment, and all the facilities which are regarded as essential in any good reference library should, therefore, be made available. While the media units may have small allocations for purchasing specialised books necessary for their day-to-day work, the bulk of the budget for the purchase of magazines and books should be allocated to the Division. In view of devaluation, the rising prices of books, and increasing number of publications, this budget will have to be suitably increased.

156. The staffing of the Research and Reference Division requires careful consideration. At present the Central Information Service is the source from which research and reference officers and staff are drawn. This ignores the fact that research work requires a particular aptitude and training. The most intelligent persons do not necessarily make good research scholars. It may be that from within the Central Information Service a sufficient number of officers can be found with the requisite qualifications. If so, we consider that they should be posted at least for a period of seven years continuously in the Research and Reference Division. Promotions should be made available to them according to their seniority without having to be shifted from the unit.

157. It remains, however, to consider whether this re-organised unit should continue to be a subordinate office under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting or whether it should be placed under one of the media units of communication. We have in an earlier report touched upon the imperative of creating a cell for co-ordinating the information policy of government as a whole and for deciding which particular medium, or a number of them, should be commissioned and harmonised to propagate a particular objective of State.

We would develop this concept more fully in our final report on co-ordination and would content ourselves by observing that it would be best to place the Research and Reference Division under it.

158. Information centres set up in the States have to fulfil the functions of the Research and Reference Division at the State-level on a reduced scale. These centres are either run entirely by the PIB or on a cost-sharing basis with the State Information Department. Recently, the Government of India have informed the State Governments that they are unable to continue financial participation to the extent of fifty per cent which was hitherto provided for this type of centre. The State Governments consider that unless such financial assistance is available as before they would not be in a position to maintain the centres on their own. Several of the State Governments have, therefore, urged that fifty per cent of the cost of not only the existing centres but also of the ones proposed should be met by the Centre.

159. Some of the State Governments have also pointed out that the working of these Information Centres needs improvement. Mainly due to financial stringency it has not been possible to build up good libraries, capable of providing adequate reference services. With greater financial assistance from the Government of India it would be possible to develop these centres. Some of the States have pointed out that there is only one Information Centre for the whole State, located generally in the Capital. This is considered inadequate not only from the point of view of newspapers but also the general public. One State Government urged that there is greater need for such Information Centres in rural areas. Under the community development administration, there is provision for running Information-cum-Community centres as a social education activity. In the absence of trained and well-paid staff to look after them, such centres have either not been started or, when started, have soon withered. Nor is it possible for the State Governments by themselves to finance such centres.

160. We are aware of the tendency of the State Governments to lean heavily on the Central Government for financial assistance for activities which pertain and are even basic to their administrative responsibilities. We are equally aware that the resources of the States are not generally sufficient to sustain welfare activities. This position has been accepted in drawing up the Five-Year Plans.

161. Attaching importance as we do to rural development and awakening, we consider that Rural Information Centres should be established and maintained in every village which has a Community Centre. Each centre should be provided with a community listening set, a film projector, a library of government books, a collection of reference books, a picture gallery of important projects and a few exhibits. But this should be suitably phased with reference to money available and the competence of the community to maintain the centre. The village school teacher or Gram Sevak should be placed in charge after necessary training to handle the equipment gradually added.

162. The centre should develop into a meeting place of village workers and others interested in the progress of the community. The information given out should not be in the abstract but deal specifically with matters which are of concern to the community, such as the availability of fertilisers, pesticides, improved strains of seeds; and the places where they are available, the formation of co-operative societies for credit and marketing, etc. This is as important a facet as any other of the Plan to bring progress and education to rural India and should be given the impetus it needs.

CHAPTER V

REGIONAL AND BRANCH OFFICES

163. PIB is responsible for ensuring country-wide dissemination of official information and publicity releases. It fulfils this responsibility through regional and branch offices, nineteen in number, located mainly at the Capitals of the States, with teleprinter links with headquarters to enable simultaneous release of news and policy statements.

164. These offices have many and varied responsibilities. Besides distributing the material received from headquarters, after translating it into the regional languages to the extent possible, they are required to maintain liaison with State Information Directorates, promote publicity for Central Government offices and undertakings in the region, provide answers to queries of the local press, cover the visits of the Central ministers to their regions, scrutinise all important papers and periodicals in their area for items of interest to the ministries of the Union for transmission to them and/keep a watch on the regularity of publication of newspapers on behalf of the Press Registrar. They are also expected to render special assistance to smaller regional and Indian language papers.

165. Before we examine the competence of these offices as they are now organised to discharge these responsibilities satisfactorily, we should deal with the general complaints of the smaller newspapers. They complain that they receive step-motherly treatment from PIB which concerns itself almost entirely with the more important English dailies, particularly those based in Delhi.

166. The smaller papers claim that they have greater opportunities to inform and educate the small town and rural communities. Yet, they are not provided with necessary assistance to do so. Specifically they complain that they are neglected by the Regional and Branch Officers who hardly ever visit their offices or make any attempt to ascertain and meet their requirements. We do not support the suggestion that it is always for the regional officials to approach the editors rather than for the editors to approach the officials. But the small papers should be encouraged to grow and PIB should assist this process by providing them standard facilities on a larger scale. There should, however, be no attempt to spoon-feed them and sap their initiative.

167. The general complaint about the regional and branch offices is that they are little more than post-offices. Eighty per cent of the material they issue is in English; only twenty per cent is in translations in the regional languages. As a result, often enough, news items get delayed in their publication in the Indian language press. The difficulties of the

papers published in the districts are even greater; news comes late and they have not the resources to translate material supplied in English.

168. While accepting to some extent the validity of these complaints, PIB explains that as it has a small number of branch offices, it is not able to distribute its releases as expeditiously as it would like to. We agree that unless more branch offices are opened and linked by teleprinters with headquarters, it would not be possible to arrange sufficient and timely supply of publicity material to the Indian language papers, more particularly those published in the districts.

169. The Committee on Small Newspapers has also recommended that PIB should open offices in important newspaper centres such as Allahabad, Kanpur, Agra, Rajkot, Aurangabad and Hubli. For publicity in remote and problem areas, it has also recommended branch offices for Tripura and Manipur. PIB considers that these recommendations do not go far enough and that offices should also be established at Jubbulpore, Indore, Vijayawada, Balgaum, Kozhikode, Trivandrum and Madurai to give it the necessary network.

170. Another complaint in regard to the branch offices is that they are not equipped to answer press queries and meet demands for special material. They have to obtain both answers and material from headquarters; it is a time-consuming process and often defeats the very purpose for which the requests were made. The ability of the heads of these offices to brief the pressmen on important events or to interpret them has also been questioned. It has been suggested that were they to be headed by knowledgeable persons with authority, status and ability, in no case below the rank of an Information Officer, the position should show improvement.

171. It should be obvious, however, that opening of a large number of offices by itself will serve little purpose unless they are properly equipped and staffed. We would much rather that as a first step the existing ones were provided with more competent directing staff, a library, literature in quantities needed and a more efficient and quicker distribution system. This would enable them to organise a more satisfactory service. It would be necessary to provide guidance on a systematic basis to the heads of these offices to enable them to brief pressmen on important events. Guidance notes should be issued regularly and they should be fed with background and other material which would enable them to deal with queries from the press. We understand that the number of copies of reports, other official publications, even material issued by the Planning Commission, supplied to the branches are not sufficient for an equitable distribution to the papers in the regions. Not unnaturally this caused dissatisfaction and gave rise to charges of discrimination. These offices should be given responsibility to collect, compile and prepare material in original on regional matters. The present reliance wholly on headquarters for all material and information even pertaining to the regions should be given up and the offices allowed to develop initiative and enterprise and grow in stature. Only policy directives and guidance should be provided by headquarters which would continue to supply news and material of national importance and about happenings of interest in other regions.

172. PIB should also recognise that the requirements of the regional press and small newspapers are different from those of

the national ones. For one thing, their interests are different, as also those of their subscribers and readers; and, for another, they require shorter versions of feature articles as they are not in a position to accommodate the complete text in the limited space at their disposal. There is the need to give importance to regional news, feature articles depicting local developments, the achievements of local people in cultural and other fields of endeavour, and information material to the life and avocations of the community.

173. It may be urged that this responsibility is that of the State Information Directors but the need remains to supplement their efforts, more particularly in regard to central projects and national programmes. There should be greater liaison and co-ordination between the Central and State agencies and PIB officers should be vested with discretion to plan regional publicity in conjunction with the State authorities.

174. PIB itself concedes that the releases to regional language papers should be on a selective basis and suitably edited with a correct balance established between national and regional news and developments. It acknowledges that there is little purpose in giving the full text of speeches and statements in translation. They necessarily have to be edited and abridged by the recipients and those undertaking this responsibility may not always be knowledgeable enough not to miss out the important points. But this would impose an additional load on PIB which it says it is unable to accept on account of inadequate staff.

175. Complaints have been voiced on the quality of translations and the delay in releasing the language versions. The original material is compiled in English and released to the press. Even at headquarters there is often a time lag before it is transmitted to the translation sections and the release of the language version. The English dailies thus have an edge over the language papers. It is in evidence that the agency releases reach its subscribers well ahead of PIB releases. Even language papers, subscribing to an agency, get the news translated by their own staff before the PIB version becomes available.

176. The translations provided are literal and do not always convey the sense intended. The answer is to prepare the material in original in the recognised languages of the Union but this would be a vast undertaking, beyond the resources of any single agency. An attempt may, however, be made to compile news in Hindi in addition to English.

177. We should now discuss the arrangements PIB has for release of material in the many recognised languages of the Union. It has only two units at headquarters, one for preparing material in Hindi and the other for Urdu. PIB complains that the Hindi unit at headquarters is overstretched. In addition to translating material from English to Hindi, it has also to translate the Hindi speeches of ministers and others into English. In addition the work of translating lengthy English texts of the External Publicity Division on a priority basis devolves upon it. We are unable to pronounce on this complaint. A study of work load is necessary to determine whether the Hindi Section needs strengthening and if so, its extent.

P. T. O.

178. The responsibility for other language releases devolves upon regional and branch offices. This implies that they have on their directing staff, officers proficient to oversee and supervise the language releases. But it is not so. PIB has its own difficulties in positioning officers who have the necessary language qualifications. In the past, PIB recruited people for their proficiency in preparing material in English. As a result, there are very few officers in its higher echelons who can deal satisfactorily with language releases. Exigencies of service and promotion prospects also come in the way of posting an officer who knows one or more languages of a region in the region itself. The position is no different from what we noticed in All India Radio. The Deputy Principal Information Officers who head regional offices have thus mostly to content themselves with public relations and administrative functions without being able to give time and attention to their major responsibility, the supervision of language releases. We consider that each regional office should have an officer of at least the status of an Information Officer to take charge of work in the regional-languages. A branch office should invariably be in charge of an officer who knows the language of the State.

179. A strong plea has been made for special attention to releases in Hindi. The point was made that sooner or later PIB's entire work will be mainly in Hindi instead of in English and that preparations should be made now for the change-over. While we sympathise with this view, we must take note of the realities of the situation. PIB's function is to serve the press and through it the public. At present the most influential papers with large circulation are published in English. Next to them are newspapers in Malayalam, Tamil, Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi. A switch-over to Hindi will create more problems than it will resolve. Nonetheless, we suggest that in the case of Central ministries, a start may be made by attaching a Hindi-knowing Information Officer or Assistant Information Officer to each ministry to prepare original publicity material in Hindi. This would enable Hindi versions to be released simultaneously with the English version. There must also be the required number of Hindi steno-typists to cope with the increased load. The ban on filling clerical vacancies has created a problem and a relaxation will have to be made to give effect to our suggestion.

180. We have earlier touched upon the need for effective co-ordination between the Central and State agencies of information and publicity. We now examine this aspect in greater detail analysing the suggestions we have received from the State Governments in response to our questionnaire. All of them are agreed that there should be more frequent meetings between the officials to exchange ideas and to plan out their respective publicity campaigns. Some of them go to the extent of suggesting that optimum results could only be obtained by integrating the two agencies; it would also give efficiency and economy. Even now the State agency has to come to the assistance of the PIB unit by providing transport and other facilities which it lacks. The unit does not bring out any original material and has mainly the routine function of translating and transmitting material received from the Centre. This function could be easily and better performed by the State agency by an expansion which should be supported by a Central subvention. Additionally, the State agency is better placed to transmit material to outlying areas. It was suggested that if the Centre provides at its cost a teleprinter link between Delhi and the State

Capitals, the States would link their Capitals with district towns. PIB would thus have the use of a wider teleprinter network for its releases at a much lower cost. In return the States' releases should be transmitted on the teleprinter service to Delhi and distributed by PIB.

181. We agree that if the regional and branch offices are to continue to function as at present, their work might well be handed over to and performed by the State agency more economically. But we have a different concept of the role of these offices and we doubt whether it would be advisable for the Centre to abrogate its functions and wider responsibilities merely on economic considerations, not of any great significance. Secondly, in a federal state the policies and purpose of the Union and States may not always harmonise. In the federal concept both the Union and the States have their well-defined and demarcated spheres of authority and functions and require suitable agencies of their own to discharge their respective responsibilities. We would, therefore, discount the suggestion for integration.

CHAPTER VI

DISTRIBUTION ARRANGEMENTS

182. We have already touched upon certain deficiencies in making timely language versions available to the press in the regions. These are accentuated by deficiencies in the distribution system. Though the regional offices receive material on the teleprinter, its communication to the papers in the region is very slow. For example, one weekly which is only 200 yards away from the regional office at Bombay receives its material by post. It could have been easily sent across by a messenger or the paper asked to collect the material by one of its own men. Similarly, papers at Indore complain that the material is sent out from Bhopal by post. Apart from vagaries of the postal service, this causes avoidable delay. A more satisfactory arrangement would be to send the packets of material by the local daily bus service. It has also been suggested that a more expeditious method would be to convey by telephone important news and information to the local press.

183. Messages are often received by the regional and branch offices on the teleprinter long after they have been transmitted by the news agencies. Nor does PIB follow the practice of news agencies which put out flashes of important items as soon as possible, interrupting the crediting of less important matter. Thus, the officers in charge of these offices get important news and distribute it long after the local press has received it on the wire service. This also detracts from the prestige of the officers and the organization.

184. Another suggestion worth considering is the use of two or three ply rolls in the regional and branch offices so that they could receive two or three copies simultaneously allowing translation work to be taken up immediately. At present, translators have to wait until the English text is completed and often released before they have access to the creed copies for translation.

185. The periodicals and monthlies have also complained of late receipt of material. They suggest that instead of sending material once a week to weeklies and once a month to monthlies, material should be sent out as soon as it is ready. A more

practicable solution would be to issue material to meet the deadlines of the different journals. These are small issues though important to the press and we are surprised that PIB has not given thought or taken any action to remove these minor complaints.

186. We now deal with the numerous complaints we have heard of inordinate delays in the distribution of material at Delhi itself. These arise largely because PIB has accepted responsibility for delivering material to the offices of newspapers and news agencies and at the residences of correspondents, yet uses only cycle peons to effect distribution.

187. We are told that even officers located in the I. E. N. S. building which is only a hundred yards away from the bureau often receive the releases made at 8 p.m. after 9.30 p.m. The delivery at the residences of correspondents is more dilatory and those living in the more distant colonies are excluded from the home delivery service.

188. We agree with the press that the delivery system should be re-organised and provided with quicker modes of travel such as motor-cycles and scooters. No material should be sent out between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and correspondents should be required to collect themselves the material which should be placed in the press room of PIB. But a quicker delivery of material released before and after these hours should be arranged. Some journalists have suggested that it would improve matters a great deal if PIB were to institute a closed circuit teleprinter service to feed news agencies, the IENS, the press club and the local papers. We do not know whether this is a practicable and economic proposition nor do we think that preferential treatment should be given to Delhi papers and journalists.

189. The distribution system has fixed hours for sending out messengers. As the Hindi and Urdu versions usually get delayed in translation they cannot be sent out along with the English versions. Their despatch has necessarily to be deferred till the next round of distribution. Special arrangements should be made to effect timely delivery of this material.

190. An ancillary reason given by PIB for the delay in distribution is that it has not sufficient number of typesetting machines to cope with the work, more particularly during the rush hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. But we should imagine that this is a difficulty which is within the competence and resources of PIB to remove. In the case of the Urdu press the process of calligraphy and lithoprinting takes longer than other types of printing; it is imperative, therefore, that it receives PIB releases not later than 9 p.m. In keeping with our conclusions and also with the general policy of government to give larger facilities to Indian language papers, we suggest that administrative arrangements should be re-oriented to give prompt and satisfactory service to the language press. These small facilities and assistance do not cost much but their psychological impact is great.

191. We should here say a word about the PIB's mailing list. We find that PIB sends out material to all correspondents and papers on its general list without exercising any discretion.

Many of these deal with special subjects and are not interested in the bulk of the material they receive. The preparation of separate specialised lists of correspondents and newspapers would considerably reduce expenditure on paper and ink, speed up the duplication process and would be welcome to the recipients as they would be spared the trouble of having to wade through a mass of papers. Similarly, it is not necessary to send all the features to the foreign press. They are not interested in many of the items put out and the supply should be on a selective basis.

192. The Committee on Small Newspapers has suggested that PIB should review its mailing lists periodically and make sure that the material is being sent out only to genuine users. Without this weeding out, the list is getting longer and longer all the time without any corresponding benefit to PIB.

193. PIB also agrees that the mailing lists for distribution, more particularly of expensive photographic prints, should be reviewed from time to time and additions made only after proper scrutiny. But the fact remains that PIB has not yet undertaken any such reviews at regular intervals.

194. As a part of our study of the system of distribution we examined the working of the teleprinter service between Delhi and outlying stations. We collected information on the service for a period of one week covering 45 hours of teleprinter transmissions. The material creeded included news items, both from Delhi and the regions, summaries of editorials from the regional offices and non-press messages.

195. We found that the records of the teleprinter service are maintained indifferently. The entries are illegible, vague and at times incorrect. For example, on a random sampling, we noticed that while the records showed the wordage of one creed item as 1,300 it was only 290. Taking the wordage of all the 35 items creeded during this period, the correct figure was only 12,370 against 24,500 shown in the records.

196. Due to frequent break-downs and mechanical trouble, the circuits cannot be worked for the full time allotted to PIB. For example, during the period of our analysis, the Calcutta-Delhi line was in working order for only 22 hours out of 45. But we were disappointed to find that even this limited availability of the link was not properly utilised by the PIB. About 47 per cent of the time available was wasted* because of faulty reception at the receiving end. As there is no simultaneous two-way communication, the receiving office could ask for a repeat, partly or wholly, only at the end of a transmission.

197. Secondly, the utilization of the transmission/^{time} should be better organised. The flow of news items is the heaviest between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. yet, many messages which should have been prepared and cleared earlier are held over for creeding during this rush period. This unimaginative planning results in the line remaining idle for hours and overloaded at other times. Messages often get crowded out and mistakes also creep in when there is undue pressure to get a large number of messages through in a limited period.

198. Thirdly, there is hardly any supervision and check over the work of the teleprinter operators. Not only are the registers incorrectly and indifferently maintained but even a record of messages which could not be creeded is not kept. Pursuing the matter, we discovered that out of 75 news items and releases during the week sent for creeding, only 33 were transmitted. We wonder whether anyone was any the wiser for this omission. The left-overs are sent by bag but they reach very late.

199. Lastly, we note with regret that the teleprinter circuits installed for communicating with the press are being used to a considerable extent for transmission of non-press messages, some of which are official and some even personal. As many of these messages are sent out or received during rush hours and some of them are of considerable length, their transmission is at the cost of the press items. This is a gross misuse of the service and should be forthwith stopped. If it were an occasional urgent message, it might be condoned, but it is not so. During the week covered in our review, the non-press messages on the Bombay-Delhi circuit accounted for as much as 66 per cent of the total wordage creeded, while on the Calcutta-Delhi and Madras-Delhi lines they were 30 per cent and 44 per cent respectively. These messages included such paltry items as reminder for early despatch of stationery to a branch office.

200. PIB spends annually a sum of Rs: 2.5 lakhs on its teleprinter service, but our analysis raises doubts whether the manner of its operation and utilization is commensurate with the expenditure incurred.

201. We recommend that the possibility of replacing the Teleprinter system by the more modern Telex Service should be explored.

CHAPTER VII RE-ORGANIZATION

202. The major issue before us is whether PIB should be retained as a common unified agency for press information and official news releases or whether the ministries should be provided with separate information units integrated into their structure as in many other countries.

203. Even now PIB is not in overall charge and control of all information and publicity. At one time, foreign publicity was its responsibility but it was divested of this responsibility in 1947 when the External Affairs Ministry formed its own cadre of Information Officers under the External Publicity Division. Similarly, the Ministry of Defence has its own publicity unit. Though headed by a Deputy Principal Information Officer, it has a distinctiveness and identity of its own with a number of Defence Service Officers in its composition. The autonomous units, mainly the Public Sector undertakings, administered by the ministries also have their own public relations outfits. Even the Department of Tourism, which used the bureau at one time, has now made its own independent arrangements.

204. Evidence tendered before us both by the press and officials including those of PIB on the issue of retaining a centralised agency is divided. Arguments both for and against the present arrangements have been given and expressed with equal vehemence. We reproduce those of substance and analyse them before making our recommendations.

205. It has been argued by many that it is convenient for the press to deal with a single agency for information and its exposition. It would make the work of the press difficult and onerous if it had to approach many different agencies to collect information and obtain authoritative interpretation. There should be a focal point for elucidation of the policies of government as a whole.

206. On the other hand, some journalists consider that there is no particular virtue in an organization like PIB which is expensive to maintain and slow in movement. It is a hindrance rather than an aid in obtaining authentic information and a correct appreciation of the rationale of official policies and decisions. They consider it essential to have direct access to the sources of information, more particularly as PIB is the purveyor of information at second hand and is unable to answer relevant queries or give necessary background material. They also feel that centralisation is bad for the correspondents who lose initiative and enterprise in seeking information for themselves. In their view, every ministry should name one of its senior officials as its spokesman and employ a qualified journalist to prepare press releases. This, they claim, would be more economical and much more useful to the press. They would be able to obtain authentic information from authoritative sources, and the ministries would also develop awareness of the importance of public relations and would be better informed of press and public reactions to policies and decisions of government.

207. It was also suggested that the Prime Minister's press adviser should be made the co-ordinator of government publicity and information and there would be no need for maintaining the apparatus of a Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

208. It is also the view of many that in PIB government has a co-ordinator of official releases which reconciles conflicting views of ministries on policy and performance. To avoid confusion, government policies should be expressed and interpreted coherently and be free of contradictions.

209. This claim has been contested. Instances were given of partisan and conflicting statements by different ministries on particular issues to make the point that the present centralised set-up was unable to prevent distortion.

210. They also counter the suggestion that were information and publicity to be made the responsibility of each ministry, publicity would be personalised and information slanted by drawing our attention to the present trend of press releases. They consider that the position cannot worsen, may even improve, if ministries were made directly responsible for information and publicity.

211. Some of the ministries support the view that a centralized organization is not able to give individual attention or the service they need. For example, the Ministry of Health and Family Planning considers that the issue of material through PIB has affected the quality of the releases and made them less informative and instructive. Some other ministries also consider that PIB is not able to present their activities in proper perspective. Moreover, the quantum of publicity is determined by the allocation of resources in the discretion of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the allocation

is often insufficient for the organization and sustenance of special campaigns the ministries require.

212. It is claimed by some that as the Information Officers belong to a ministry other than the ones for which they undertake publicity, they are able to tender independent professional advice and act on their own discretion and judgment. This position would be compromised were they to become a part of the ministries.

213. On the other hand, the point has been well taken by others that Information Officers are transferred frequently and are not kept on an assignment long enough to acquire an intimate and detailed knowledge of the working of the ministry concerned nor are they able to cultivate and establish relations of confidence with its officials. They are thus not able to assimilate the ministry's policies and programmes and project them correctly and effectively.

214. The need for specialisation is growing and an omnibus multi-purpose service is unable to meet this need from within its resources. For example, it would be beyond the competence of most Information Officers to handle the publicity of a department like Economic Affairs with its many technical and complicated responsibilities extending from balance of payments to control of stock exchanges.

215. It is urged that as press information has to be supplied in a number of languages, a centralised agency for translation, dissemination and distribution is more economical than if all these were to be separately organised ministry-wise. It is also claimed that centralization makes it possible to regulate the volume of press releases including pictorial material from day to day, minimising the risk of individual ministries releasing a volume of material which the press would find it difficult to publish on any given day. By regulating the flow, a sustained programme of publicity is made possible. If, on the other hand, a centralised agency becomes unwieldy to organise timely releases and their immediate distribution, as is the case now, there would not be any justification for maintaining it. In the interests of government as also of the press it would be best to decentralise.

216. Before we make our observations on the conflicting points of view, we should give in brief the organization of information in a few selected democratic countries. In the United Kingdom, each ministry (and department of State) has its own Information Wing. This is considered inescapable as each minister is accountable to Parliament for the information policy and output of his own department. It also gives completeness to the responsibility and activities of every department and ministry. Being a part of it, the PIO is in close touch with policy formulation and is thus fully equipped to prepare the press releases informatively and to brief the press competently. He is the link with the radio and television services for organising necessary releases. Similarly, the responsibility for planning campaigns when necessary in collaboration with technical officers of the department devolves upon him.

217. In addition to the departmental information service, the United Kingdom has a Central Office of Information with comprehensive functions. It embraces functions fulfilled in India by several agencies such as the Directorate of Advertising and Visual

Publicity, the Films Division, the Publications Division, the Photo Division, and the Research and Reference Division. It also gives expert advice, prepares material and affords other necessary assistance to ministries in organising health, educational and other campaigns. It is in the main a service agency with its own budget which is framed mainly on estimate provided by the ministries and departments. There is a separate compilation which brings together and gives the total expenditure incurred by each individually, on information and publicity.

218. The Information staff, whether in the ministries or in the Central Office, belongs to a common cadre and is inter-changeable. Appointments to the cadre are made from the press as also from the executive wing of the Civil Service. Some are on permanent establishment, some are temporary with prospects of permanency and a few on short-term contracts. When a vacancy arises in any ministry or even in the Central Office, it is trawled around and the most suitable applicant is selected for the assignment without regard to his seniority.

219. In the United States also each department has its own Information Wing, but a far greater importance is attached in USA to press liaison than elsewhere. As the media of internal information are completely privately owned, the preparation of material has to be done competently and made attractive to find acceptance. The Information Wing is placed in charge of a high-level officer, usually an Assistant Secretary, comparable in status to an Additional Secretary or Joint Secretary in our hierarchy. There is no central organization of information as in the United Kingdom and the entire responsibility for publicity devolves upon the departments themselves.

220. The State Department has a more elaborate set-up and a senior Assistant Secretary is in charge of information and Publicity. He is the spokesman of the department, is in constant touch with the press and is the sounding board of the department. He keeps the Secretary informed of public and press reactions to current as also prospective policies. These officers do not belong to any organised Service and are appointed ad hoc, their tenure being usually co-terminous with that of the Secretary of the Department.

221. In Italy, an information department is attached to the Prime Minister's secretariat. It functions as the centre for collection and dissemination of official information in respect of government's activities as a whole. For day to day publicity, each ministry maintains its own information and public relations officers. There is no organised service as such.

222. In the countries mentioned as also in many others, information and publicity are functions of the individual ministries. Despite this they are objective and impartial. As a result the press hold the Information Officers in high esteem. This lends support to the point of view that we should also re-organise on similar lines. But this line of thinking ignores the fundamental differences between their Constitutions and environs and ours. These are all unilingual countries, and, except USA, are unitary States. In USA, the constituent States have their own comprehensive arrangements for information and publicity.

223. India is a country with many languages, many traditions and many cultures, with States in different stages of development with widely varying needs. And the activities of the

~~Union impinge on the lives~~ of the people in many ways and many forms. The need to apprise them of the various plans and programmes is far more insistent than elsewhere. Also the media of mass communication and even tele~~g~~communications in general are far less developed than in advanced industrial countries.

224. It is against this back-ground that the constitution of the Information Agency has to be considered and determined. The arguments that have been marshalled against a centralised agency arise not because of its concept but because it has been unable to function effectively and purposefully and most journalists including the Press Association consider that centralization is desirable in theory but it must be purposeful in practice as well

225. This induces us to consider how best the organization can be re-shaped and its functions re-defined to make it a more effective instrument of information free from bias, wholly acceptable to the press and held in esteem by it.

226. The first essential is to restore the PIB's image as an organization of information rather than of propaganda or of publicity for individuals. Secondly, it has to create and live in an atmosphere of a news-room. Thirdly, its officers should be sensitive to the needs of the press and bring to their work a professional, objective and uninhibited approach, and anticipate, plan ahead and co-ordinate their activities with other media. The question is how best to bring about this-psychological transformation.

227. In regard to the charter of the bureau we can do no better than reproduce the directive principles laid down in 1935 at the instance of the Director of Information of the India Office who came out to re-organise the bureau. He had enjoined that (a) the bureau should not put out 'puffs' regarding government activities, (b) it should not comment on the facts and information it supplies and (c) no political or controversial matter should ever be put out except when it can be attributed to a definite source such as a speech by a member of government. The bureau also secured a ruling from government that it should not be expected to give personal publicity to political speeches by members of the Viceroy's Executive Council which were unconnected with the work of government.

228. These principles still hold and have greater significance in a democratic state with organised parties in opposition. The party in power cannot be identified with government and official publicity cannot subserve the interests of the party. We regret to say that the bureau does not respect or conform to the principles earlier accepted as essential attributes of an official information agency. Ministers and other public figures expect PIB to give publicity to their movements, statements and activities even when they have no connection with the work of government. To avoid their displeasure and to protect their service prospects, Information Officers are only too readily inclined to toe the line. In this situation the press can hardly be expected to attach any great importance to PIB's releases which are for the greater part publicity puffs for individual ministers and officials.

229. Unless the well understood basic principles of an information agency are re-affirmed and scrupulously honoured PIB

cannot even serve the interests of government; its releases would continue to be lightly regarded by the press and would not be accepted at their face value.

230. We trust that government will take note of the prevailing dissatisfaction over the functioning of PIB, and ministers and senior officials would exercise necessary self-restraint. But it is important that a new charter for PIB should now be drawn up and announced to give it the character and independence of an information organ as is the case in other countries.

231. In this re-organisation and re-orientation its responsibility to serve the Indian language press outside the metropolitan cities should be defined in detail and stressed. It is apparent that many of PIB's present services are not availed of by the bigger papers either because they do not need them or because they prefer exclusive material. They hardly ever make use of PIB's features, photo and eboid services, or seek background information from it or even participate in its conducted tours. Yet PIB's main pre-occupation is with these papers.

232. On the other hand, smaller papers with scarce resources would welcome these services; they even need them to survive or grow. But PIB is unable to make these services available to them because of its preference for larger papers and the dissipation of its resources in producing material which they hardly make use of. We recommend that PIB should give importance and priority to the timely preparation of features with satisfactory arrangements for their translation when needed for supply to the Indian language press. Similarly, useful photographs and other background material should be specially prepared which would have appeal for small town and rural communities. We consider it essential that the organization at headquarters and in the regional and branch offices should be overhauled and re-oriented to render service to those who need it most. In this process PIB would be able to serve a much larger community and bring to them news and information with an educative value, opening out also a window on the larger world outside.

233. It should not be necessary to add that in recommending that the PIB should render a service to the small newspapers we do not intend that papers, however, small should exist only with government support. In a country in which the newspaper is still a rare commodity it is essential to give all legitimate assistance to papers to grow. But at the same time in a democratic society it is essential to ensure that the assistance does not in any way interfere with the freedom of the press or lead to any undesirable dependence on government for privileges which are denied to the bigger papers.

234. We have broadly indicated earlier the measures necessary for this purpose but we should spell out the steps necessary to give effect to our recommendations:

a) There should be a radical change in the composition of the staff. There should hereafter be more and better qualified journalists in its cadre for writing features, compiling background and reference material, etc., in the Indian languages.

b) The regional and branch offices should be strengthened

not only by increasing their number and strengthening the directing staff but also by providing them with all necessary equipment.

c) Preparation and issue of material in original in Indian languages, satisfactory translations of material common to all languages and their release in time should also be organised.

d) There should be devolution of authority and decentralization of functions to allow the regional and branch offices to exercise greater initiative and independence.

235. We should at this stage discuss the scope of PIB's responsibilities as the unified agency of official information and publicity.

236. We first deal with external publicity. This is now being looked after by a Special External Publicity Division in the Ministry of External Affairs. This division (1) deals with special requirements of foreign correspondents located in Delhi, (2) feeds Indian missions abroad with material for publicity and (3) briefs the press on matters concerning foreign affairs. But for all these purposes it leans on PIB and makes use of its facilities and its releases. With very few exceptions it issues material prepared by PIB, its photographs and features. We recognise that publicity abroad requires a different approach, orientation and treatment, but even the establishment of a separate division has not achieved this. This view is shared by a responsible cross-section of public opinion.

237. We understand that the External Publicity Division is not staffed and equipped to do so and the material issued by PIB is sent out without any attempt at editing it suitably. It should be the special responsibility of the External Publicity unit to reshape the material or, better still, of the Information Officers in the missions abroad. For this purpose it should have officers of the Foreign Service who possess knowledge of conditions and trends of public opinion in different foreign countries and of our political and economic relations with them.

238. The Committee on the Indian Foreign Service in its recently published report has confirmed and stressed the need for the closest collaboration between the Ministries of External Affairs and Information and Broadcasting. We fully endorse their views.

239. We now deal with the future of the Defence publicity set-up. As in the case of the External Publicity Division, the media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have to provide the channels and most other facilities for defence publicity. A senior officer of PIB is in overall charge of the defence unit assisted both by PIB officials and a few officers from the Armed Forces. While the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting bears the cost of the PIB personnel assigned to this unit, the Defence Ministry bears the cost of the service personnel and some non-service personnel recruited specially for this unit by that ministry. We should like to reserve our final recommendations on the relationship of the Defence Publicity Wing to the centralised information agency we contemplate and for the present our recommendations are confined to improving the present set-up.

240. The calibre of staff needs considerable improvement. At present Defence Service personnel are invited to volunteer for

assignment to the unit. Those with ability and competence are disinclined to do so and be sidetracked thereby. Elsewhere, defence publicity is considered so important that serving officers of status, imagination and ability are deputed for a spell for such work even in peace time. This does not dilute their service and other prospects but adds to them. The Defence Ministry and the Service Chiefs should recognise the importance of proper publicity both in war and peace and re-adjust their attitude towards the organization which provides it.

241. Finally there should be proper planning for strengthening the organization to cope with the special requirements of information and publicity in times of conflict. As was realised during the recent Indo-Pak conflict, it is not possible to get results by drafting inexperienced officers nor is it possible even to do so when needed at short notice. It is not advisable to depend on PIB for providing additional manpower as it would be unfamiliar with defence equipment, terminology and strategy.

242. A plan for expansion should be on the drawing board, a list of officers who could be seconded should be prepared and revised from time to time and some young PIB officers put through a familiarization course. This course should be extended to press correspondents who show interest and volunteer. This would equip them better to report defence events and create an additional reservoir of manpower.

243. Before we conclude, we should touch upon the arrangements in hand to cope with situations similar to those that arose in 1962 and 1965. We understand that the Cabinet had given certain guidelines for planning and preparing for such eventualities in future. But these seem to be still under discussion between the Ministries of Defence and Information and Broadcasting and no agreement has been reached as to which ministry should take the follow-up action.

244. It is such a situation of irresolution which causes confusion and impairs our ability to prepare for eventualities. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is at present responsible for defence publicity and it must, therefore, take the initiative and develop and plan defence publicity on the lines we have recommended in concert with the Defence Ministry.

245. We must now touch upon certain handicaps of PIB which arise because of the status accorded to it. It is an attached Office of a ministry. This makes it difficult for it to obtain from ministries and others the information it requires at various stages of policy making. This in turn encourages correspondents to seek contacts with ministers and officials directly. Unless the PIO and his staff can function on a basis of equality with senior officials and journalists, they cannot command the confidence of the ministries or for the matter of that of the press. PIB is unable, therefore, to prepare the press and the public for the reception and acceptance of major policy decisions. For the same reasons PIO cannot develop his role as the adviser to government on press publicity. We were given instances where hasty announcements of policies had to be amended at the instance of PIB to make them intelligible and consistent.

246. Steps must be taken to arrest the tendency on the part of the press to approach the ministries by-passing the PIB even on routine matters. Unless the PIB is given an appropriate status and made the sole repository of official information, there will be no effective way of stopping releases of partisan and conflicting material by the different ministries of government. We appreciate that unless there is team spirit and harmony in the government as a whole, conflicting views and opinions would continue to flow to the press, but with the higher status PIO should be able to intervene to prevent distortion in news released.

247. It is the confirmed view of the press that government does not attach sufficient importance to framing information policies along with major policies on economic, political and other matters. While at the political level there is excessive concern for publicity, at the official level there is too little interest and too much caution. Uninformed assessment of a situation and absence of fore-thought are responsible for imperfect and inaccurate organization of publicity.

248. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting is, under the present organization, responsible for government publicity and information policy, but the press considers that the Minister and the Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, are the least informed persons in the Government of India as neither of them attends Cabinet meetings or has access to material leading to policies and decisions. Until and unless individual ministries are made responsible for their own publicity, it is essential that the Minister for Information and Broadcasting should be in a position to advise the Cabinet on information and publicity policy and promote government's interests by providing information about important decisions of government. He should also be in a position to induce the government to decide in advance on the information policy affecting important decisions so that the PIO can function within certain well-defined instructions and limits. As a senior minister put it, the present waste of effort and money is due to a lack of well-defined objectives for official publicity.

249. We understand that some time ago it was considered necessary for the PIO to attend Cabinet meetings but no decision was taken and the PIO continues to be excluded from these meetings. Whether his attendance is allowed or not the Secretary of the Information Ministry should certainly attend them to be aware of government thinking and policy, to be able to co-ordinate publicity and information for all the media which are at present under his ministry's control.

250. Lastly, we should make our observations on the financial and administrative powers delegated to the PIO. His powers are no larger than those enjoyed by heads of other attached offices. In consequence constant references have to be made to the ministry for sanctions on minor matters. This hampers and slows down PIB's work and impairs its utility to the press.

251. The administrative support available to PIO also requires strengthening. As an officer of the rank of Under Secretary is unable to exercise all the responsibilities a Deputy Principal Information Officer has been assigned the supervision of administrative work. This has deprived the organization of one important post and of one knowledgeable person from publicity work.

252. Another flaw in the rules is that the PIO himself is not authorised to re-delegate the powers given to him to his senior officers both in Delhi and in the States. This results in his having to devote a great deal of his time to routine administrative references made from his subordinate officers. We consider that delegation of authority to PIO should be commensurate with his responsibilities and function and further that he should be authorised to re-delegate them to the extent necessary to selected officers deployed in the States as well as those employed at headquarters.

253. We should, however, enter a caveat. In making these recommendations, we have proceeded on the assumption that PIB would be retained and strengthened as the unified central agency of information. We have yet to consider whether in a scheme of co-ordination of the media of communication, its scope and character should remain the same or whether along with all other media units (except Radio and Television) it should not also be brought under the umbrella of a Central Office of Information to be constituted. In this re-organization, it may well be possible and even necessary to give a ministry full control over its information wing to make its releases more informative and reliable and the planning of its campaigns more purposeful. This would also make the minister in charge fully accountable for his Ministry's information policy and performance. It would also enable the ministries to make appropriate financial provision in their budget estimates. Even now, some of the ministries have felt impelled to set up publicity units of their own in view of their specialised responsibilities and functions. For example, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture has the Extension Wing to handle its specialised publicity. Similarly, the Ministry of Family Planning is embarking on publicity campaigns of considerable magnitude (including field publicity) and Small Savings Campaigns are planned by the Finance Ministry itself. Our recommendations are thus to be considered in that context.

254. There is no organization for a systematic and sustained evaluation of the quality of material put out by the bureau. Nor has any attempt been made to ascertain the extent of its use by the press, the type of material it utilises, the type it rejects and the reasons for its preference. Is it the absence of news value, is it the indifferent presentation, is it the faulty timing or is it a combination of all three which makes the press chary of making a larger use of the material? It is only by having a machinery of evaluation that the answers can be found and other basic information collected. Without this information, the effort of PIB cannot be made more fruitful and commensurate with the expenditure incurred.

255. We, therefore, directed our research staff to undertake a limited sample study. The information it brought to light was disturbing; the study more than confirmed the reports we had heard of the scanty utilization of material issued by PIB and it placed the bureau's activities even in a worse light than we were inclined to believe.

256. It revealed that of the 37 English and Indian language papers, large and small, examined for a period covering a week,

only two used more than 50 per cent of the material issued. Four papers used 20 to 30 per cent of the material, eight 10 to 20 per cent and fourteen used even less than 10 per cent. The Indian language papers used more material than those published in English. Had the study been confined to the latter, which receive far greater attention from the bureau, the results would have been more disturbing.

257. Of the 46 photographs released during this period nearly half the papers did not publish even one of them. One paper published 10, another 6 and the remaining ones 1 to 5 pictures. Thus of the 1,700 and odd prints distributed to them at considerable cost, using material not easy to obtain, only about 100 were published. The study thus discounts the bureau's claim that its material is widely used, especially by the second and third-line papers.

258. This random sampling confirmed our conclusion that a well organised evaluation unit should be formed without delay to undertake studies on a more extensive scale and on a continuing basis. The unit should be headed by a senior and experienced official with some statistical background. The unit should form a part of PIB or better still be controlled by the multi-media cell of co-ordination we suggest in a later report. The findings of the unit should be made available to the PIO to give him the opportunity to make necessary adjustments from time to time and to regulate the outflow on a selective basis to make it usable to the press more or less in its entirety.

259. The analysis we have attempted of the shortcomings of PIB focuses attention on the ineptitude and inadequacies of the staff. In general terms, the evidence before us indicates that Information Officers, for many reasons, have not been able to identify themselves with the ministries to which they are attached; some do not exert themselves while some others do not have the capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of their assignments. There are, of course, exceptions. In consequence, the questions put by the press, even those which are not particularly searching ones, cannot be handled by the Information Officers who are obliged to seek assistance from busy officials who do not always appreciate the importance of press relations. The answers to the queries are thus inordinately delayed and made available when they have ceased to be topical. When this is the situation in regard to the policies of individual ministries, a coherent interpretation of the policies of government as a whole is even more difficult to achieve.

260. The remedy lies in recognising that a degree of specialization is inescapable in the information service and to provide for it on a continuous basis. For example, an Information Officer responsible for servicing the Department of Economic Affairs must obviously know something about inflation and deflation, balance of payments, stock exchanges, banking and currency. When he is proficient, not only are his handouts and their clarification lucid and useful but he is readily accepted and taken into confidence by the ministry itself.

261. The evidence of ministers, senior officials and the press also supports our view that without major changes in its recruitment policy and service conditions, the Central Information Service cannot provide competent manpower for the bureau.

262. Prior to the constitution of the CIS, PIB as also the other units had their own cadres and independent arrangements for manning them. This gave unequal opportunities of advancement, the smaller ones being at a disadvantage. The idea was then conceived that posts with allied functions and responsibilities in the other media should be brought together and added to those of PIB to form a composite cadre, namely, the CIS. The Service thus came into being to provide the entire man-power for the bureau, for the Field Publicity Directorate for the Research and Reference Division and for the editorial posts in the Publications Division and All India Radio and also for certain specified posts in the Films Division, the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity and other units. The strength of the cadre was determined on this basis. The need for providing officers to various media units is met by inter-media transfers. These transfers deprive the bureau and other media units

of officers who have proved their worth in their assignments and place them in unaccustomed fields of work and new environs. And they are hardly ever left in their new assignments long enough to be of any value to the organization concerned before being moved away to other units. Thus, they look upon themselves as birds of passage and are largely disinclined to acquire knowledge and techniques which would be of little use elsewhere nor are they fitted by earlier training and experience to fill all the posts encadred in the CIS.

263. In our earlier reports on Radio and Television, Documentary Films and News Reels, and Advertising and Visual Publicity, we have touched upon the need for specialists and specialization and have given cogent reasons why these could not be met by a general-purpose Service like the CIS. Our study of PIB also induces us to recommend that there should be a measure of specialisation in the bureau itself. The short point, however, is that the scope of the Service has to be re-defined and its cadre re-adjusted to exclude posts in other media units which do not fall within the ambit of the purpose for which this Service was organised. To give but a few examples, the script and commentary writers and the news reel producers in the Films Division, and the copy-writers and exhibition officers in the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, should not be in the CIS cadre. We have already advised against CIS providing staff for the news room of All India Radio.

264. While we have sympathy with the considerations which led to the formation of a unified Service, we cannot accept the situation in which they come to over-ride the imperative of managing and operating the units efficiently.

265. It is against this background that we proceed to examine the contrary claim of the Service that its members being proficient in techniques of publicity can fill posts in all the media with equal facility and competence. It avers that all the media of communication have one common basic purpose, to inform and educate and its members have the necessary equipment and aptitude to do so. It concedes that all that is necessary is to arrange short in-service familiarization courses in the media to which the staff is posted.

266. We find it difficult to entertain this claim that the members of the CIS can blossom into specialists in different and varied fields of employment by short in-service training,

nor do we appreciate how it would be practicable to organise this training when an officer moves from one medium to another or even from one specialised section in a medium to another at

frequent intervals. Each one of these needs specialised knowledge which can be provided only by initial training and continuous employment. Even the posts in allied fields in All India Radio, the Films Division, the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity and the PIB, are not wholly inter-changeable. This is the illogicality in the constitution and working of the CIS.

267. It is our considered view that a single Service cannot meet adequately the varied and specialised requirements of the different media units. With the adjustment of the cadre of the Service as suggested earlier and certain changes, some radical, in its administration, which we now suggest, it may be adapted for better deployment of staff in PIB and the other media to the extent required.

268. The CIS has four distinct and separate grades instead of the customary two classes in most other Central Services. At its constitution in 1960 all officers recruited earlier for information work in different media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting were absorbed after a review by the Union Public Service Commission and placed in grades corresponding broadly to salary scales allowed to them. This accounts for its unusual structure. As is customary in all other Services, vacancies in the higher grades are filled both by direct recruitment and promotion, there being a quota reserved for promotion. In the lowest grade all vacancies are filled by direct recruitment after a preliminary seeding of the candidates who have then to qualify in a written test, followed by an interview. In Grade III vacancies are partly filled by promotion and partly through a departmental examination.

269. Half the posts in Grade II, which correspond to other Class I Services, are filled by promotion, the other half being filled by direct recruitment of candidates on the results of the combined competitive examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission for Class I Services.

270. We have heard considerable criticism of the method by which direct recruits are obtained. If young graduates can be absorbed into other Services, and, after intensive training in both training establishments and service posts, equipped for the specialised responsibilities of the different Services, we see no reason why they would be unable to man the CIS posts after suitable training. The shortcoming of not having a training establishment has now been removed with the establishment of the Institute of Mass Communication. Its course of study has been designed to initiate the candidates in techniques of publicity and to teach them how to apply these in practice. This is not sufficient in itself and we suggest that the training course should be re-designed.

271. We consider that the present practice of attaching recruits to the four-month course in the National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie should continue to give them a general idea of the country's political and economic system.

This should be followed by a 9½ month basic course at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication which imparts a general training in information and communication theory and practice. It makes no provision for specialised training required for employment in the PIB. On the satisfactory completion of training, recruits should be placed with suitable newspapers for about six months. The period of attachment should be utilised to put them through the mill. The newspapers should be induced to make use of them on actual assignments as aides to working journalists and, later, on their own. Unless arrangements can be concluded on this basis, the purpose of this attachment will be defeated. This period would also give the trainee the opportunity to understand the requirements of the newspapers, and how PIB could serve these requirements better.

272. This attachment should be followed by a well-conceived programme of job training in the different departments of PIB for four months. This comprehensive training scheme, covered in a period of two years, should complete the education of the probationers.

273. There is also the need to organise refresher courses for selected officers of medium seniority to improve their knowledge and efficiency. These should provide for visits to projects and information units in the field. There should also be provision, as in the case of other Class I Services, for periodic attachment to the Defence, Administrative and other Staff Colleges.

274. Direct recruitment to other grades has not proved satisfactory and useful as the terms and conditions offered are not attractive to working journalists. This is conclusively proved by the fact that since the inception of the Service, not a single journalist seems to have responded to advertisements inviting applications even for posts in the higher administrative grades.

275. When the bureau was first established in 1941, the salaries and terms offered were comparatively more attractive than those obtaining the employ of the newspapers, but the position has changed very considerably since and it is just the opposite of what it was then. No correspondent worth his salt would forsake journalism to seek employment in the CIS. As a result, direct recruits to the CIS made available to PIB have neither any journalistic experience nor any other useful qualification.

276. Both the officials and the press consider that the Information Officers and others who work in the bureau should have experience of newspaper work. They believe that people with this experience could be obtained if the terms of employment were suitably revised and made more attractive. But it would be difficult for government to prescribe a scale for any particular Service which would be completely out of line with the accepted norms of its Class I Services generally. We should add en passant that the scales and the service prospects of the CIS are less attractive than those of other Class I Services. The scale for Grade II of the CIS is Rs: 400-950 while for the other Central Services, for which recruitment is through the same competitive examination, it is Rs: 400-1250. Even an equalization would not produce the remedy we seek. This is a problem to which there is no ready solution.

277. The CIS should be re-arranged in the conventional form of

Classes I and II, replacing the present irrational division of Class I alone into five grades and seven distinct pay-scales. It should be re-organised with a time-scale as in other Class I Services. In addition there should be selection grades for posts categorised as carrying higher responsibility and authority. Direct recruits to Class I will form the corpus of the Class I Service with the usual reservation for promotion from Class II, but the need will remain of inducting senior officers from other Services and even the press to meet the specialised needs of the bureau. To make this possible there should be a provision for deputation of officers and for temporary appointments of journalists.

278. Unless the ministries take over their own publicity and information work, and select officers who are sufficiently knowledgeable to deal with their specialised requirements, it would be necessary for PIB to be strengthened by the induction of officers from other sources. Ministries like Finance, Commerce, Industry, the Planning Commission, the Atomic Energy Commission, etc. obviously require such specialised assistance. It is stating the obvious that in the interest of ministries themselves officers for information work should be selected for their special aptitude and competence.

279. We also consider that it would be an advantage even desirable, to obtain on short-term deputation acknowledged experts from first-line newspapers and periodicals by mutual agreement for special assignments with government. We have stressed the need of recruiting specialists on short-term contracts for the other media units such as All India Radio, the Films Division and the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity. We should extend this recommendation also to PIB.

280. We appreciate that it would be difficult to obtain journalists whose articles on political, economic and agricultural matters are distinguished by study in depth and clarity in exposition and command public respect. First, the newspapers would not be enthusiastic about releasing them even for a short-term deputation. Secondly, the journalists themselves would be hesitant lest it should be a set-back to their journalistic career. Thirdly, it would create discontent in the permanent staff of PIB as these journalists would have to be offered more or less the same salary and perquisites they were previously in receipt of; these would be appreciably higher than what is allowed to officers of the CIS in comparable positions.

281. But, nonetheless an effort should be made. Once it is recognised that while government publicity would be enriched by outstanding journalists coming from outside, the newspapers loaning their services would themselves benefit by the wider knowledge, experience and insight the journalists would bring to their papers or return, it should not be difficult to effect mutual adjustments. An example is the appointment of the Press Adviser to the Prime Minister from the newspaper world. It may also be a prelude to an exchange programme between PIB and the press. But this method of obtaining specialists should be sparingly used only when the established Services are unable to produce anyone equally suitable. We had pointed out earlier that the Chief Press Adviser and his staff must have journalistic experience. If the CIS cannot

provide suitable officers obviously they must be engaged from the profession and given appropriate status and emoluments.

282. It remains now to consider the recruitment policy, composition and functions of the Class II Service. PIB's responsibilities are extensive, but mainly for historical reasons, there is an excessive concentration of authority and functions at headquarters. The need for their decentralisation on a regional basis in a welfare multi-lingual State has yet to be realised and appreciated.

283. We have underlined the importance of the regional and branch offices in the process of giving a wider coverage and spread to information and we have stressed the need for giving assistance on a larger scale to small language papers to foster their growth, this being in the interests of a wider dissemination of information which is the raison d'etre of PIB.

284. In our report on All India Radio, we have mentioned the need to vest regional control in those who know the language, the tradition and the genius of the people to be served. This cannot be provided by officers who do not have the knowledge or perception of the regional cadres as being more economic to operate and more purposeful in functioning. This had led us to recommend the re-constitution.

285. We consider that the recruitment to the Class II Service, absorbing the present Grades III and IV, should be made on a linguistic basis on a unified scale. This would benefit not only PIB in which such personnel are mainly required for work in Indian languages both at headquarters and in the regions, but also other media units where Indian language staff is needed.

286. We should stress, if indeed this is necessary, that the scale of the Class II Service should be made comparable to other organised Class II Services. This is necessary to attract the right type of people who can fill the present need for the translation work being done more competently and for undertaking preparation of features and other material in original.

287. While the normal age limit for entry would apply to the Class II Service, we consider that a relaxation for the benefit of the Service is necessary to allow the recruitment of people with experience of journalistic work. In their case the limit may be relaxed up to 35 years.

288. To effect the re-organization we recommend it will be necessary to assess both the present posts and the personnel to fix the cadres of the Class I and II Services, and to select the staff for them. We appreciate that the present Grade IV includes certain posts, the weight of responsibility of which would not justify their inclusion in the Class II cadre. They should be placed in comparable ministerial scales.

289. Our recommendation for the re-constitution of the Service with two Classes with extended time scales would meet to a large extent the complaints against the multiplicity of grades, with many breaks in promotion prospects and advancement in service. In rationalising the structure of the Service, we would also be removing a long-standing grievance of its personnel.

290. Under the present dispensation, the prospects of promotion of Indian language staff has posed a serious problem. This is due to the fact that so long as the bulk of the work of PIB is done in English, as seems likely for some years to come, the balance of advantage will always lie with officers engaged on work in English. As a result, some of the regional and branch officers and some at headquarters who have to their credit original creative work in their own languages do not get an outlet for their work nor a share in promotion which comes to others.

291. We should mention the surprising fact that despite the importance of Hindi as the official language, the post of Deputy Principal Information Officer or even of a Chief Editor is beyond the reach of those employed in the Hindi Section.

292. With the acceptance of the logic of strengthening the regional offices and giving larger importance to Indian language releases, the need will inevitably arise of strengthening the language units at headquarters and of manning the regional and branch offices with officers and men proficient in the languages of the regions. With the recruitment of the Class II personnel on the basis of linguistic requirements and the reservation of posts in Class I, the present feeling of frustration should gradually disappear.

293. Our plan of training should provide the CIS with officers who are better equipped to function as Information Officers in the future. But this by itself would not bring about the improvement needed. Their initial postings and subsequent transfers should also be more carefully planned. The initial attachment of an officer who has a flair for economic subjects should be to a ministry dealing with economic problems. He should be left in his assignment long enough to make him a useful and knowledgeable adjunct to the ministry, to be replaced by another coming up the stream. His later assignments should also be to ministries with allied functions.

294. This salutary principle has yet to find acceptance. Transfers are frequent and we have been given instances of Information Officers moving from ministry to ministry along with changes of portfolios of the ministers concerned. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Information Officers develop personal loyalties and their publicity gets personalised. But, in an attempt to provide specialisation from within the cadre, there is the risk of running into another danger, the danger of stagnation and loss of initiative. As a normal rule, no officer should be left in the same charge for longer than five years. Experience has shown that longer attachments do not necessarily bring about any improvements in the relations of the Information Officers with the ministries nor give any distinctiveness and excellence to their press releases.

295. The CIS Association has represented that the complaints about the service arise as there is no method in the initial posting of officers nor in their subsequent transfers whether within PIB or to other media units. It is fully in accord with our view that the sole criterion for positioning an officer should be his qualification and aptitude to meet the requirements of a particular assignment. This consideration assumes even greater importance when inter-media transfers are under contemplation. The Association also considers that normally

there should be no transfer within a period of three years and no inter-media transfers should be made after an officer has reached the Junior Administrative Grade. This would help to retain specialised talent at senior levels in each unit. If promotion is due the officer should be protected rather than moved away from a unit where his usefulness has been established.

296. We have earlier advocated that the strength of the CIS cadre should be reviewed to withdraw from it posts which require specialised skills which a general training in communication and information techniques cannot provide. This would reduce the frequent inter-media transfers which at present impinge on the efficiency of all of them. With the longer time scales we recommend, absorbing several of the present grades, it would not be necessary to transfer staff frequently. This itself will allow for specialisation to a much greater degree.

297. For promotions to the selection grades, we favour in the case of the CIS, because of its technical and specialised work, public advertisements for inviting applications rather than the present mode of selection through a departmental promotion committee in which seniority usually receives heavy weightage. This would not only allow outside talent to be recruited but also make talented junior staff eligible for appointment.

298. The CIS has represented that the incidence of administrative posts to its other posts being about the lowest in the Central Services, has caused stagnation and frustration. This should be removed by establishing a correct balance between the total strength of the cadre and the selection posts as is the case with all other Class I Services. This adjustment need not necessarily cause extra expenditure; the number of lower posts should be reduced to give a corresponding offset. This re-adjustment would not impair the efficiency of the Service, but should contribute towards it by providing better and more competent supervision.

299. We should mention in this context, the incorrect use made of junior Information Officers on routine duties which do not require professional skill and should be performed by lower-paid assistants and clerks. We had occasion to notice and comment upon this misuse in other media units also. We cannot but deprecate strongly this tendency which is both uneconomic to the State and harmful to the young officers.

300. The Association is also of the view that CIS officers should be posted to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry and be made responsible for administering the Service. This would not only give satisfaction to the Service but would also lead to its better administration and a more beneficial disposition of officers. We are unable to accept this recommendation. We have a different plan which we shall outline in our report on Co-ordination which would bring together and vest in a single authority the technical and administrative responsibilities of control and use of all the media units. In this re-organization the CIS will have its appropriate share and place.

301. The status of the PIO is not equated to that of even a Joint Secretary in the secretariat hierarchy. This naturally sets the tone to the status assigned to his

subordinate officers working with the ministries. Both the press and the staff of PIB have urged that in his capacity as the technical adviser to government on all publicity matters and assisting government in formulating its information policy and adjusting it from time to time, the PIO should be given appropriately the pay and status of an Additional Secretary, if not a Secretary to government. This would equate him correctly with senior editors and other officials with whom he has to work.

302. The PIO should undoubtedly be a person whose professional competence and intellectual integrity are unquestionable and who is, therefore, held in high esteem by the press. Whether one is available in the Service or not is a question we cannot answer. But we would have no hesitation in saying that, if need be, a person of eminence should be persuaded to accept this assignment in the national interest. This happened in the United States when Mr. Ed Murrow agreed to head its information agency at considerable sacrifice, adding lustre and giving a purpose and direction to the agency. We believe that, with proper approach and assurances of non-interference, government should be able in India also to obtain an outstanding journalist.

303. Linked with the question of raising the status of PIO is the equally important question of the status to be given to the Information Officers accredited to the various ministries. There is near unanimity between the officials and the newspapermen who tendered evidence before us that the status of an Information Officer should not be lower than that of a Deputy Secretary, at least in the important ministries, and there should be a directive that he should be allowed to be present and even participate in discussions on policy. These two together would equip him to present the policies and decisions of the ministry in a form more informative and precise and to answer questions, to elucidate and elaborate, to satisfy the press.

304. In conclusion we should add that it is far from our intention to denigrate the officers of the CIS as a class. Our analysis and observations are meant to focus attention on the system which does not give any scope to the development and play of their latent talent. We are aware that several members of the Service who, feeling frustrated left it, are holding today high positions in the world of journalism enjoying social and official status, and salary and perquisites which were well beyond their reach in service.

305. We should complete our study of PIB by reviewing the requirements of its staff in relation to its work-load. The PIO considers that he is understaffed; he contends that though the work-load has increased several-fold in the last few years, the increase in staff has not kept pace with this growth. On the other hand, a responsible volume of opinion holds that there is no justification for attaching an Information Officer to each and every ministry. Many of them do not have enough work. It should be possible to group together three or four smaller ministries to form a unit to be serviced by an Information Officer assisted by one or two Assistant Information Officers as may be needed. The adoption of this practice, more than justified by an assessment of work arising, would give appreciable economy in men and money, broadly estimated to be of the order of a fourth. It is also suggested that the strength and deployment of Deputy Principal Information

Officers should be suitably adjusted by re-assessing the weight of responsibility attached to their present assignments.

306. While we are not in a position to endorse the PIO's contention that the bureau is understaffed for its present activities, we are also unable to support the suggestion that smaller ministries should be grouped together and placed in charge of a single Information Officer. We are of the opinion that by rationalization and redistribution of work and responsibility certain economies should be possible and meet, to an extent, the extra expenditure on the various new activities we have suggested.

307. We are confident that, were the recommendations we make given a fair wind, the present weaknesses of PIB would disappear and its potential as an instrument of information correctly developed. And it would be acknowledged as a useful and reliable aid by the press.

308. By and large, the community anywhere welcomes information which helps it to understand a problem or a policy, but it rightly resents attempts to suppress or distort news and information. While it is prepared to accept a tinge of bias as inevitable in the releases of an official agency, it does not tolerate propaganda in the guise of information nor does it get deluded by personalised publicity. It is this basic realization which has moulded and shaped the information agencies in democratic societies and has induced public faith in their objectivity, impartiality and reliability. We trust that PIB would be encouraged and not deterred to acquire these attributes with faith and determination.

309. We can well understand that in a young democracy subjected to political and economic stresses and strains, those in authority feel tempted to use all available official agencies to present themselves and their activities in a favourable light. But, we should make the point once again that the information agency should be considered both a part of government and outside it. While it has to depend on government for sustenance, it can live and grow only in an atmosphere of freedom. With this exhortation and expectation, we conclude our study of PIB.

Sd/- (ASOK K. CHANDA)	Chairman.
Sd/- (NATH PAI, M.P.)	Member.
Sd/- (M. S. GURUPADASWAMY, M.P.)	Member.
Sd/- (L. M. SINGHVI, M. P.)	Member.
Sd/- (SMT. KAMALA CHAUDHRI, M.P.)	Member.
Sd/- (S. HASAN ZAHEER).	Member.
Sd/- (HAZARI PRASAD DWIVEDI).	Member.
Sd/- (S. MULGAOKAR)	Member.

Sd/- (MISS M. MASANI) Secretary.

(24.1.1967)

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1. The operation of government in a modern State needs the machinery of public information as an integral part of its administrative apparatus. The need for a well-organised official agency is even more important in an under-developed country. (Para.1).
2. The PIB's three major functions are to provide information to the press on government activities, to feed the resident foreign correspondents with news and background material, and to keep government informed of press and public reactions to its activities (Para. 5).
3. PIB should attempt to give to the representatives of the foreign press in this country important information in precise and objective terms. (Para. 8).
4. PIB should come to the assistance of small newspapers, particularly those in the regional languages, by providing support and services to them in a larger measure. Care should, however, be taken to ensure that while giving assistance to the press no attempt is made to interfere with the freedom of expression or influence editorial policy. (Paras. 10 and 13).
5. PIB, to be of use to government, must provide factual information faithfully and operate with moderation and judgment to avoid being looked upon as a vehicle of propaganda in support of the political party in power. (Para. 12).

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTIONS OF PIB

6. Though the most important function of the Principal Information Officer is to act as adviser of government in the treatment and orientation of press publicity, he is unable to fulfil this function for various reasons. (Para. 37).
7. Because of organizational difficulties the PIB is unable to co-ordinate government publicity through the press. (Para. 38).
8. The Information Officer must be treated as a limb of the Ministry to which he is posted and be invited to be present at meetings when policy is discussed. (Para. 39).

Press Conferences

9. When Parliament is not in session, all major decisions should be announced at press conferences by those competent to explain their rationale and implications and released simultaneously at all important newspaper centres. Even when Parliament is in session a press conference should be held to explain issues arising out of an important announcement. (Para 45).
10. The press should be given greater opportunities of meetings ministers to discuss major decisions so that their import can be better appreciated and interpreted. (Para. 45).

11. As far as possible the Prime Minister should meet the press once a month, but a suitable procedure should be evolved by the Press Association to ensure that a few correspondents do not monopolise the proceedings and that time is not lost over irrelevant minor questions. (Para. 46).

Press Briefings

12. The briefings by the Cabinet Secretary, after Cabinet meetings, should be more intimate and seek to interpret and elaborate issues under discussion. When technical matters are likely to figure in the discussions, the Secretary of the Ministry concerned or some other senior official should also be present to assist the Cabinet Secretary in giving detailed explanations. (Para. 48).

13. The correspondents' complaints about the present arrangements for their daily meetings with Information Officers should be removed. An hour or so should be specifically reserved for individual meetings of the correspondents with Information Officers. (Para. 53).

14. Proper arrangements should be made for answering the correspondents' queries when news breaks outside normal office hours. (Para. 53).

15. When a correspondent contacts an Information Officer for collecting information to prepare an exclusive story the correspondent's confidence should generally be respected. (Para. 54).

16. PIB should cultivate and establish more friendly relations with the editors of important and influential dailies. (Para. 56).

17. The tendency of some Information Officers to organise exclusive interviews for correspondents with a minister in return for personal publicity for the minister is to be deprecated. (Para. 59).

18. It must be realised that only when sufficient resources are allocated to the information services and their status made comparable to the administrative services would it be possible to re-organise them properly, man them with talented people, and bring about accord and harmony which can exist only between equals. (Para. 60).

Conducted Tours.

19. The scheme of conducted tours should not be given up but the invitations should be limited to the editors, correspondents and senior members of the journalistic staff of small and medium newspapers, preferably on a regional basis. Correspondents of major papers who ask for them, should be given facilities to cover the projects at their own expense. (Para. 64).

20. Members of the conducted parties should be given sufficient time at each project. (Para. 64).

Publicity in an Emergency

21. During an emergency PIB must be given overall responsibility for release of information. Too many sources of information result in the issue of contradictory statements which cause confusion. (Para. 71).

22. Whether it is an armed conflict or an economic crisis, the press should be taken into confidence on major happenings. While presenting the official version, there should be no attempt to play down the seriousness of a situation; the action taken to contain it should be clearly stated. (Para. 71).
23. Separate briefings should be arranged for foreign and Indian correspondents. A high-level committee of two or three people, closely in touch with developments, should brief the press in the capital on the day-to-day developments. (Para. 71).
24. The Briefing Room should have good and detailed maps, on which places in the news must be clearly indicated, and also other equipment necessary for the purpose. (Para. 71).
25. PIB should keep its regional and branch offices constantly informed about developments so that dissemination of information in the regions can also be properly organised. (Para. 71).
26. A plan, on the lines of the War Book, should be drawn up to be put into operation in an emergency to secure effective and informed publicity. (Para. 72).
27. There should be a co-ordinating cell with senior officers from the ministries concerned to direct the strategy of publicity and determine how news should be screened. (Para. 72).
28. A reserve of officers, who can function in time of emergency with competence should be created. (Para. 72).
29. A corps of cameramen should be built up and called upon when the need arises to visit the battle front and take suitable action pictures. (Para. 72).
30. Proper arrangements should be made, including telegraphic and telephone facilities, for correspondents selected to visit the front so that complaints of harrassment are eliminated. Their visits to the front should be cleared by and co-ordinated with field officers to avoid difficulties. (Para. 72).
31. Arrangements should be made for developing films speedily and releasing them when they have news value. (Para. 72).
32. A system of training newspapermen as war correspondents should be devised either at the National Defence College or similar institutions. (Para. 73).

The Press Adviser

33. A file of stories disallowed, with reasons therefor, should be maintained so that there may be some consistency in approach to the stories. (Para. 75).
34. The Chief Press Adviser must be a high-powered officer with a close link with the Director of Military Intelligence. (Para. 77).
35. The Chief Press Adviser should organise the work of his office in shifts covering the greater part of the day and night and should himself be available on the phone for urgent and important consultation. (Para. 78).

36. The Press Adviser should have access at all times to an authority who could clear military news. He should have direct access to the Minister and Secretary for Defence and to senior military officers. (Para. 79).

37. Press advising on military matters must necessarily be centralised; there should be no difficulty if the Press Adviser were to keep himself fully informed of what was happening on different fronts by maintaining close contact with the Defence authorities. (Para. 80).

38. The Press Adviser should plan carefully, in advance, his line of action in an emergency and the ground organization he would require when the need arises. (Para. 81).

39. The Press Adviser and his staff should have considerable journalistic experience to exercise their functions keeping in view the requirements of the press. (Para. 82).

Accreditation of Correspondents

40. The Central Press Accreditation Committee should be made more representative. (Para. 86).

41. Correspondents who are accredited in the regions should also be allowed access to sessions of parliament, press conferences and other functions when in Delhi. (Para. 87).

42. News cameramen and foreign correspondents should be given equality of treatment with other accredited correspondents. (Para. 87).

43. A working press room should be provided, in lieu of the present press lounge. (Para. 88).

Press and Public Opinion Analysis

44. There should not be a separate unit for public opinion analysis on the Plans. The staff responsible for the daily press review analysis should be able to undertake it. (Para. 89).

45. Adequate funds have not been provided to the regional and branch offices to purchase all the dailies published in their regions for compiling press reactions. (Para. 90).

46. More thought and attention should be given to the preparation of the daily "Press and Public Reaction Analysis" so that ministries attach importance to it and look upon it as an important aid to their proper functioning. (Para. 93).

47. In the interest of efficiency and economy the analysis and assessment of public opinion trends should be centralised in the Research and Reference Division which is better equipped for this work, and which also undertakes such analysis and assessment at present. (Para. 94).

CHAPTER III

PIB's Services

48. One or two senior officers should be assigned exclusively the function of supervising the work of Information Officers.

This would not only improve the quality of the Bureau's output but also assist junior officers to develop professional skill and a feel for news. (Para. 97).

49. PIB should prove its usefulness to the press by reporting fresh news and developments objectively and in detail, providing also the background information required. (Para. 98).

50. To eliminate contradictions in news culled from different ministries, the bureau should be placed in a position to function effectively as co-ordinator and spokesman of government. (Para. 98).

Handouts

51. For increasing the utility of PIB handouts the bureau should develop a selective sense in reporting. (Para. 100).

52. The practice should be discontinued of handing over written statements, which are biassed, and for which responsibility is not accepted either by the Information Officer or by the Ministry on whose behalf it is issued. (Para. 101).

53. In spite of the Press Commission's recommendations to the contrary the tendency to indulge in personalised publicity persists. The release of a large volume of material of negligible news value is a waste of public funds. (Para. 102).

54. Advance texts of speeches serve no useful purpose unless they are distributed promptly. (Para. 103).

55. The handouts have to be in simple language and supported by sufficient factual material and data to enable the readers to understand and assimilate their import. (Para. 104).

56. There should be a central desk through which all releases should be routed to ensure proper priorities. The desk should also edit the material to make it more concise. (Para. 104).

57. To ensure uniformity in spelling, punctuation, typing etc. a 'Style Book' for technical officers and a 'Guide Book' for typists and the distribution section should be prepared. (Para. 105).

Features:

58. Features instead of being restricted to conventional occasions like Independence Day should be more frequent, embracing more topical, informative and educative themes. (Para. 107).

59. The Principal Information Officer should be invested with authority to commission competent and knowledgeable writers where necessary to prepare features or articles. (Para. 107).

60. The External Publicity Division and the Information Officers in the missions abroad should edit, adapt and re-shape the basic material supplied by PIB. (Para. 108).

61. The recommendations of the Vidyalankar Committee and the Committee on Small Newspapers about strengthening and extending the feature service to cover the needs of regional newspapers and

periodicals should be taken more seriously by the government. (Para. 109).

Background material

62. Delay in providing background material to the press on important occasions cannot be condoned. The bureau should develop a sense of anticipation of major events and requisition necessary background material from the Research and Reference Division and docket it for release when the need arises. (Paras. 111 and 113).

General

63. To prepare the releases quickly and to improve their appearance, the PIB should be re-equipped with modern and better machines and should use better quality paper, attractive covers etc. (Para. 114).

64. All material which is required for reference and record should be printed. (Para. 114).

The Photo Service

65. The tendency to concentrate on topical events and to focus on Ministers' activities should be curbed. The Photo service of PIB should concentrate on material which can be used to illustrate events considered important by the press. (Para. 124).

66. PIB should supply to the press relevant sketches, maps and graphs also. (Para. 124).

67. Photos should be released with proper captions. (Para. 124).

68. Principles prescribed in the PIB's Technical Publicity Rules about the nature and extent of photographic coverage should be brought to the notice of the ministries and others by the government. It should be made clear to the officers that violation of the instructions contained in the Rules would be penalised. (Para. 126).

69. A high-level review should be made in collaboration with the External Affairs Ministry of that Ministry's need for photo prints with a view to minimise its demands. (Para. 127).

70. Specialisation among photographers should be encouraged. (Para. 129).

71. The Chief Photo Officer should be relieved of his administrative responsibilities so that he can give more time and attention to the supervision of the technical work of his staff. (Para. 130).

72. Photographic coverage should not be limited to events in and around Delhi and should depict regional events also. For the purpose photographers should be located at important centres. (Para. 131).

The Photo Library

73. Prints should be supplied to the library promptly where

adequate arrangement should exist for their proper captioning, indexing and mounting in albums. (Paras. 133-134).

74. The number of photographs to be indexed and retained should be reduced by weeding out the pictures not likely to be required. (Para. 135).

75. The housing and working of the library should be re-organised with adequate staff and modern equipment to give it both efficiency and economy. (Para. 136).

76. The Photo Library should be merged with the Photo Division which should be placed under the administrative control of PIB. (Para. 137).

77. One or two experienced photographers, though belonging to the Photo Division and using its service facilities, should be deputed to the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity and to the Publications Division on a whole-time basis to meet the specialised needs of those units. (Para. 137).

78. The number of newspapers on the distribution list for photos should be reduced. (Para. 139).

79. Steps should be taken to use the radio photo service to serve areas like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. (Para. 139).

80. Though the photo service should continue, the question of restricting the free supply of prints to papers should be examined in consultation with the press. (Para. 141).

The Ebonoid Service:

81. The Ebonoid Service, whose usefulness has been fully established, needs expansion and rationalization to meet the growing demands on it. It is not necessary to provide ebonoids to papers with large circulations but only to newspapers and periodicals with a circulation upto 10,000, provided they come out regularly and maintain certain journalistic standards. While one block will suffice for papers with circulations of less than 5,000, two blocks of each photo may be necessary for the rest. (Paras. 142-145).

82. A subject chosen for the ebonoid block should have news value and be of interest. Maps and graphs which facilitate the understanding of the textual material should also be included in this service. (Para. 146).

83. Until the foreign exchange position improves considerably, there should be a reduction in the import of films and other photographic material to find resources for the import of ebonoid material. (Para. 147).

CHAPTER IV

THE REFERENCE SERVICE

84. Research, reference, library and documentation services now dispersed in many units should be coalesced under a single organization, the Research and Reference Division. The functions of this

unit should be clearly defined and ad hoc work of various types should not be allowed to interfere with its regular and prescribed functions. (Para. 153).

85. There must be scope for continuous studies for important problems so that the material that the division issues is of utility to the press and to other media units. (Para. 154).

86. Analysis of press, public and political opinion done in the various units of the I&B Ministry should be centralised in this division (Para. 154).

87. The analytical studies should identify areas of unrest so that the information and publicity apparatus of the Government is able to plan its publicity intelligently. (Para. 154).

88. A sufficient number of newspapers, books, microfilming equipment and all the facilities which are regarded as essential in any good reference library should be made available. (Para. 155).

89. While the media units may have small allocations for purchasing specialised books necessary for their day to day work, the bulk of the budget for the purchase of magazines and books should be allocated to the division. In view of rising prices of books and increasing number of publications, this budget will have to be suitably increased. (Para. 155).

90. Research work requires a particular aptitude and training. If officers with requisite qualifications are available in the Central Information Service they should be posted at least for a period of seven years continuously in this division. Promotions should be made available to them according to their seniority without having to be shifted from the division. (Para. 156).

91. The Research and Reference Division should be placed under the multi-media Co-ordinating Cell to be created. (Para. 157).

Information Centres:

92. State Governments will be unable to maintain even the existing information centres if the Central Government's financial participation in their running is discontinued. (Para. 158).

93. Due to financial stringency it has not been possible to build up good libraries. (Para. 159).

94. The number of centres is inadequate. Rural Information Centres should be established and maintained in every village with a community centre. (Para. 161).

95. Each Rural Information Centre should be provided with a Community Listening set, a film projector, a library of government books, a collection of reference books, a picture gallery of important projects and a few exhibits. But this should be suitably phased with reference to money available and the competence of the community to maintain the centre. (Para. 161).

96. The teacher or Gram Sevak should be placed in charge of the Rural Information Centre after necessary training to handle the equipment gradually added. (Para. 161).

CHAPTER V

REGIONAL AND BRANCH OFFICES

97. PIB should assist the growth of small papers by providing them standard facilities on a large scale. There should, however, be no attempt to spoon-feed them and sap their initiative. (Para. 166).
98. More branch offices linked by teleprinters with headquarters should be opened for sufficient and timely supply of publicity material to the Indian language papers, more particularly the papers published in the districts. (Para. 168).
99. The existing branch offices should be provided with more competent directing and other staff proficient in the regional language, a library, a photo service, a reference and research service, other necessary equipment and a more efficient and quicker distribution system. (Para. 171).
100. Guidance should be provided to the heads of the regional and branch offices on a systematic basis, as also background and other material, to enable them to brief pressmen on important events. (Para. 171).
101. Copies of reports and other official publications should be supplied to the regional and branch offices in sufficient number to enable them to make an equitable distribution. (Para. 171).
102. Instead of the present system of depending wholly on headquarters for all information, even pertaining to regions, the regional and branch offices should be allowed to develop initiative and enterprise and grow in stature. There should be devolution of authority and decentralisation of functions. They should be given responsibility to collect, compile and prepare material in original. (Para. 171).
103. The regional press and small newspapers require shorter versions of features and also news and articles depicting local developments and information relevant to the life and avocations of the community. PIB should supplement the efforts of State Directors of Information in this respect. There should be greater co-ordination between the Central and State agencies for this purpose. (Para. 172).
104. Releases to regional language papers should be on a selective basis and suitably edited with a correct balance established between national and regional news and developments. (Para. 174).
105. An attempt should be made to compile news in original in Hindi in addition to English. A Hindi knowing Information Officer or Assistant Information Officer should be attached to each Ministry for the purpose. (Para. 179).

CHAPTER VI

DISTRIBUTION ARRANGEMENTS

106. To avoid complaints about delays in delivery of PIB's

material, deliveries should be made through the quickest available means. (Para. 132).

107. In case of important news, it should be conveyed to local papers over the telephone. (Para. 132).

108. PIB should follow the method prevalent in news agencies for crediting material. (Para. 133).

109. Two or three ply rolls should be used on teleprinters in the regional and branch offices so that two or three copies could be received simultaneously to allow quicker translation. (Para. 134).

110. Material should be sent to periodicals keeping in mind their datelines for inclusion of material. (Para. 135).

111. In Delhi, no material should be sent out between 10 A.M. and 5.00 P.M. and correspondents should be required to collect it themselves from the press room in PIB. (Para. 133).

112. The delivery section should be provided with quicker modes of travel such as motor cycles and scooters, for distributing the material before 10 A.M. and after 5 P.M. (Para. 138).

113. Special arrangements should be made to deliver Hindi and Urdu material which is at present held up due to delay in translation. (Para. 139).

114. The number of Roneo machines should be increased to cope with the work particularly during rush hours. (Para. 190).

115. Separate specialised lists of correspondents and newspapers should be prepared for issue of material of interest to them. (Para. 191).

116. All features need not be sent to the foreign press. (Para. 191).

117. The lists of recipients for PIB's material should be periodically reviewed. (Para. 192).

The Teleprinter Service:

118. There is considerable waste of time on the teleprinter circuits because of inadequate and out of date equipment, insufficient organization and supervision. The use of the teleprinter service for personal and official messages should be discontinued forthwith. (Paras. 196-199).

119. The Teleprinter service should be replaced by a Telex service if possible. (Para. 201).

CHAPTER VII

RE-ORGANIZATION

Redefinition of Functions:

120. There is a division of opinion on the issue retaining a centralised agency for press information and publicity. (Paras. 202-216).

121. Several changes are necessary in the organization of PIB.

to enable it to function effectively. The first essential is to restore PIB's image as an organization of information rather than of propaganda. (Para. 226).

122. The bureau's charter should be on the lines of the directive principles laid down at the time of its re-organization in 1935. (Para. 227).

123. The need to serve the Indian language press outside the metropolitan cities should be defined and stressed. The bigger papers are not interested in PIB's services, while the smaller papers would welcome them if they were oriented to meet their requirements. (Paras. 231-232).

124. The timely preparation of features with satisfactory arrangements for translation for supply to Indian language papers is necessary and also photographs and background material specially prepared for them. (Para. 232).

125. The organization at headquarters and in the regional and branch offices should be overhauled to meet these requirements. (Para. 234).

External Publicity

126. Material for external publicity cannot be tailored by the PIB for supply to the different foreign countries. This is the responsibility of the External Publicity Division or of the Information Officers posted in Indian Missions abroad. (Para. 236).

127. The closest collaboration between the Ministries of External Affairs and Information and Broadcasting is essential. (Para. 238.)

Defence Publicity

128. The calibre of the staff engaged on defence publicity needs improvement. Competent Defence Services personnel should be deputed for such work instead of the present system of inviting volunteers for assignment to this unit. (Para. 240).

129. The defence publicity organization requires to be strengthened to cope with the special requirements of information and publicity in times of conflict. A plan for expansion should be drawn up and a list of officers who could be seconded for work should be prepared and revised from time to time. (Paras. 241-242).

130. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is at present responsible for defence publicity and must, therefore, take the initiative and plan it in concert with the Defence Ministry. (Para. 244).

Relations with Government

131. The status accorded to PIB does not enable it to function effectively. So long as the PIB continues to function as a central information agency for the government, steps must be taken to arrest the tendency on the part of the press to approach the ministries direct on routine matters. (Paras. 245-246).

132. Government should attach more importance to the framing of information policies on economic, political and other matters. The Minister for Information and Broadcasting must be in a position to advise the Cabinet on information and publicity policy and induce the government to decide information policies in advance (Paras. 247-248).

133. The Secretary, Ministry of I&B must attend Cabinet meetings so as to be able to co-ordinate publicity and information for all the media under his ministry's control. (Para. 249).

134. The financial and administrative powers delegated to the PIB are inadequate and need to be increased. (Para. 250).

135. The administrative support available to PIO is inadequate and requires strengthening. (Para. 251).

136. The PIO must be authorised to re-delegate powers delegated to him for greater efficiency. (Para. 252).

Evaluation

137. In the absence of a systematic and sustained evaluation of the quality of material put out it is not possible for the PIB to make its output more effective. (Para. 254).

138. The results of a limited study reveal that very little of the bureau's material is utilised by the press, thus discounting the bureau's claim that its material is widely used especially by the second and third line papers. A well-organised evaluation unit must be established to undertake study on an extensive scale on a continuing basis. It should form part of PIB or, better still, be controlled by the multi-media cell of co-ordination to be dealt with in a later report. (Paras. 255-258).

Staffing

139. A degree of specialisation is inescapable in the Central Information Service. Without major changes in the recruitment policy and service conditions it cannot provide competent man-power for the bureau. (Paras. 260-261).

140. As in the case of other media units, there should be a measure of specialisation in the PIB. The scope of the CIS should be redefined and its cadre re-adjusted to exclude posts which do not fall within the ambit of the purpose for which this service was organised. (Para. 263).

141. Staff for Class I of the Service should continue to be recruited through the medium of the common competitive examination for Central Services, but the training given to it at present is inadequate and needs to be re-organised. (Para. 270).

142. Refresher courses must be organised for selected officers. (Para. 274).

143. The CIS should be re-arranged in the conventional form of Classes I and II, replacing the present irrational grading, with selection grades for higher posts. (Para. 277).

144. There will still be need to induct senior officers from

other Services and from the press to meet the specialised needs of the bureau. (Para. 277).

145. Journalists should be obtained on short-term deputation and conditions must be created to make such deputation attractive, financially and otherwise. (Paras. 279-281).

146. Class II of the CIS should absorb both the grades III and IV on a unified time-scale and recruitment should be a linguistic basis to provide competent personnel for work in Indian languages. The age limit may be relaxed to allow the recruitment of persons with journalistic experience. (Paras. 285-287).

147. To effect the re-organization an assessment of posts and personnel is necessary. Posts in the present Grade IV which cannot be included in Class II of the re-organised service should be excluded and placed in ministerial scales. (Para. 288).

148. With the re-organization of the cadre and grades the present difficulties of Indian language staff to obtain promotions will be gradually removed. (Para. 292).

149. The postings and transfers should take into account the aptitude of the staff and frequent transfers should be avoided. Promotion to the selection grades should be through public advertisements and not through the Departmental Promotion Committee to allow outside talent to compete and to make talented junior officers eligible for appointment. (Paras. 295-297).

150. The correct balance should be established between the total strength of the cadre and the selection posts as in the case of other Class I Services. (Para. 298).

151. The incorrect use made of junior information officers on routine duties should be discontinued. (Para. 299).

152. The status of the Principal Information Officer requires to be raised to that of Additional Secretary to Government, if not Secretary. If a suitable officer is not available in the Service, one should be engaged from outside. (Paras. 301-302).

153. The status of the Information Officer must also be raised and should not be lower than that of a Deputy Secretary, at least in the important ministries. He must be allowed to participate in discussions on policies to equip him to present the decisions of government effectively. (Para. 303).

154. Rationalization and re-organization should result in economies to meet to some extent the additional expenditure on new activities recommended. (Paras. 305-306).

155. PIB must be encouraged to function as an information agency and not indulge in personal publicity and propaganda. (Paras. 308-309).

• ANNEXURE

The jurisdiction of the Regional and Branch Offices

<u>Name of Office</u>	<u>Languages of work</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>
Delhi(headquarters)	English, Hindi, Urdu.	Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
Bhopal.	English, Hindi.	Madhya Pradesh.
Lucknow.	English, Hindi.	Lucknow and Kanpur.
Varanasi.	English, Hindi.	Varanasi & Allahabad.
Patna.	English, Hindi.	Bihar.
Srinagar and Jammu.	English, Urdu.	Jammu and Kashmir.
Jaipur.	English, Hindi.	Rajasthan.
Calcutta(Regional).	English, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu.	West Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Manipur, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
Gauhati.	English, Assamese.	Assam.
Cuttack.	English, Oriya.	Orissa.
Bombay (Regional).	English, Marathi, Gujarati.	Gujarat and Maharashtra.
Ahmedabad.	English, Gujarati.	Gujarat.
Nagpur.	English, Marathi.	Vidarba.
Poona.	English, Marathi.	Poona, Kolhapur and Sholapur.
Madras (Regional).	English, Tamil.	Madras, Mysore, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Laccadive, Amindiv & Minicoy Islands.
Hyderabad.	English, Telugu, Urdu.	Andhra Pradesh.
Bangalore.	English, Kannada.	Mysore.
Ernakulam.	English, Malayalam.	Kerala.
Jullundur (Regional).	English, Gurumukhi, Hindi and Urdu.	Punjab, Harayana and Himachal Pradesh.

Ministry of.....

Department of.....
Office.....

.....SECTION

NOTES/CORRESPONDENCE

	<i>Subject</i>
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Indexed on.....

Initials.....

Record A/B
Record C. Destroy in.....

To be noted
Not to be noted in Sectional Note Book

Initials of S. O./Supdt.....

Initials of Clerk.....

Previous References

Later References